

AVP Trauma Resilience Workshop

Purchase, NY—June 9-11, 2017

Daily Schedule

June 9, Friday

6:00—7:00pm Supper
7:00—9:30pm Building Community and Safety

June 10, Saturday

9am – noon Understanding Trauma and Resilience
1:00 – 4:00pm Building Safety and Transforming Power
4:30 - 7:00pm Remembering and Mourning
7:00—8:00pm Supper

June 11, Sunday

1:00—4:00pm Reconnecting
4:30—7:00pm Rebuilding Trust / Reflection on whole

Session Schedule

Welcome
Gathering: Adjective or Affirmation name and...
Agenda Preview
Activity / L&L
(repeating)
Reflection
Closing

Friday evening: Building Community and Safety

Adjective or Affirmation Name, where I am from, how long with AVP and a power or gift for good that I have is...

Opening talk

Cooperative Agreements Big Wind Blows
Core Self / Companions Available and Prepared
Step Into the Circle

Saturday morning: Understanding Trauma and Resilience

The color that symbolizes a quality I want to live out in this workshop is...

Stand on the Line

Definition of Trauma / Resilience

Regular Stress / Traumatic Stress Earthquake

Trauma Iceberg

Guided Meditation

Saturday aft: Building Safety and Transforming Power

Something that makes me feel safe is...

Concentric Circles

Safe Place / Companion groups Pattern Ball

Transforming Power—Building Resilience, Breaking out of the Cycles

Saturday evening: Remembering and Mourning

Loss definition

Something or someone important to me that I have lost is...

Grief definition and expressions

Mourning definition and expressions

A Personal Loss / Companion groups Back Massage

Reflection

Sunday afternoon: Reconnecting

One person I call a friend or one person who loves me is...

Recalling Significant Moments You are amazing!

Empty Chair

Sunday evening: Rebuilding Trust / Reflection on whole

Someone I trust and why...

River of Life Hokey Pokey

Human to Human (if time and if the group is ready)

Pleasant Memories

Open Questions

Reflection on whole

Yarn Web

Guides to Transforming Power

1. Seek to resolve conflicts by reaching for common ground.
2. Reach for that something good in others.
3. Listen before judging others.
4. Base your position on truth.
5. Be ready to revise your position.
6. Expect to experience great inward power to act.
7. Risk being creative rather than violent.
8. Use surprise and humor.
9. Learn to trust your inner sense of when to act.
10. Be willing to suffer for what is true.
11. Be patient and persistent.
12. Build community based on honesty, respect and caring.

Welcome

Welcome. Please sit comfortably, relax on your skeleton. Stop. Let yourself fall away. Let what you want, like, understand fall away. Feel your breath, your heartbeat, the unconditional gift of life. Open to the transforming power of life. Life is valuable, you are alive and valuable. Nothing we can say or do will make us any more valuable than we are right now. This is it. This is enough.

History

The trauma resilience workshop is an Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Advanced special topic workshop. AVP began in 1975 by Quakers, peace and civil rights activists and men incarcerated in prison. In the early 2000's, community-based healing and trauma recovery workshops were launched in Burundi and Rwanda with survivors of genocide. In 2004 a similar workshop was developed with people recovering from civil war and a tsunami. In 2008 the workshop was taken to Colombia and in 2010 to Central America and the U.S. Only a few workshops have been held inside U.S. prisons.

Philosophy and Approach

- Respect everyone's goodness, capabilities and beauty
- Respect the Earth's goodness, generosity and beauty.
- Everyone's a teacher and a learner.
- Learn through experience and reflection.
- Everyone's journey is different.
- Focus on personal change in private and public life.
- Attend voluntarily. Not required or coerced.
- Discern decisions together.
- Focus on learning, not on religion or therapy.
- Enjoy! Experiencing a culture of peace: playful, awestruck, surprised, hospitable, loving...

Cooperative Agreements

- Affirm self and others; no put downs or put ups.
- Stop, listen, don't interrupt.
- Speak simply, honestly, without fear of mistakes.
- Tell you own stories, not others' without permission.
- Ask for and offer hospitality, feedback and help.
- Call for play or silence as needed.
- Make friends, not enemies of people similar to and different from myself.
- Tend emotion, then speak directly if in dispute.
- Use what's needed and share the rest fairly.
- Use your rights to pass and consultation.
- Volunteer yourself only.
- Take care of yourself, the group, the community and the Earth.
- Live in integrity with life's transforming power.

Opening Talk

1. History, Approach, Teamwork
2. Journals, Clear Circle, Photos, Open Questions
3. Schedule, Logistics, any questions

Trauma Resiliency

Safety—with self and with others

Remembering, Listening

Process Trauma / Loss

Reconnect and Rebuild Trust

TRANSFORMING POWER

Good Companions

We communicate a lot without speaking, so good listening and much communication are non-verbal. Notice what you communicate through the language of your face, breathing, muscles and attention. Good companions are good listeners, who stop, turn towards the speaker, pay attention, and do so while staying present in our core selves and remembering the core self of the other person. We listen to, learn from and discharge our distresses, make decisions from our core selves, not from out of our distress as much as possible and invite others to do so as well.

Do:

- Pay attention to the other's goodness and capabilities.
- Stay relaxed, non-anxious and present in this place and time.
- Take equal turns.

Do not:

- Make it about me, interrupt or tell my own story.
- Figure it out or fix it, give advice or solutions.
- Over-react or steal the other's emotions.

Emotional Discharge

All are natural signs of healing, not of being hurt.

Listen, learn from and discharge distresses.

Make decisions and act from core self, not distress.

Emotion	Signs of Discharge
Grief	Crying, sobbing, moaning
Fear	Shaking, shivering, cold sweat, urinating, laughing
Anger	Loud voice, sharp movements, pacing, hot sweat, laughing
Boredom	Conversational talking, laughing
Joy	Conversational talking, laughing
Pain	Yawning, stretching, scratching

Core Self

A first-person, bodily experience of one's whole, natural person—genuine, authentic, true, safe—the origin of one's unique goodness, capabilities, traits and qualities that feels sincere, capable, courageous, compassionate, caring, calm, clear, curious, connected, creative and confident, and that stays constant yet matures over time with awareness and knowledge. Draw what your core self feels like and write three words.

Available and Prepared

In your companion group, consider what you need to have or let go of in order to stay aware of transforming power in every moment to be available and prepared for the demanding work of healing from trauma and building resilience to traumatic events and supporting others in this work.

- Am I taking care of myself: sleep, water, food, activity, curiosity, tranquility, balance and health?
- Is distress intruding that need discharge?
- Is my heart open? Do I need to express grief, fear, anger, apathy, joy, delight or gratitude?
- Is my mind open? Do I need to reevaluate confusion, insight, understanding or integrity?
- Is my conscience open? Do I listen, experiment with transforming power and change?
- Do I love life and act on what I know to be true, for the pure joy of it?

Companion Groups

In groups of three, divide the time evenly among members with a few minutes to settle in at the beginning and the end. Practice being good companions (see p.2). The focus person may sit silently letting go or listening inwardly, discharge emotional distress physically from the body, and/or speak to the question.

Big Wind Blows

The big wind blows for anyone who... tell something true about you that helps others get to know you or you get to know others. Invite us all to sit in many different seats next to different people throughout our time together and notice how that promotes more peace and creativity in the group.

Groundings

Groundings can help us heal from trauma because they bring us into the present moment, reminding us that in this moment, we are safe, allowing us to relax and to breathe at least for a moment. And as we discover that we are indeed safe, we can move more fully into being present and relaxed all the time.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) tapping –tapping to tap on the meridians—energy pathways in the body that help to calm and relax and restore balance in the body. (see handout).

1. Side of the hand.
2. Top of head
3. Inner eyebrow
4. Side of eyes on bone
5. Under the eyes--bone
6. Under the nose
7. Chin
8. Collar bone
9. Under arm
10. Inside of wrist to inside of wrist

Drawing

Traumatic events cause a disconnect between the left and right sides of the brain. So reconnecting those sides is part of the healing process. Drawing (right brain) and then putting words (left brain) to the image helps connect the two sides.

Step into the Circle

Step into the circle if what is said is true for you. The group will be quiet a moment and imagine what life is like for those for whom it is true and for those for whom it is not true.

Trauma definition

Trauma is caused by events that overwhelm adaptations to life. Traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence or death. No instance is universally traumatic, so one can't judge the event alone. Trauma is a feeling that is so overwhelming that one is reduced to terror and helplessness. —adapted from Judith Herman, 1983

Resilience definition

Resilience is the ability to bent without breaking, the capacity to bounce back after adversity, the ability to withstand hardship and recover.

Examples of traumatic stress

Direct involvement or witnessing:

- Natural disasters or accidents
- Serious illness
- War
- Sudden loss (home, job, loved one, friend)
- Physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse
- Structural violence—poverty, racism
- Ongoing humiliation
- Exposure to media, communal or societal violence

Trauma Iceberg

What are the effects of trauma that we see?

What are the effects of trauma that we don't see?

What can melt the iceberg?

Symptoms of trauma

We can lose speech, lose language, become confused.

Physiological changes: difficulty breathing, eyes hurt, sick to stomach, numbness, loss of feeling, wanting be alone.

A veil comes over the mind. It is hard to be happy, crying easily. Anger. Need of love, loss of memory, hard to make decisions, hard to focus, paranoia, jumpiness, get tired easily.

Cumulative trauma can be passed across generations without direct knowledge or experience—holocaust, racism. Previous traumas can be re-activated by similar events.

Do not allow yourself to freeze after experiencing a traumatic event. Trauma sets in when we freeze.

Loss definition

Something or someone important that we can never meet or have again.

Grief definition

A personal, emotional reaction of deep sadness or sorrow in response to a great loss of a relationship, person or thing.

Mourning definition

Time set aside personally or with family and community to remember and pay our respects for who or what was lost and discharge our grief over the loss.

A Personal Loss

Remembering someone or something lost, honoring what was lost and fostering compassion for self.

Recalling Significant Moments

We often do not have or allow ourselves the time or circumstance to process our losses, or perhaps we lack the ability to do so. Here we will recall a positive, important and meaningful time or event connected with the person, place or thing that is lost. You may use the loss drawn in A Personal Loss exercise or choose a different loss.

River of Life

Traumatic experiences need not define our whole lives. This exercise can help us to integrate traumatic experiences into the longer narrative of our lives. Identifying and naming our internal and external strengths from our past and those in our present can allow us to recognize what we can draw on in our present and future.

Journaling suggestions

Write freely what comes to mind

Write a letter to someone

Write a dialogue with another person

Develop a timeline to express your hopes for the future

Record memories of special moments in your life

Write a letter to God

Write a letter to a wise person or your grandparents

Write about an event you want to share

Write a reflection on the workshop

Write a reflection on a scripture or other sacred text / spiritual literature.

Sources:

Trauma Healing Manual by Nadine Hoover

Peacebuilding en Las Americas: Sanacion del Trauma

AVP Liberation Workshop – Nadine Hoover

Eastern Mennonite University's Village STAR (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience)