



avp
alternatives
to violence
project

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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This handbook is occasionally updated. The most up-to-date version is available on the website at www.avpbritain.org.uk in the Resources section (you'll need to log in to access).

WELCOME TO THE AVP VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Thank-you for choosing to volunteer with AVP. By joining our community you are also becoming part of a network spanning over 50 countries worldwide. Since a small group came together in a New York prison in 1975 to run workshops aimed at tackling violence on their wing, this network has continued to grow. We hope that as you carry on the workshops they started, your own experiences and ideas will also inform our practice as it develops. We look forward to continuing the AVP journey with you – there is much more to learn!

Alongside the learning and support you will be getting through your mentor, co-facilitators, and regional team, the Volunteer Handbook will help you navigate all the main aspects of working with us. The Handbook has been put together by volunteers, including experienced facilitators, and staff. It should provide all the information you need to be a successful facilitator or non-facilitating volunteer and take part in the wider AVP network, including what is expected of you and what you can expect from us.

There is no need to read it all right away. You may find it works best to consult the different sections as and when you need them, but it'd be a good idea to familiarise yourself with the information contained here, so that you can refer to it easily in future.

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WHAT IS 'AVP'?

People involved with AVP use the term to mean a variety of things. One meaning of 'AVP' is as the name of an international nonviolence movement supporting people who have been affected by violence to handle conflict and build better relationships. AVP began as a workshop programme in US prisons, co-created by prisoners and experienced group workers in the 1970s. The movement works in around 50 countries worldwide – in prisons, schools, refugee camps, conflict zones and other communities – usually with individuals in disadvantaged and violent situations. Many participants have lived with severe violence and/or have committed it against others.

'AVP' is also used to describe the philosophy behind how we work. At the heart of AVP is a belief in the potential of individuals and communities to discover the strength to transform situations and societies so that all can live with less violence and ultimately flourish. We believe it is possible to experience this, and that we need to develop skills and attitudes to serve it well in our relationships and in society as a whole.

In addition to supporting people to finding ways of living well individually and together, our work also aims to confront violence and its causes. AVP understands violence to have many forms. Perhaps most obviously, it includes physical and verbal abuse in relationships, which are in turn usually associated with injustices in society, themselves a form of violence. Many people in AVP also draw links between violence in homes and communities and the large-scale violence of war and ecological harm. Although AVP focuses on working with individuals and their relationships, our work can also be seen as part of a wider field of social and political concern for a more just, less violent world.

'AVP' is sometimes used to refer to a personal and collective commitment. To what? Perhaps: to celebrate life-giving potential of all people, including ourselves, to strive to respect and value ourselves and others with equal passion, and to work for social change accordingly. We aim to reflect this in how we work: for example, AVP facilitators try to avoid 'teaching' participants, instead taking part in the workshop alongside them and learning all together. These are some of the values of nonviolence, which we try to bring in to all we do and our daily dealings, including with each other. This is a challenging commitment and, being human, we do not always manage to meet it, nor could we expect to, but it is a value and goal that probably most AVPers would say they share.

Finally, 'AVP' is the name of our organisation in Britain, one of the larger branches of the worldwide movement. AVP Britain is a charitable organisation supporting the AVP community to carry out our work. The organisation is divided into six geographic areas, where around 150 volunteers organise and deliver our workshop programme. Volunteers also form eight national and regional volunteer committees. We have five part-time staff in London and Glasgow managing the administration, helping to improve how we work, developing the organisation and, of course, trying to raise funds in a difficult economic climate. We now supplement our workshop programme with a successful distance-learning project for prisoners; in the future we hope to become a national voice and source of experience on issues of interpersonal and community violence and prison reform.

Welcome to 'AVP' – in all its meanings.

AVP CORE VALUES AND VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

VALUES

We have a values statement summarising some of the commitments we try to make to ourselves and others. AVP is committed to the values of the organisation in our relationship with you and we also ask you reflect on and keep these values yourself.

We are actively committed to nonviolence, by which we mean respect and care for ourselves, each other and the world. As individuals and as an organisation we strive in all we do to:

1. Honour the right to choose
2. Take responsibility for our actions
3. Value the contribution everyone can make
4. Be bold, honest, trusting and creative
5. Recognise the potential of conflict, when handled well, to deepen understanding, create opportunities for cooperation and challenge injustice.
5. Accept that we make mistakes

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

A copy of the Volunteer Agreement you will have signed is in the Appendix.

AVP – AIMS AND STRATEGY (SUMMARY)

FORMAL VISION, MISSION AND AIMS OF AVP

AVP's vision is a non-violent society and our mission is to support people, particularly those in hardship, to learn how to handle conflict, resist violence and build stronger relationships. We believe every person is capable of non-violent, effective responses to challenging situations and difficult relationships.

FORMAL AIMS

The formal aims of AVP as an organisation are that:

1. Public awareness of, and resistance to, the causes of violence between people are increased
2. People handle conflict better without committing or suffering acts of violence
3. Volunteers gain training and experience as group facilitators in the community, including prisons
4. A nationally and regionally coordinated and evaluated service reaches diverse communities in every region of Great Britain

PRIORITY GROUPS

Whilst we believe everyone can gain from AVP, given our limited resources we focus our work on people whom we believe benefit most, being adults:

- In the criminal justice system, at risk of offending, or who are ex-offenders.
- Affected by domestic violence, including perpetrators.
- Whose mental health has been affected by violence.

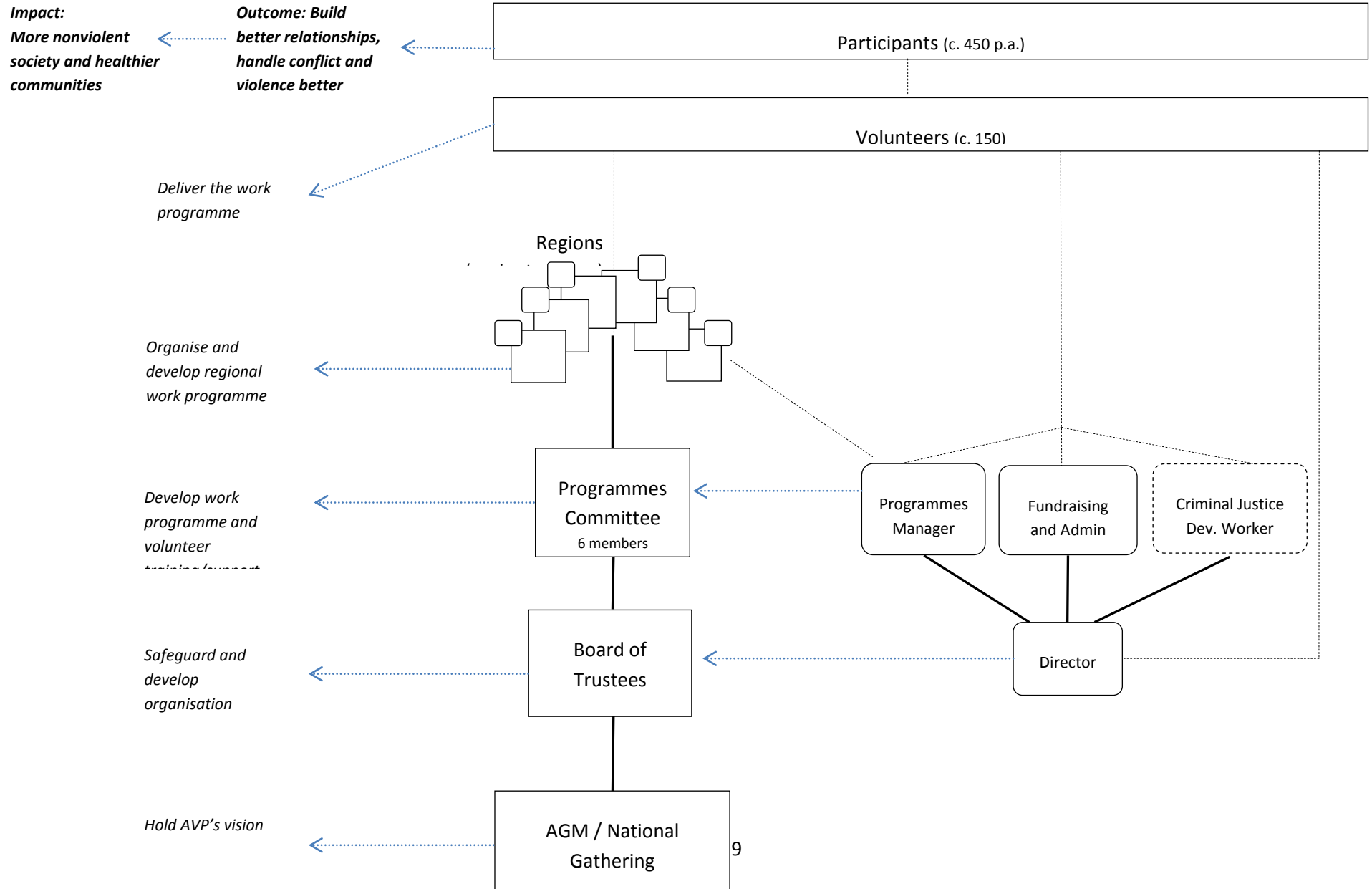
STRATEGY (SUMMARY)

Over the next three years we will aspire to ensure that the proportion of participants from our priority groups will increase. This aim applies to our work as whole; we recognise that diversity of participation is an important part of AVP's approach and there will therefore remain opportunities for AVP regions to work with individuals outside these priority groups. A copy of the full strategy is available on request – just ask us.

STRUCTURE, STAFF AND COMMITTEES

AVP Britain is divided into six geographic groups – Scotland and five regional areas in England and Wales. Each group has its own **Regional Coordinator** (paid or voluntary) and **Regional Management Committee**. The **AVP Regions** are semi-autonomous and work within the broad framework of the strategy and other decisions made nationally. Nationally, the **Programmes Committee**, supported by a part-time **Programmes Manager**, oversees the work programme and makes decisions about how the AVP work programme operates. The **Board of Trustees** manages and develops the organisation as a whole, supported by a part-time **Director**. A part-time **Admin and Fundraising Assistant** manages the national administration. You can use the drop-down menus of the People page of the website to see who's who. AVP's structure is set out on the next page.

Alternatives to Violence Project



AVP – A LEARNING COMMUNITY

The Alternatives to Violence Project is an international network of volunteers trained to facilitate workshops in handling conflict and building better relationships. By becoming a part of AVP you are also welcomed into this network.

Here in Britain we have a body of over 150 volunteers, some of whom are long-standing members, others who until recently had never heard of AVP. Although we are geographically spread (from the far North of Scotland right down to Cornwall!) we aim to cultivate a spirit of community among our volunteers, who often work across regions to help foster a culture of mutual learning, shared skills and ideas.

WITHIN YOUR REGION

AVP Regions are semi-autonomous, and regional work programmes vary greatly from one region to another. Each region has a Management Committee, which meets regularly to build strategy and steer the work programme for that area.¹ Many volunteers are involved in fundraising activities in their region, and also hold social events for volunteers to meet, or Themed Discussions groups for facilitators to come together to discuss particular issues that have arisen on workshops.

Contact your Regional Coordinator to find out what's happening in your area (Nothing yet? Why not start something yourself?!)

AVP BRITAIN

Whatever the level of activity within your region, there are also many opportunities to participate in the national network. This exists to:

- Provide ongoing training and support
- Share learning and develop our practice
- Build a common vision of the organisational whole and develop our work in Britain

We welcome your feedback and ideas at any time.

VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE NOT FACILITATORS

Not all volunteers are facilitators. A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes at AVP, from coordinating workshops to developing partnerships with other agencies, and providing a listening ear to participants planning to

¹ For information on becoming a committee member, contact your Regional Coordinator.

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attend. Some AVP volunteers choose not to become facilitators, and are involved instead in many important roles without which the organisation could not function:

- Membership of national committees
- Regional Co-ordinators (in some regions this is an employee, but for most it is a volunteer)
- Website developer
- Regional committees, including chair, secretary, and treasurer
- Office administration, publicity and partnership-building
- Organising and coordinating workshops
- Fundraising
- Facing up to Conflict project (our distance learning course) administration and assessment

Regions are often looking for volunteers to support their work. If you are interested in volunteering at any level of the organisation, please contact your Regional Coordinator to find out about opportunities in your area (for a full list of contact details, see Appendix).

SUPPORT FOR FACILITATORS

Facilitating workshops is a fascinating and rewarding experience. However, it can also be emotionally and physically draining, and it is important that you take care of yourself and recognise your own capacities to prevent 'burn-out'.

We want to help you manage this, and to make your experience of working with AVP an enriching one. Our facilitators are the lifeblood of our organisation, and it is essential to us that they receive ongoing relevant feedback and support, that they feel recognised and able to contribute to the movement of the organisation as a whole. For these reasons we have a comprehensive system of training and support available to everyone who trains with us.

FACILITATOR TEAMS

You will work with your co-facilitators on the workshop to create a mutually supportive team (for more information on this, see the section on *Preparing for a Workshop*). At the end of the weekend a Workshop Evaluation Form will ask you to list any safeguarding concerns, practical issues, or facilitator training needs that arose. Your feedback will go to the Programmes Manager, who works with Regional coordinators and the Programmes Committee to develop the workshop programme.

MENTORING

Every facilitator is expected to have a mentor for support and guidance. There might be someone you would like to ask to be your mentor, or you might prefer to be allocated someone you haven't met before. Your mentoring sessions are an opportunity to discuss issues or concerns that may have arisen on a workshop, and to reflect on your own practice and areas for development. For further information on this, see the section on *Mentoring*.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

We are always wanting and needing to develop our practice as facilitators. We aim to provide regular opportunities for facilitators to develop their practice, subject to funding. Each workshop you facilitate will form part of your ongoing learning process, but there may be particular areas for which the Programmes Committee believes facilitators would benefit from some more focused training. For this reason you will periodically be invited to attend AVP Training Days.

You will be kept informed of these opportunities and more via *Developing Our Practice* emails, which serve as a means of disseminating best practice, issues of concern and matters for reflection among the national facilitator network. These emails are sent out on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.

NATIONAL GATHERING

The National Gathering is our main annual training, volunteer support and decision-making event. This is a residential weekend for volunteers from across the UK to come together to participate in workshops, discussion groups, and community-building activities. It is also when we hold our annual AGM, and all volunteers are invited to attend and contribute their ideas. The National Gathering is an important opportunity for us to build mutual support and energise our network.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR SUPPORT

For practical arrangements relating to workshops, please contact your **Regional Coordinator**.

If you have an issue relating to a workshop or your own practice that you would like to discuss further with someone, please contact your **personal mentor**, who will also refer you on as necessary.

For training enquiries, please contact projects@avpbritain.org.uk

For administrative support relating to workshop evaluations, course booklets, or other matters relating to the workshop programme, please contact the office on the main email address: info@avpbritain.org.uk

If in doubt about who to contact, contact your Regional Coordinator first, who will signpost you on! (See the *Contact* section a full list of regional and national contact details.)

USING THE WEBSITE

The AVP website (www.avpbritain.org.uk) is our most up to date resource on everything that's happening within AVP. There is a **Public Section** for people interested in AVP, and an **Internal Section** for AVP coordinators and facilitators. It is here that you can find contact details for other volunteers, update your personal info, see what workshops are coming up, access workshop manuals and all the forms you'll need, and even read recent research papers.

As an AVP volunteer you must be registered on the AVP Britain online database for insurance purposes. Once you have completed a Volunteer Agreement Form (see Appendix) your details will be added to the database and will be accessible to AVP coordinators so that they can contact you and, if you're a facilitator, approach you to join a workshop teams.

HOW TO LOG IN

To log in, click on 'Volunteer Login' in the top right hand corner of the homepage.

From here, you can navigate the site by clicking along the blue bar at the top. It is worth spending some time familiarising yourself with what's there, as you are likely to need to refer to it in future.

Below is a brief introduction to the various sections:

- **Activities.** Lists workshops, training events, and committee meetings by year. You can search for particular types/regions/dates using the tabs on the left.
- **Committees.** Records of minutes from trustees and committee meetings, and the AGM.
- **Resources.** A comprehensive record of AVP policies, guidelines, resources and forms. It will take some time to find everything on here, but is worth doing so because everything you need should be listed and up to date.
- **People.** Details of all AVPB volunteers. Use the drop-down menus at the left to search by role and region etc..

It is your responsibility to manage your online volunteer 'profile'. Please ensure that you regularly update your contact details, volunteer 'status', and recent activities to help us keep accurate records of volunteer activity and assist us with workshop programming – thank you.

BECOMING A FACILITATOR

The decision to become a facilitator with AVP may carry with it a mixture of feelings: excitement, apprehension, even a degree of uncertainty about whether this is the right 'path', or the right 'time', for you. For these reasons it is important to take things at your own pace. The first workshop experience as a participant is often a very intense and exciting one, but training will take some time, and even when you have completed the process you may continue to feel very 'new' for some time after. This is all part of it! Be sure to draw on the range of experiences and support of your facilitator team, and remember that ***a good AVP Facilitator never stops learning!***

APPLYING TO BE A FACILITATOR

To apply to become a facilitator, you will need to have completed **three workshops**, including **one Level Two workshop**. It may be worth contacting your Regional Coordinator at this stage to let them know you are interested in training, so that they can help guide you through the process.

SELF-ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW

You will also need to complete a **self-assessment interview** with the Lead Facilitator of one of your workshops, usually your Level Two workshop. This is an opportunity to discuss the decision a bit more with someone who has seen how you participate in a workshop. Together, you will work your way through a number of questions that will encourage you to reflect on your reasons for becoming a facilitator and the skills and attitude you would be bringing. If after this interview the Lead Facilitator is satisfied that you would make a good candidate, they will recommend you for training to the Programmes Manager at the London office.

TRAINING FOR FACILITATORS

You are now ready to attend a **Training for Facilitators (T4F) Part I** workshop. This training weekend will be run in a similar way to a normal workshop, but will focus on giving you the skills and knowledge base to facilitate others. You will train alongside other volunteers from across the country, and by the end of the weekend, if the trainers are happy with your progress, you will become an **Apprentice Facilitator**.

BECOMING AN APPRENTICE FACILITATOR

You may now begin facilitating. You must complete **three workshops as an apprentice** and complete a one day workshop in role-play (**Training for Facilitators Part II**) before becoming fully qualified as a regular **Facilitator**. You may have had an opportunity at the T4F weekend to sign up to facilitate on upcoming workshops; if not, you can contact your Regional Coordinator to find out when they will next need a facilitator.

SETTING UP YOUR MENTOR

You will also have been asked to consider who you would like to be your mentor, and now is the time to set this up. For more information, see the section on *Mentoring*.

THE COMMITMENT OF AN AVP FACILITATOR

When you attend Facilitator training you will be asked to sign our Volunteer Agreement (see Appendix). This is a joint agreement between AVP and facilitators to identify commitments and responsibilities.

To help you work well and feel comfortable in your role we have produced the following set of guidelines, which state what is expected of you as a facilitator for AVP. Most of it is common sense but please have a read through.

As you gain experience you will find that you develop your own way of working, and also that you are able to adapt afresh each time to the different styles of other facilitators. Planning and preparation are crucial to the success of any workshop, as is your commitment to working as part of a mutually supportive facilitator team.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

All AVP facilitators should do their best to model the values and methods of AVP through demonstrating the basic values of integrity, responsibility and respect. When facilitating you should always consider the following:

- Honour your commitment to facilitate workshops. Please give at least two weeks' notice if you are unable to facilitate (unless there are exceptional circumstances) so that other arrangements can be made.
- Wear appropriate (modest, comfortable, casual) clothing.
- Participants place their trust in facilitators and may perceive you as an authority. Be sensitive to your role and its boundaries.
- Before each workshop, work with your team to identify any potential issues relating to safeguarding of participants. Should an issue arise during a workshop, always inform your Lead Facilitator at the earliest opportunity. They will then work with you to decide on the best course of action. See the section on *Safeguarding* for more information.

BEING AN APPRENTICE FACILITATOR

FEELINGS AND SUPPORT

So here you are. You have participated in at least 3 AVP workshops. Inspired by the principles and ways of working of AVP, you have felt led to undertake training as a facilitator ... and now you are ready to co-facilitate your first AVP workshop as an apprentice. You may experience a mixture of feelings – excitement, apprehension, nervousness. Your mind may be invaded by ‘what ifs’. ‘What if I mess up an exercise?’ ‘What if I don’t know the answer to a participant’s question?’ Don’t worry – these feelings are natural. One thing to remember is that AVP is an organisation which fosters mutual respect, support and encouragement. Feel free to contact your mentor and talk through any feelings or doubts you may have in good time.

PREPARATION

The other way of ensuring you arrive at your first workshop as an apprentice facilitator in the best possible frame of mind is to prepare as thoroughly as you can. You can do this in several ways:

- Get to know your team. You can do this by e-mailing (or, if you have technology) Skype-ing the lead facilitator and facilitators you will be working with and exchanging some preliminary information about yourselves and how you like to work.
- Ask the lead facilitator for a draft programme in good time, so that you can see the shape of the workshop, and refresh your memory regarding the proposed exercises.
- Make sure that you’re clear about all practical arrangements in terms of travel to the venue and when and where the team are meeting beforehand. This will help you to arrive in good time, unflustered, and ready to facilitate.

WORKING AS PART OF A TEAM

As an apprentice facilitator you are part of an AVP team. This should feel a bit different from other teams you have worked in, in that it is less hierarchical, based on mutual respect and trust, and with an emphasis on good communication. As an apprentice, you should feel a valued member of the team, and be able to contribute your thoughts and ideas. You bring a unique set of skills and qualities to the team, and you should feel that these are appreciated. It is useful to remember, however, that you are nearer the beginning of your AVP journey than the other members of the team. Try to listen, observe and learn from co-working with more experienced facilitators, whilst feeling able to contribute your own ideas and ways of working. Be ready to accept and learn from constructive criticism as an important element of reflective practice.

If there are issues with the way the team is communicating or working together, these should be addressed openly and honestly during team debriefing sessions, using processes and behaviours which are part of the AVP way of working.

THE ROLE OF FACILITATOR

These are the first AVP workshops where you take on the role of facilitator as well as that of participant. It is worth reflecting that the basic meaning of 'facilitate' is to make something easier. Your essential role, then, is to help participants reach a clearer understanding of violence, and to support them through a series of experiential exercises which will help them deal more positively with conflict in their lives. As a facilitator, try to:

- Be aware of the needs of participants, and how they are affected by different exercises;
- Be clear when giving instructions, make sure that participants have understood, and leave time for debriefing;
- Be flexible – adapt input in the light of feedback and to address needs as they arise;
- Be aware of different roles within the team – leading, supporting, time-keeping – to ensure exercises run smoothly;
- Be respectful and courteous at all times, and ensure that all participants are and feel listened to.

USEFUL TIPS

- Prepare as thoroughly as you can;
- Don't be afraid to refer to the handbook when facilitating an exercise – but don't depend on it entirely!
- Volunteer for exercises you feel comfortable with at first – you can become more adventurous later!
- Try to look confident, even if you're feeling shaky underneath – smile!

PREPARING FOR A WORKSHOP

Before the workshop:

CONTACT YOUR MENTOR

Prior to every workshop you should contact your mentor to discuss how you are feeling about the workshop and to make arrangements to have a follow up discussion after the workshop. If you do not have a mentor please contact your Regional Coordinator to make arrangements.

REFER TO THE MANUAL

Have a look through your Level One (or Level Two) manual before your workshop to remind yourself of the introduction and some of the exercises.

STARTING WELL

It might be worth considering what else you have planned in the days leading up to the workshop. The weekend is intensive, and will require significant mental, physical and emotional energy so you should make every attempt to arrive feeling well in yourself. Think about what you're doing in the days following the workshop too; give yourself time to rest afterwards!

TEAM PREPARATIONS

Our usual practice is to have one lead facilitator, one other facilitator and one apprentice facilitator, but this may vary according to the needs of the group and availability of facilitators. Sometimes there is no 'lead', and all facilitators share the 'lead' responsibilities. All teams work on the understanding that they are all co-facilitators, each bringing important skills and knowledge, whatever level of their experience may be. A diverse team is usually most successful, so Regional Coordinators try to draw in facilitators with different backgrounds, levels of experience, ages, demeanours, and there are always both men and women on a team.

You should schedule 2-3 hours for team-building and co-planning prior to the workshop. This creates trust and understanding among co-facilitators, and helps ensure that responsibilities are shared in a way that you are all comfortable with. If you have any questions or concerns about the workshop make sure you talk them through with your team. In planning the workshop agenda, apprentice facilitators should be given first choice in the exercises or activities she/he may wish to lead.

KIT BOX

Your Regional Coordinator is responsible for preparing your workshop kit box. In your team preparations make sure that the kit box includes all the resources that you require for the activities you have planned, including information about further resources available to participants beyond the workshop. At the end of the workshop ensure that you mark what has been used up so that the kit can be easily replenished.

PARTICIPANTS' NEEDS

Before the workshop, find out from the coordinator if there are any participants with particular needs or requirements you and your team need to be aware of.

SAFETY

FIRE SAFETY

During your preparation, find out about the venue. Make sure that you know where the fire exits are, the fire procedures, where all the facilities are and if there are any instructions about the security of the building. During your workshop 'Opening Talk' ensure that participants are informed of where all the facilities are and what to do in the event of a fire. At the start of every session ask the participants to sign a register. In the event of a fire the lead facilitator must take the register with them. Once assembled in the assembly points the lead facilitator must take a quick register to ensure that all the group are together in the safe point.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please take care when moving furniture and workshop equipment. Do not put yourself at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be divided into smaller quantities and always seek the assistance of other people to help you move large items or to lift heavy and awkward loads. If you feel any strain, stop immediately to prevent serious injury.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Your Regional Coordinator will ensure a risk assessment is completed before the workshop. During your team preparations review the risk assessment and ensure any safeguarding issues have been attended to. There will be common features for most AVP workshops, but your workshop team should consider whether there are any specific issues which need extra attention before every workshop. For further guidance on completing risk assessments, see the Appendix or contact your Regional Coordinator.

FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

AVP will develop and grow as we the volunteers develop and grow. It is hoped that this self-checklist which is designed for your own use will be helpful in those processes. Although designed for you to use as you wish, you might want to share the contents or parts of it with your mentor, or whomsoever else you may choose.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

- Did I refresh my understanding of the structure and purpose of the workshop?
- Did I prepare myself for my TP presentation?
- Did I study parts of the workshop suggested by the Lead Facilitator?
- Did I look at the Volunteer Handbook ?

THE FACILITATORS MEETING

- Did I come with ideas for the proposed agenda?
- Was I comfortable with the team-building process?

DURING THE WORKSHOP

- Did I think that my strengths and weaknesses and experience were understood and fully taken into account by the team?
- Was I comfortable with the exercises I led?
- Did I find the team feedback between sessions helpful?
- Did I get the support I felt I needed on unfamiliar exercises?

AFTER THE WORKSHOP

- Was my contribution to the workshop evaluation appreciated?
- Did I have the opportunity to see the final evaluation before it was submitted?

FACILITATING A WORKSHOP

For full guidance on facilitating a workshop, please refer to the Level 1 Manual.

WORKING IN TEAMS

Facilitators work in teams of 3 or 4, rather than on their own, for several reasons

BETTER AGENDAS

A good team is stronger than an individual. Not only do more people bring more ideas, but the exchange and discussion of ideas leads to better agendas, as we bounce off, refine and build on each other's thoughts and experiences.

BETTER FACILITATION

As we all bring different strengths and weaknesses, teamwork also helps ensure that our blind spots are covered by our co-facilitators' strengths and awareness. We can achieve high standards of facilitation by giving each other feedback so as to keep developing our self-awareness and skills.

MODELLING COOPERATION

As we try to promote cooperation, our supportive and effective teamwork can offer a useful example of good cooperation. When teamwork encounters hiccups, we can also model the kind of open communication and attitudes which help resolve conflicts.

MODELLING COMMUNITY

The team create a mini community through team-building – which is then opened and extended to participants.

MUTUAL SUPPORT

Facilitating workshops is challenging work, and we can all benefit from the moral, emotional and practical support of our team mates.

OFFERING ROLE MODELS

A team will ideally represent different sections of the community, to offer role models for participants of different ages, genders, ethnicities, sexualities and socio-economic backgrounds. While 3 or 4 AVP volunteers may not represent all sections of the community, we feel it is important that a team includes at least one male and one female. Much violence is connected to gender relations, and widespread ideas of masculinity and femininity. It is therefore particularly important to provide non-violent, assertive role models for both genders, as well as give people a chance to experience positive and safe interaction with people of different genders.

GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback is one of our main ways of learning and developing. After each workshop session, and in the post-workshop team debrief, it is usual for the team to give one another feedback. Part of the discipline of being an AVP volunteer is to invite other people's feedback and to give your own in a respectful and supportive way.

The aim of good feedback is to support someone to develop; it is given as a gift, rather than imposed as a sort of 'correction' or judgement. This matters because our sense of self-worth depends partly on how much confidence we have in our work. There are many techniques but giving feedback well is first a matter of whether we can bring a generous attitude to it.

When receiving feedback, try to be open. There is always something to learn, and usually something useful in all feedback even it is not offered as respectfully as it could be. Your openness to others' feedback will help to build trust, which makes feedback easier to give and receive. Here are a few more ideas for you to think about when giving or receiving feedback...

GIVING FEEDBACK

When giving feedback, reflect on what you think the person has done well and start with this. Beware of skipping over this; really focus on it and give it time. Always be specific if you can. 'You were marvellous' sounds supportive but is too vague to be helpful. Always 'own' your feedback – it's your point of view, rather than objective truth – add 'I'; for example, 'I liked the way you...'

For example: 'I liked the way you responded to Paul in the last session; you noticed he really needed to speak in the group and you invited him in, and I also thought... [then another thing you thought worked well]'

Once you've talked about what went well, you might want to suggest how something could have been done differently, although this isn't always necessary. When you think this will be helpful, bear in mind that the person listening can only take in one suggestion at a time and needs time to reflect on it. Otherwise, you risk overloading them and knocking their confidence, which damages trust and makes feedback more difficult to give and receive in the long run.

So, be sparing with your suggestions. Think first about the ONE most important/useful/supportive thing to say. Again, be specific and own your statement. Also, it's a good idea to end your statement by asking for their own view.

For example, 'I wonder whether the exercise you led would have worked better with smaller groups because I think some of the groups were struggling to stay involved. What do you think?'

INVITING SELF-FEEDBACK

Give yourself feedback! After each session, think about what went well and what could have been done differently. Be generous with yourself.

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Similarly, in some situations it works well to ask someone to give feedback to themselves first: 'What do you think you did well? ... And what would you do differently next time, if anything?'

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

To make the most of the feedback you receive, treat it as a useful gift – useful enough to write a note of it each time. If you only receive critical comments from someone, ask them whether they thought there was something you did well. If you only receive glowing feedback, ask whether there is anything that could have been done differently. If you receive only vague feedback, do ask for clarification or an example. And if you're not getting much feedback, ask for some; even better is to say during teambuilding that you welcome feedback.

Finally, you don't have to accept feedback as accurate if you don't think it is. There is usually something useful in it, though! If you feel hurt or angry about the way someone has given you feedback, you are quite in order to say so. This might not be easy to do but it can be better than letting any resentment fester during the workshop.

KEEPING FEEDBACK BRIEF

Once you've raised two or three main points (at the most), move on – feedback of all kinds is only digestible in small chunks. During the team debrief after a session, you probably won't need more than a minute to give feedback to someone.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER ON THE SUBJECT OF FEEDBACK

Here are a few pointers. If you try to follow these you will learn quickly, you'll strengthen your practice, and you'll become more comfortable with giving and receiving feedback:

- Do you want to learn from others and to support others to learn?
- Do you invite others to give you feedback?
- Do you and your team ask permission to give each other feedback?
- Are you respectful of others' sensitivity to receiving feedback?
- When giving feedback, do you focus mainly on the other person's strengths? Are you specific?
- Are you sparing with 'learning points' but still willing to offer these when you think they are needed?
- Are you committed to make the most of feedback you receive, even when it is not communicated as well as it could be?

CONFLICT IN TEAMS

Just as conflict is a normal part of life, it is a normal part of working within an AVP facilitation team. While we all have the same concerns at heart, we bring different experiences, a range of strengths and weaknesses, and different ideas about the ingredients of the ideal workshop. Running a workshop is challenging, and team members are likely to experience a degree of stress. We may let minor issues build up, particularly if we do not take enough time for team-building or debriefing. Workshops can also be emotionally demanding: we may be tempted to believe that we are all so emotionally resilient that there is no need to treat each other with as much care and sensitivity as we offer to participants.

These factors or others may create tensions between team members, but much can be done to minimise these difficulties, through good team-building, debriefing, affirmations, and looking after ourselves as well as each other. The guidelines in the Volunteer Handbook and workshop manuals are the result of many years' experience of what has worked best for facilitators; they are worth reading carefully.

When tensions do arise (and they will!), they can be welcomed as opportunities to clarify our needs, and come to a better understanding of how to harmonise our strengths and weaknesses as a team. They are an excellent opportunity to put our communication and conflict-resolution skills into practice, model them for participants, and keep our awareness of conflict dynamics fresh and real. We are all constantly learning about the multiple and bewildering facets of conflict, and can embrace team conflict as a way to deepen our understanding of the issues, so that we may better support participants.

It is also a chance to rediscover our own attitudes to conflict: some of us may shy away from tackling it, others may plunge in head first, or assume or deny responsibility. Remaining conscious of our own personal inclinations is important in helping us present a balanced picture to participants.

When an incident occurs, we can remember to ask for explanations and seek understanding before expressing anger. We can avoid escalating conflict by remembering not to raise our voice for example, or trying too hard to justify ourselves instead of listening to what others are saying. When seeking a solution, we can share a focus on the participants' best interests.

Conflict often teaches us something about our own triggers: other facilitators may push buttons we didn't know we had, and help us develop our self-understanding. When our vulnerabilities are uncovered, we may naturally become defensive. We can recognise this openly, and trust that our team have enough empathy to respect us and support us even when we feel uncomfortably exposed. We can take responsibility for what we feel, do and say, keep working on our skills, and, if appropriate, apologise gracefully.

We are only human after all and we are always learning, so we can accept ourselves and each other in the full knowledge that none of us is perfect. We can remember that it's OK to make mistakes, while recognising the skills we all bring and remaining committed to mutual respect and care, and to walking a nonviolent path.

SAFEGUARDING

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SAFEGUARDING?

'Safeguarding' for AVP means working together in an informed and responsive way to minimise and manage risk to adults who may be vulnerable. (AVP does not usually work with people under 18 years of age; when we do, other guidelines apply in addition to these below)

Anger, violence and interpersonal conflict are complex issues, and AVP Workshops can 'bring up' a range of emotions, thoughts and feelings for participants and facilitators alike. By their nature, the workshops also attract some of the most vulnerable members of society. For these reasons it is essential that we work with awareness and sensitivity, and that we respond appropriately where we are concerned for the safety of someone on a workshop.

AVP believe that any adult at risk of abuse, exploitation or neglect should be able to access the support they need to enable them to live a life free from violence and abuse. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to protect adults at risk of harm, abuse or exploitation. Where we are concerned that a participant or someone close to them may be at risk, we will respond in a way that is respectful of those involved, that helps assure the safety of that person and those around them, and that joins with other organisations and services to promote a society safe from harm.

WHAT DOES SAFEGUARDING MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Below are some possible workshop scenarios, all of which raise issues of safeguarding. As you read them, think about:

- What are the risks, and who is at risk, in this situation?
- What action if any do you think should you and or your co-facilitators take?
- What follow up action, if any, should be taken?

Scenario 1.

You are volunteering at your local AVP office while your Regional Coordinator is off on holiday. A man called Philip has sent in a booking form for your next Level 1 workshop. He telephones the office to confirm you have received his form and deposit, and in conversation you develop a rapport with him. Over the next week he telephones the office again several times asking you for advice regarding a child custody problem he is experiencing. In the latest call he sounds distraught, discloses to you that he is trying to overcome a serious drink problem and tells you that he has been contemplating self-harm.

Scenario 2.

On Sunday during the workshop you hear shouting coming from outside. A few moments later, one of the participants comes in to the room and appears upset. She tells you that her ex-partner had seen her in the street and followed her to the venue. Words had been exchanged between them. You can still hear a man shouting outside.

Scenario 3.

While facilitating a workshop you note that John, one of the participants, has made a number of inappropriate sexual remarks. You quietly but firmly challenge this behaviour during the session and John apologises. At the next break, another participant approaches you and asks to speak to you privately. She tells you that she has been receiving unwanted sexual advances from John since the beginning of the workshop.

Scenario 4.

During a workshop one of the participants called Marjorie, wants to tell you about something very serious that is bothering her and she has been 'bottling up'. She wants you to promise that you will not tell anybody about your conversation before going any further.

MANAGING RISK

We can manage risk before, during and after workshops by planning ahead, responding appropriately, voicing concerns and referring on as necessary.

BEFORE A WORKSHOP

The Regional Coordinator should inform the Lead Facilitator before the workshop of any particular safeguarding issues. If this is a partnership workshop, the Lead facilitator should also speak with a contact within the partner organisation to identify any particular needs of the group. During preparation and planning, the facilitator team should then discuss potential issues and how to handle them well.

DURING A WORKSHOP

Disclosure of information.

Trust is crucial to the success of AVP workshops, so it is important to be transparent from the outset about where confidentiality begins and ends. Raising the issue of confidentiality at the beginning of the weekend need not intimidate participants, and should help them manage their own boundaries by inviting them to make decisions about how much they share.

The nature of our workshops means that participants may disclose information that indicates a risk of abuse to themselves or others (see also the Appendix for how to recognise signs of abuse). Where this happens, facilitators have a duty to refer this information on, which means that there are limits to the confidentiality we offer to workshop participants. See the following pages for a diagram showing the flow of information where a concern is raised.

Your Regional Coordinator will supply you with a list of referral agencies, which you may choose to recommend to participants if they would like access support or services beyond the reach of an AVP workshop.

Safeguarding is also important for our work in prisons. A section on safeguarding in prisons will appear here soon.

The contact details of all participants and facilitators should remain anonymous. Where email lists are passed around, the option not to join should always be freely given.

When you are concerned for the personal safety of participants or facilitators during a workshop

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You will be working to create and maintain a shared space in which all participants and facilitators feel safe. Should a situation arise during the weekend in which you are concerned for the safety of anyone on the workshop, you should act immediately and with due consideration for all those involved. Communicate your concerns privately to your lead facilitator, who will work with you and the rest of your team to decide on the best course of action. Always take your own and the participants' safety seriously, and do not put yourself at risk or attempt to resolve issues without the support of your facilitator team.

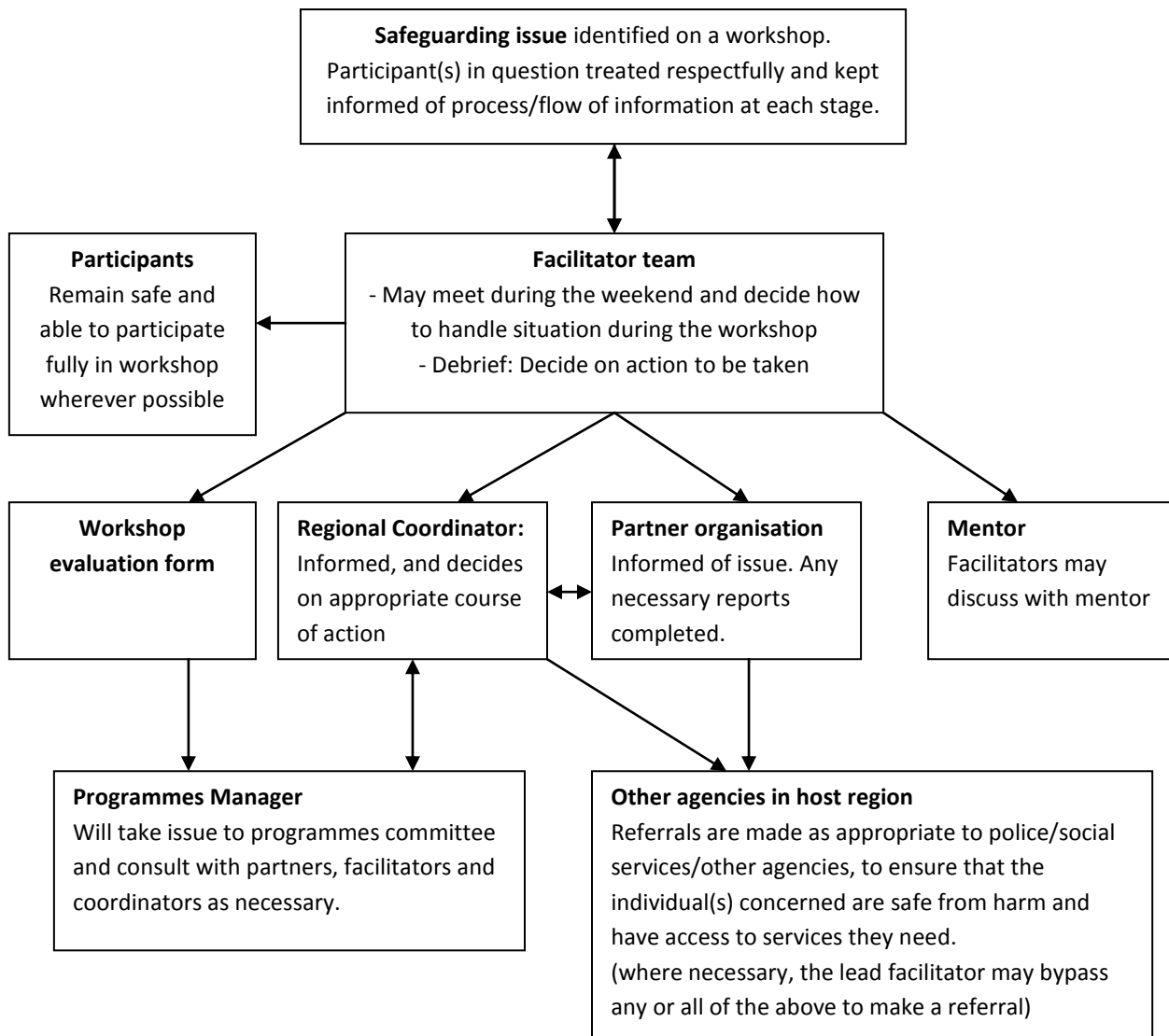
All this sounds a bit intimidating, and it's true that in becoming an AVP facilitator you are taking on the responsibility of safeguarding workshop participants. But your role is also to create a friendly, informal atmosphere, so it's important to remain confident and sensitive to safeguarding issues in a way that contains them and is conducive to the workshop itself.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP

AVP workshops are often inspiring and invigorating experiences for participants, but you should actively make clear to participants that AVP is not a 'fix' over a weekend – it can only be the start of a journey. AVP is not 'therapy, but you should be aware that the workshop may have brought emotions to the surface, and will have brought the issues discussed over the weekend to the foreground. Encourage participants to go gently when they return home, and not to expect to 'solve' it all straight away.

During your team debriefing you should discuss any safeguarding concerns, and make decisions on any further action required. Safeguarding issues should always be reported in the workshop evaluation form, to the Regional Coordinator, and partner organisation (where applicable). You may also decide to discuss issues with your personal Mentor.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SAFEGUARDING ISSUE ARISES ON A WORKSHOP?



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SAFEGUARDING

<http://www.safeguardingmatters.co.uk/> is a good source of up-to-date information on safeguarding best practice.

The 'Freedom Programme' offers an online course looking in detail at domestic violence and abuse. It costs £10 and can be accessed at <http://www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/>

Consult the Regional Coordinator of your hosting region for a list of referral agencies in that area.

The AVP policy on Safeguarding is currently being updated, and will be available from February 2013.

We are always interested to hear of new courses and training events happening across the UK. If you would like to recommend one, do let us know!

BECOMING A LEAD FACILITATOR

So, you've been facilitating for a while... you enjoy the challenge and get a lot from each workshop, but you'd like to take it a step further... ever thought about becoming a Lead Facilitator?

A Lead Facilitator is an experienced AVP facilitator who has undertaken to be responsible for the overall functioning of a workshop. This means that as well as ensuring practical arrangements are taken care of, they are also gauging the temperature of the facilitator team and the participants throughout the weekend. Working with the facilitator team, they will see that existing protocol is followed and that schedules run smoothly; that any issues are dealt with and followed up as necessary; and that adequate time is made for debriefing during and after the workshop. It is a significant task, and AVP recognises the valuable contribution that Lead Facilitators make to the success of the workshops. To ensure that Lead Facilitators are well informed and equipped with the skills necessary to practice well, there is a process that all facilitators must complete before they can become a 'Lead'.

TRAINING PROCESS

Before undertaking training, discuss your decision with your Mentor. They will help you think about whether this is a good decision for you, and what's involved in becoming a Lead.

Any Facilitator wishing to become a Lead should first complete:

- Three workshops as an 'Apprentice Lead'. These can be arranged with your Regional Coordinator, and involve you 'leading' a workshop while being mentored by an experienced lead. This is an opportunity to learn and practice what's involved in leading a workshop in a supportive atmosphere, with plenty of opportunity for feedback and guidance.
- One 'Lead Facilitator Training Day'. This training day combines experiential and practical tuition to provide practical training on what's involved in becoming a Lead with AVP.
- The Lead Facilitator Training Checklist (see Appendix) should be filled out as you complete each stage (in any order). When you have finished, your mentor will sign your certificate (see Appendix). There will be a presentation ceremony for new Leads and Facilitators at the Annual National Gathering, when we will recognise and welcome all those who have trained in the last year.

BEING A LEAD FACILITATOR

AVP workshops are very often run by facilitators who may never have met before, or have only worked together infrequently. Team building is essential before the workshop starts and it takes time. Although it is possible to determine who the Lead Facilitator will be at the team building meeting, experience has shown that there are considerable advantages if the Regional Coordinator has pre-determined who that shall be. AVP has therefore developed the role of Lead Facilitator. The check list which follows shows the tasks involved and is designed for personal use, and with your mentor. It is for use before and after each workshop you lead. It is not a list of rights and wrongs but a guide to help strengthen your practice.

LEAD FACILITATOR'S SELF CHECKLIST

As a lead facilitator, you are responsible for the overall functioning of the facilitator team and the smooth running of the workshop.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP

- Confirm with the regional co-ordinator that the workshop organisation and team are in place.
- Contact the team before the workshop with draft agenda, information about who's on the team, and how to contact each other. You may also wish to remind the other team members to bring manuals and to read certain sections in advance.
- Remind other facilitators to familiarise themselves with Transforming Power and to have prepared their input in advance.
- Check that co-facilitators have a designated mentor.
- Check with organiser that there is someone to meet and greet participants
- Arrange the time and venue for the facilitators to meet before the workshop for team building and planning
- If the workshop is a partnership project with another organisation, you should make sure you have a copy of that organisation's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including any Records of Concern forms.

PRIOR TO FIRST SESSION – TEAM MEETING

- Team Building and contract
- Agenda planning
- Check that the agenda includes the four AVP themes
- Have regard to the experience of the team members in regard to exercises they volunteer to do
- Check timings for sessions, meals etc.

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- Check venue for Health and Safety issues
- Determine the 'housekeeping' issues the group needs to know
- Prepare agenda, unanswered questions etc.
- Decide how to deal with upset or difficult participants

ONCE THE WORKSHOP IS UNDERWAY

- Ensure debriefing between sessions
- Take responsibility for the progress of the agenda, including time management and the safe completion of exercises - this may mean taking over if necessary.
- Take ultimate responsibility for the workshop. As the lead facilitator you need to be prepared to deal with emergencies and difficult situations.
- Take a fire register and inform participants of the fire procedures.
- Debrief between sessions and monitor the welfare of the team.
- Give feedback to the team. Identify strengths and weaknesses, suggestions of what to do next, refer to mentor as appropriate.
- Ensure the safety and well-being of the group.
- Encourage other team members to take on exercises not previously facilitated in order to extend their competence.
- Ensure that participants who show interest in becoming facilitators are provided with relevant information and support.

AT THE END

- Check that the four themes of AVP were adequately covered
- Ensure register, participant evaluations, workshop evaluation and agenda (as delivered) is written up, agreed by the team, and sent to the regional co-ordinator and other team members.
- Report any accidents or incidents to the regional co-ordinator.
- Go through the participants' written evaluations.
- Be prepared to talk to team members' mentors, if approached.

FACILITATING IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS

In this section, you will find important information and guidance for facilitators running workshops in prisons and detention centres.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

All establishments are unique and individual, not just in terms of their prisoner population and location, but in terms of their culture and history. Security guidelines will therefore change from prison to prison, governor to governor and wing to wing. There are some factors, however, that are common to all prisons and this section aims to give guidance on some of the practicalities.

It is important to remember that prisons are, first and foremost, secure establishments and that no one must act in any way that could prejudice the safety of those who work and live in prisons, or the security of the establishment. Being aware of security issues and of the procedures involved will enable you to work co-operatively alongside Prison Service colleagues. The rules may also be applied with varying consistency, in as much that what is allowed on Friday may not be allowed on Saturday. This can be a source of some frustration for facilitators as well as inmates, but it's what makes the prison 'human' rather than a 'machine', so bear this in mind and keep your cool. Use these incidents as an opportunity to gain just a little insight into the prisoners' experience.

PREPARING TO VISIT A PRISON

Before your first visit to any prison, you will require security clearance. This may take between 2 to 6 weeks or sometimes even longer.

Prisons in England and Wales now have two levels of security clearance: **local clearance**, which usually only allows for a single visit, and **enhanced clearance** which requires central clearance and should be valid in any prison in England and Wales. Enhanced clearance can be a complex process. The form is online and around 83 pages in length, but once cleared it is valid for all prisons. It usually takes two to four weeks to process, but can on occasion take much longer, for example if questions aren't answered to the prison's satisfaction. Your Regional Coordinator will advise you on the security clearance procedures.

Prisons in Scotland have different rules. Clearance is provided by each prison and a PVG protection of vulnerable groups certificate is required with clearance requests. However, access to the two private prisons is simpler, with two forms of photographic ID being required on the day of entry with no need for advanced clearance. Again, your Regional Coordinator will advise you on the security clearance procedures.

Each prison has its own rules as well as those common to the whole prison system. Again your Regional Coordinator will be able to give you more information specific to the establishment you will be working in.

VISITING THE PRISON

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The following items cannot be taken into a prison. It is extremely important you check carefully that you are not carrying any of these items into a prison, then double-check.

Mobile phones, lap top computers, memory sticks, cameras, recording equipment, radios, walkmans/iPods, videos/DVDs, any tools, penknives, chewing gum, blue tac, glue, sellotape, anything sharp at all, umbrellas, syringes, alcohol and illegal drugs, unauthorized medication*, food and drink. Some high security prisons do not allow wire-bound notebooks or anything else that could be made into a weapon.

Always inform prison staff at the gate of any drugs (including prescription medication) you have with you.

Taking banned items into the prison can put the security of volunteers, inmates and the prison itself at risk, and can seriously jeopardise AVP's work in the long term.

Remember these security guidelines may differ on every occasion that you visit; do not become complacent. Treat every visit as if it were your first.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

- Arrive early – always allow enough time before the workshop to go through security checks and to be escorted to the workshop space.
- Always take some photographic identification with you to show to the staff at the gate – a photographic driving license or a passport is the most usual document. If you are issued with a pass for entry to the prison in which you work, take good care of it.
- If you are travelling by car, check on car parking arrangements so that you can be cleared in advance to park in the prison car park if there is one available.
- You and your property will be searched before being allowed into the prison. “Rub-down” body searches are commonplace and you may also be required to pass through an x-ray machine, or be checked by drug detecting dogs or equipment.
- Take only the minimum of personal possessions into prison with you and have them locked up whilst you are working. Do not take in personal possessions such as address books, envelopes, or anything else with your name and address on.
- Avoid taking in more cash than you might need e.g. for your lunch, as in some prisons you have to pay in the canteen or you may need to go out for lunch. Your Regional Coordinator will advise you on the arrangements for lunch.
- Never take in valuables such as cheque books and credit cards.
- Wear appropriate (modest) clothing. Appearance is important within a prison.
- The Gate (or ‘Reception’ in a private prison) will be your first point of contact in the prison. Their primary function is security and this will be reflected by the manner in which they perform duties.

SECURITY SEARCHES

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For those of you who are going into prison for the first time, security procedures can be an intimidating experience. As an AVP facilitator, you should find that you enter as an honorary staff member and be subject to a much less intense search than a friend or family member of a prisoner. Officers can be expected to be polite, quick and discreet. If you have arrived by car, the best policy is to leave everything you don't need in the car. If that's not possible, then the entrance gate should have a small locker for you to use for small items like a phone/keys etc. In some prisons, there will be no search at all – you might just be asked if you have any prohibited items (e.g. mobile phone, chewing gum, penknife). At the other extreme (entering a highest security prison), you may have to remove your shoes and jacket, watch and pocket contents. These will be placed in a tray and go through an x-ray machine, together with anything you wish to take into the prison. While that happens, you will walk through a metal detector arch (as in an airport), be scanned by a hand-held metal detector and be rubbed down by a prison officer of the same sex as you. You could be asked to open your mouth, lift up both your feet and even have your ears looked into. Finally, you could be asked to stand while a drugs dog walks past you. Every prison has its own rules and procedures and even in the same prison they can change from day to day.

Please Note:

- Be mindful that prison staff work in a restrictive and stressful environment.
- Remember that releasing staff to escort people around the prison can sometimes cause operational difficulties.
- If in doubt about any situation in relation to security ask advice from a Prison Officer or voluntary sector link person.
- Respect the privacy of prisoners – don't ask prisoners why they are in prison. Be careful who you talk to on the outside about the work you're doing. Never divulge the name of the prisoners you work with.

PERSONAL SAFETY

There are many civilian staff and volunteers working inside prisons. For the majority of the time you will be in a very safe and controlled environment and incidents are unusual. However, all of those working in prisons must be aware of some of the basic and sensible precautions for their personal safety. Depending on the type of prison, the prison may well give training in breakaway techniques and 'jailcraft'.

SOME GENERAL ADVICE TO ALL THOSE FACILITATING IN PRISONS

- Your Regional Coordinator may arrange for you to have an induction prior to the workshop, but this is not always possible.
- Always advise the wing officer of your presence on the wing.
- Never enter a prisoner's cell unless accompanied by a member of prison staff.
- Ensure that you know how to report worrying incidents or intimidation.
- Your workspace may be fitted with a panic button in case of an emergency. During your induction, ensure that you have been given full instructions of where the alarm button is situated and how to use it.

PERSONAL CONDUCT IN PRISONS

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While in prison these are some things to avoid doing:

- Do not leave personal possessions unattended. Temptation places both you and the prisoner at risk.
- Do not agree to do anything for a prisoner outside the prison such as make a telephone call, post a letter, make a purchase, or visit another person on their behalf.
- Do not give prisoners money at any time. Prisoners can earn money by working.
- Do not take anything in or out of the prison without approval, including sweets and treats, as prisoners can be bullied for these or they can be used as currency.
- Do not accept gifts from prisoners. Keep to the rule 'nothing in, nothing out', verbal or otherwise.
- Do not make promises that you may be unable to keep. Always get the approval of staff when scheduling or making plans involving a prisoner.
- Do not become over friendly with individual prisoners. Sometimes a prisoner can become over-attached. If this happens, you should discuss this with your facilitation team.
- Do not ask prisoners or the staff about prisoners' offences. However, prisoners may choose to divulge information.
- Do not discuss your personal circumstances or those of staff with prisoners, or give them home addresses or phone numbers.
- Do not be intimidated, especially with a group of prisoners – be clear about why you're there and what your role is.
- Do not criticise staff, officers or prisoners in front of a prisoner. There are procedures for making complaints.
- Do not believe everything a prisoner tells you. You will hear many hard luck stories some of which are true and others that are not.

While in prison do:

- Do make every effort to build a good relationship with the prison officers and staff. Be sensitive to their responsibilities and the problems they face daily.
- Do sit closest to the door and ask where the panic button is, particularly if you are on your own. Pressing the panic button will bring a group of prison officers into the room very quickly. Be careful not to press the panic button unintentionally.
- Do be careful about physical contact. A warm handshake is usually acceptable, appropriate and shows respect. Be very careful about touching.
- Do build your relationship on trust. When a prisoner confides in you, do not discuss the problem with others. The exceptions are: potential suicide, breach of security and threats to good order and discipline.
- Do be a good listener. Sometimes a prisoner simply wishes to have a listening ear.

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- Do remember that you come to work alongside other disciplines within the prison. You are part of a larger team.
- Do tell a member of staff if a prisoner is distressed at the end of your workshop. Check what support participants can access and be ready with this info at the end of the workshop.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

All information shared in prison workshops is kept strictly confidential unless a facilitator believes:

- There is a real possibility of escape from a prison
- There is a serious risk of harm to self or others
- It could be detrimental to the security of the establishment and/or any prisoner, staff or volunteer working within the prison.

At the beginning of any workshop it is important to explain our confidentiality policy to participants. If a prisoner discloses information to you that requires you to breach confidentiality, you should act immediately. Any disclosure that occurs during a prison workshop must be reported to the lead facilitator in the first instance and then to the appropriate member of prison staff, and the Regional Coordinator.

DEALING WITH SERIOUS INCIDENTS IN PRISONS

If an incident occurs which can be handled within the workshop group (such as a biased remark) discuss the incident with your team. There are some incidents of inappropriate behaviour by a prisoner that must be reported to prison staff, such as threatening language or behaviour, or sexual harassment. Reporting it is protection for you and for the AVP programme, and for the other prisoners in the workshop whose safety could be jeopardised by becoming involved.

If there is a serious incident:

1. Tell someone immediately; report the incident to the lead or co-facilitator.
2. If the incident cannot be dealt with within the workshop then inform the Regional Coordinator and the Prison Officer on duty (or AVP link member of the prison staff). If this is uncomfortable for you, ask to speak to a Principal Officer or staff advisor, who will tell you what steps to take and may ask you to complete a security information report (SIR).
3. Any severe incidents, even those resolved well, should also be reported to the Regional Coordinator.

MENTORING

Every AVP facilitator is expected to have a mentor for support and guidance. A mentor is someone who has experience of facilitating several workshops and completed a mentor training day. Your mentor is there to support and encourage you to manage your own learning within AVP. We recommend that you meet, speak or email your mentor before and after every workshop. Since this is not always possible, we ask that you meet at least once every four workshops, or once a year if you are not facilitating regularly. A mentor can be contacted to discuss particular incidents, to ask any questions and as a general point of support within AVP. The Facilitator Logbook provides further guidance on how to make best use of the mentor relationship (available in the 'Resources' section on the AVP website).

Before your facilitator training, you should have been asked to consider whom you would like to be your mentor and had an initial meeting or conversation with this person. You can approach any facilitator (apart from an apprentice) to ask them if they'd be willing to be your mentor. You may have someone in mind, or else prefer to be assigned someone you haven't met. Your Regional Coordinator can help with this.

HOW TO MAKE THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP WORK

Your first workshops should be rewarding but can also be stressful. However, your Regional Coordinator and the experienced facilitators in your workshop team will support you during and after the workshop. When facilitating a workshop in a new environment such as a prison, it is advisable for facilitators to contact their mentor or the lead facilitator both prior to and after the workshop to discuss how they are feeling about the workshop. Before the workshop you may like to consider if there are particular exercises you would like to facilitate so that you can ask the team if this will be possible. If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the workshop, make sure you talk it through with your team. You might want to know about the venue, the participants or past successes. Don't be afraid to ask questions as this will ease your stress and enable you to make the most productive use of your time as a facilitator. After the workshop you can use the facilitator logbook as a learning journal to reflect on how the workshop went for you and what you have learned. This is a useful way to prepare before discussing the workshop with your mentor.

One of the roles of the mentor and of the experienced facilitators on the team is to help you to evaluate your own performance, and to decide which areas you'd like to develop and how you might achieve that development. Make sure that you will be able to ask questions and get feedback during and after the workshop. Agree times to do this during the teambuilding session before the workshop.

STRUCTURING YOUR MENTORING CONVERSATION

It might help to structure your learning under various topics and, for each topic, consider:

- What worked for me? What didn't work?
- What will I do differently next time?
- Is there anything I need to learn?

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- When can I take a step towards this?

Use your Facilitator Logbook as a learning journal. Here you will find a detailed “Facilitator’s self-assessment questionnaire” that you may find helpful in reflecting on the various aspects of the workshop. Make a note of your thoughts and the lessons you’ve learned. You may find it useful to then go through the lessons you’ve learned with your mentor after each workshop to discuss your ongoing progress. Re-read your journal before each workshop.

Another approach to reflecting on what you have learned may be to consider the following topics:

The environment

- How did the environment affect how you felt and how you acted?

Facilitation

- What did you learn from observing other facilitators?
- What did you learn from the exercises that you led?
- What new exercises might you try next time, and how will you prepare?

Participation

- How would you describe the group at different times during the workshop?
- What helped or hindered the sense of community?
- How did you feel about individual participants?
- How did you deal with those feelings?

Teamwork

- How did you contribute to the team?
- How did the team support you?

CONTACTS

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

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Address: 260 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4JP

AVP Northwest

Coordinator: Alan Saleh
Email: northwest@avpbritain.org.uk
Telephone: 0161 8323660
Address: 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS

AVP Northeast/East Midlands

Coordinator: Gill Bocock
Email: northeast-eastmidlands@avpbritain.org.uk ~
Telephone: 01904 769563
Address: PO BOX 743, York, YO32 4WW

AVP Midlands/Wales

Coordinator: John Conchie
Email: midlands-wales@avpbritain.org.uk
Telephone: 01785850787
Address: Croft House, Newport road, Eccleshall, Staffs, ST21 6HH

AVP Southwest

Coordinator: Virginia Membrey
Email: southwest@avpbritain.org.uk
Telephone: 07964766275/07964767522
Address: AVP, PO Box 1235, Cheddar, BS27 9AD

AVP Southeast

Coordinator: Jessica Bombasaro-Brady
Email: london-southeast@avpbritain.org.uk
Telephone: 020 7324 4757
Address: AVP London/SE, The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT

Alternatives to Violence Project

AVP Britain London Office

Telephone: 020 7324 4755

Address: AVP Britain, The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT

General enquiries: Sarah Jupe

Email: info@avpbritain.org.uk

Director: David Gee

Email: director@avpbritain.org.uk

Programmes Manager: Helen Jukes

Email: projects@avpbritain.org.uk

An up-to-date list of names and contact details of staff, Trustees and committee members is available on the website. When you have logged in, go to the 'People' section and use the 'role' tab on the left hand side to search.

POLICIES

A copy of all AVP policies are included in a separate document. Please ensure that you read these carefully; as an AVP volunteer you are expected to model and uphold the best practice they lay out. They are periodically updated, and cover:

- Expenses policy
- Complaints and feedback policy
- Data and IT Policy
- Equality and Diversity policy
- Health and Safety Policy Children and vulnerable adult protection policy
- Volunteer policy

NB: The Safeguarding policy is currently being updated. Please check back in February 2013 for this document.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX CONTENTS

1. Volunteer Agreement
2. Expenses Claim Form
3. Risk Assessment & Guidelines
4. Self-Assessment questionnaire
5. Self-Assessment for Lead Facilitators
6. Recognising Signs of Abuse (taken from NHS guidelines)
7. Recommended Reading

AVP VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

This volunteer agreement describes the arrangement between AVP Britain and [name]

We really appreciate your volunteering with us and hope you find the experience enjoyable and rewarding. If for any reason you are not satisfied in your volunteering role, please let us know.

Please note that this agreement is binding in honour only. It has no legal status and is not a contract of employment; either party can cancel it.

PART 1: AVP BRITAIN VALUES

We are committed to the values of the organisation in our relationship with you and we also ask you reflect on and keep these values yourself.

We are actively committed to nonviolence, by which we mean respect and care for ourselves, each other and the world. As individuals and as an organisation we strive in all we do to:

1. Honour the right to choose
2. Take responsibility for our actions
3. Value the contribution everyone can make
4. Be bold, honest, trusting and creative
5. Recognise the potential of conflict, when handled well, to deepen understanding, create opportunities for cooperation and challenge injustice.
6. Accept that we make mistakes

PART 2: AVP BRITAIN'S COMMITMENT TO YOU

We will support you to carry out your volunteering role and to develop continuously during your work with us. [continued over...]

We also commit:

1. To provide induction on the work of AVP Britain and on your volunteering role, and to train and support you appropriately.
2. To provide a named person (your mentor if you are an AVP facilitator or your manager if you are volunteering in other capacities) with whom you can discuss your volunteering.
3. To repay reasonable expenses incurred whilst volunteering for AVP in accordance with the AVP Expenses Policy.
4. To minimise risks to your health and safety in accordance with the AVP Health and Safety Policy and to provide training if necessary, and to provide insurance cover for you whilst you carry out voluntary work authorised by us.
5. To ensure that we meet the requirements of our Equal Opportunities Policy in our relationship with you, and to try to resolve fairly any problems, grievances or difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us. In the event of an unresolved problem, you have an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with the AVPB Complaints procedures set out in the Volunteer Handbook.

Alternatives to Violence Project

The Volunteer Handbook provides full details of the organisation and its policies.

PART 2: YOUR COMMITMENT TO AVP BRITAIN

You agree to:

1. help AVP Britain fulfill its aims and perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
2. continuously strive to learn and develop in your role, appropriately supported by the organisation.
3. follow the organisation's procedures and standards, including those relating to health and safety and equal opportunities; to maintain the confidential information of the organisation and of its clients; and to meet the standards set out in the Volunteer Handbook and agreed to elsewhere, including time commitments.
4. be willing to provide referees if requested, and to accept that any work with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the AVP Children and Vulnerable Adults policy.
5. if you are an AVP facilitator:
 - to meet your commitment to facilitate an agreed minimum number of workshops in your first year;
 - to become a mentor once your apprenticeship has been completed to support other facilitators to develop;
 - to honour your agreement to facilitate workshops that you are booked onto, and to give at least two weeks' notice if you are unable to facilitate (unless there are exceptional circumstances) so that other arrangements can be made;
 - to try to attend continuing, subsidised training events that will support you to develop in your role for AVP.

PART 3: DATA PROTECTION

By signing this form you give your consent for your contact details and certain other limited personal information to be included in the AVP Britain online database, which is not accessible to the public. These details will be available to AVP coordinators for the legitimate purposes of AVP Britain. This information will not be supplied to any other organisations and will be handled by AVP Britain in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

[This paragraph is optional – please cross it out if you do not want other AVP volunteers to view your details] Your details will also be available for other volunteers in AVP to view; this helps people within AVP to keep in touch more easily. By signing this form you agree not to pass on the details of AVP volunteers to anyone outside AVP.

AND FINALLY...

AVP is a voluntary organisation mostly managed and run by volunteers; please consider applying to join one of AVP's regional or national committees; we need over 50 people to volunteer in this way at any one time! Please read this agreement carefully. Ask the programmes manager or your regional coordinator if you have any problems or questions. If you understand the agreement and are happy to agree to it, please sign below.

[Signed etc.]

EXPENSES CLAIM FORM (ALSO ON THE WEBSITE)



Name:

Address:

Tel:

Expenses: Please attach receipts where possible.

Date	
Activities Covered	
Personal	
Travel	
Meals/refreshments	
Accommodation (B&B)	
Training/Conferences	
Workshop	
Room Hire	
Catering	
Materials	
Admin	
Postage	
Printing/stationary	
Advertising/publicity	
Telephone	
Other (please specify)	
TOTAL:	£

I confirm that the above expenses have been made on behalf of AVP Britain.

Signed:

Date:

Please return your completed form (attaching receipts) as follows:

- a) For expenses chargeable to an AVP region (including AVP workshop expenses), send to your regional coordinator.
- b) For expenses chargeable to AVP Britain (including national committee expenses), send to Ed Hurren, Finance Administrator, AVP Britain, Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT.

(For Office use only) Date paid:

Cheque number:

RISK ASSESSMENT AND GUIDELINES

The purpose of risk assessment is to identify all possible causes of harm and the measures needed to avoid them. Risk assessments should enable resources to be directed where they are most needed. They should be done systematically but using common sense.

A risk assessment form should be filled in for each activity taking place by those responsible. There will be common features for most AVP workshops but each organiser and workshop team should consider whether there are special features which need extra attention. It is not intended that this becomes an extra burden on a team but is seen as a helpful way of ensuring that all our activities are well considered in terms of safety and carry the lowest risks possible.

Hazards: A hazard is something that has the potential to cause harm – it might be physical or an aspect of the activity; each hazard identified should be recorded in a different row.

Particular risk: This identifies a person involved in the activity who is at high risk, e.g. someone known to have particular needs or disabilities

Hazard evaluation: The assessor makes a judgement including both the potential severity of the risk and the likelihood of it occurring and classifies it as low (L), medium (M) or high (H).

Action required / taken: This identifies the actions that are necessary to minimise the risk; it should state specific things that are required and actions already taken; where action has not been taken because it is judged to be impossible this should be stated clearly.

Remaining risk: This identifies the risk remaining after all precautions have been carried out; again a judgement is required as to whether the remaining risk is low, medium or high.

Reasonably feasible: If the remaining risk column contains a number of highs or mediums a judgement is required whether all has been done that can be done and whether it is advisable to proceed or not.

Review and report: Every team has the responsibility at the completion of the activity to review whether there have been unidentified hazards or incidents which should be the subject of an incident report. This is necessary to minimise the risk of similar occurrences in the future and to provide on-the-spot evidence in case of a complaint or an insurance claim.

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM FOR AVP WORKSHOPS

Activity being assessed:		Location of Activity:		Date of Activity:	
Name of Assessor:		Judgment as to whether activity is reasonably feasible: Yes / No		Review date:	
Hazards	Particular Risk	Evaluation (H, M, L)	Action Required	Remaining Risk (H, M, L)	

AVP BRITAIN SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR LEAD FACILITATORS:

Lead facilitators should have considerable experience of AVP and be able to take responsibility for workshops. Each team has different ideas about what the exact role of the lead facilitator should be. Each team can decide on this during team-building, but we hope that the following questions will help those interested in becoming lead facilitators assess their readiness for this task.

1. Do you have a clear understanding of the AVP process?
2. Are you modelling the AVP process in your own life and as a member of AVP facilitation teams?
3. To what extent in your own life and as a member of AVP facilitation teams are you practising the principles of Transforming Power?
4. Are you able to step back from your own issues in dealing with other people?
5. What experience have you had in handling difficult situations in a workshop? Will this enable you to help others?
6. Do you feel confident about managing conflict in the team?
7. Do you feel confident about co-ordinating a workshop (team-building, agenda, debriefing, etc.) and accepting ultimate responsibility for it?
8. How familiar are you with the manuals (level 1 and 2)?
9. Have you reached a stage where you are able to judge how appropriate the introduction of variations or new material would be for a particular group?
10. Are you able to give and receive feedback constructively?
11. Can you offer supportive encouragement without imposing your views or appearing critical?
12. Are you familiar with the AVP log-book?

AVP recognises that each of us is on a journey and we do not expect perfection - in ourselves or in others! It is hoped that the above questions will help those undertaking the role of lead facilitator or participating in a lead facilitator training course to prepare themselves for the experience and enhance their learning.

RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF ABUSE *TAKEN FROM NHS GUIDELINES*

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'ABUSE'?

The physical, psychological, emotional, financial or sexual maltreatment, or neglect of a vulnerable adult by another person. The abuse may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. It may take one form or a multiple of forms. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse. Abuse can occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person/persons, in breach of that trust, who have influence over the life of a dependant, whether they be formal or informal carers, staff or family members or others.

Forms of abuse can be categorised as follows:

- Physical abuse (including inappropriate restraint or use of medication)
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Institutional abuse
- Discriminatory abuse.

WHAT MIGHT YOU NOTICE?

Here are just a few examples of possible signs of abuse, none being conclusive on their own.

- Injuries, such as a slap, being restrained in a chair, or given too much medication
- Being involved in a sexual act that was unwanted or not agreed to, like watching pornography
- Weight loss
- Dehydration
- Lack of personal care
- Bills not being paid
- An overly critical or disrespectful carer who may, for example, bully or undermine
- Sudden loss of assets, friends or family or threats to gain access to someone's money, or to get them to change their will
- Not getting to medical appointments
- Deference or submission to a suspected abuser
- Change in behaviour or mood
- Isolation from usual network of friends, family or community
- Where a carer looks after someone in a way that is convenient to them rather than what the person needs, thereby affecting their health

RECOMMENDED READING

Further reading, including research papers and information about the history of AVP, can also be found in the Resources Section on the website.

Rosenberg, M. (2003) *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*. Encinitas, California: Puddledancer Press.

James Gilligan (1997) *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic* Vintage Books

Cantacuzino, M. and Moody, B. (2004) *The F word: images of forgiveness*. London: The Forgiveness Project

Newell, T. (2000) *Forgiving Justice: A Quaker vision for criminal justice*. (Swarthmore Lecture 2000). London: Quaker Home Service.

Tutu, D. (1999) *No Future without Forgiveness*. London: Rider.

Wallis, P. and Tudor, B. (2007) *The Pocket Guide to Restorative Justice*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

MEDIATION

Beer, J. E. (1997) *The Mediator's Handbook (revised and updated edition)*. Canada: New Society Publishers.

Cornelius, H. and Faire, S. (2006) *Everyone Can Win: Responding to Conflict Constructively*. Australia: Simon Schuster.

Fisher, R. & Ury, W. (1997) *Getting to Yes*. London: Hutchinson.

Fisher, S. et al (2000) *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action*. London: Zed Books & Birmingham: Responding to Conflict.

Liebmann, M. (1996) *Arts Approaches to Conflict*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

VIOLENCE

De Zulueta, F. (1993) *From Pain to Violence: The Traumatic Roots of Destructiveness*. London: Whurr Publishers.

Gilligan, J. (2000) *Violence: Reflections on our Deadliest Epidemic*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

PRISONS

Lozoff, B. (1987) *We're All Doing Time*. Harrisonburg, US: Hanuman Foundation

ANGER MANAGEMENT

Fisher, M. (2005) *Beating Anger: The eight-point plan for coping with rage*. London: Rider.

Tavris, C. (1989) *Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion*. Revised edition. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Thich Nhat Hanh (2001) *Anger: Buddhist wisdom for cooling the flames*. London: Rider.

USEFUL WEBSITES

Restorative Justice Council, UK www.restorativejustice.org.uk

European Forum for Restorative Justice www.euforumrj.org

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T: 020 7324 4755
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