

Organising Guide

About this Guide

If you are an AVP facilitator who is or who wants to be involved with the organisation of an AVP program and AVP workshops, this step-by-step guide is for you. It covers how to start, build and maintain strong, sustainable local AVP programs in a variety of settings.

If you have not taken an AVP workshop, then that is where to start. Take the series of AVP workshops and then train to become a facilitator

This Guide is useful for AVP facilitators who wish to:

- start and build the first AVP program in their country
- start and build a local AVP program in a country with already established AVP activity
- further build and maintain an already existing AVP program

AVP programs share many of the same challenges when they start up and as they remain active, and this guide offers some suggestions for meeting those challenges. Then again, AVP programs also face varying situations across the world, and AVP programs are encouraged to adapt the suggestions in this guide to their local cultural, economic and social contexts.

What's in the Guide

Introduction: This section gives an overview of AVP as an international organisation and an idea of how it works.

Getting Started: This section is for anybody starting an AVP program.

AVP in Different Settings: This section explains some of the differences in AVP programs depending on where AVP workshops are held, for example community, prisons, schools, etc.

Sustainability: This section discusses various other areas that will be important for keeping AVP programs vital over time.

Partnerships: This section describes different types of partnerships to grow your AVP program.

Finances and Fundraising: This section offers general discussion of some of the more important financial aspects an AVP program may consider and tips on raising money for AVP programs.

Organising Guide Resources: This section contains the sample documents that are mentioned in the text of this guide.

How to Get this Guide

Ask for a pdf copy by sending an email to: info@avp.international

As a registered user of the www.avp.international website, you will be able to read the Guide online in the Resources section.

Download the Guide from www.avp.international/organising-guide (registered users)

Since this guide is for the worldwide AVP community, the more input the community adds, the more useful it will be! Please tell us about your experience of starting and maintaining an AVP program or organisation. Has this guide been helpful? We'd like to know what worked and what didn't. Let's share our experiences to help our AVP friends on the way.

Please send contributions for future editions of this “living” Organising Guide to:
materials@avp.international

Introduction

Welcome to the international community of the Alternatives to Violence Project. AVP International is an umbrella organisation whose primary function is to support AVP workshops around the globe ... helping people to discover their own Power to Transform their lives.

Every single day, somewhere in the world, there is a group of people in an AVP workshop sitting in a circle sharing personal experiences and learning from each other, realising they too have a voice and a purpose, thanks to the tools and facilitators that make the Alternatives to Violence Project program an experience for real life. There are AVP facilitators holding workshops in over 45 countries on 6 continents.

This Guide sets out to capture the wisdom and experience of many people who have started and who run AVP programs in various settings. We hope it will help you do the same.

If you wish to start an AVP group in a country which already has one or more AVP groups, it is important first to consult with the existing AVP groups to explore working together. If you do not know whether there is AVP in your country, visit the AVP International website (www.avp.international) to find out what AVP groups are near you and how to get in touch with them. If you can't find anything, contact AVP International and ask!

The role of AVP International is to support the development of AVP programs worldwide through:

- Providing communication channels for AVP groups and facilitators worldwide
- Fostering dialogue to identify and share best practices in AVP
- Editing, translating and distributing manuals
- Offering organisational guidance and sharing resources
- Supporting regional networking, facilitator visitation and gatherings
- Coordinating multinational partnerships

About AVP

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) started in 1975 in Green Haven Prison in New York State, United States of America. It has since spread into other prisons, communities, schools, and a variety of settings around the world.

AVP workshops are experiential, which means that we learn by doing rather than by listening to lectures or other presentations. A workshop is a series of experiences, guided by a team of facilitators. The experiences may be brainstorming, discussions, role plays, or other learning activities / exercises. We learn techniques and concepts by reflecting on how our experiences of the workshop shed light on the experiences we bring to it from our lives.

AVP workshops can be held anywhere there are people. Workshops are held in cities, villages, or rural areas, working with the general community, prisons, schools, youth groups, gangs, traumatised communities, groups of refugees or people with special needs, among others. AVP groups often cooperate in a wide range of partnerships with governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), not-for-profit organisations commercial organisations, community organisations, and churches or faith organisations. Each setting and culture has its own unique requirements and characteristics.

AVP workshops are based on AVP principles, best practices and experience gathered over many years. It is vital to incorporate the AVP principles and best practices not only into the conducting of workshops but into the creation, organisation, and sustaining of an AVP program or group. The same principles and philosophy -- respect for all, expecting the best, deciding by consensus, and others -- also govern the running of an effective AVP program.

The AVP network is based on a grassroots or local model that is non-hierarchical and decentralised and that uses shared leadership. The local groups are responsible for their own programs and make their own decisions.

AVP Mission, Vision & Model

The AVP Mission

The Alternatives to Violence Project is a multi-cultural organisation of volunteers offering experiential workshops that empower individuals to liberate themselves and others from the burden of violence. Our fundamental belief is that there is a power for peace and good in everyone and that this power has the ability to transform violence. AVP builds on a spiritual basis of respect and caring for self and others, working both in prisons and with groups in communities around the world.

The AVP Vision

We are working toward the creation of a nonviolent society. Our goal is to reduce the level of violence by reducing the need that people feel to rely on violence as a solution. Our process uses the life experience of participants as a learning resource, drawing on that experience to deal constructively with the violence in themselves and in their lives. We do our training where violence is found: in our prisons and in our communities, acknowledging that not all violence is physical.

The AVP Model

"We learn by experience."

The AVP program teaches through experiential learning with a minimum of lecture. AVP workshops consist of a series of structured experiences or "learning activities." Intellectual knowledge is generally not very helpful in the midst of conflict, but practicing nonviolent solutions to conflicts that have been previously experienced is helpful. This is done through role plays, a key focus of AVP workshops: they help participants discover new ways to deal with conflict nonviolently by both participating in and observing role plays.

"The best way to ruin a program is to require people to attend it."

A fundamental requirement is voluntary participation in the program on both an individual and institutional level. When the program is required or imposed by others, it is probably doomed (guaranteed to fail). Our workshops are about personal growth, and people can only grow when they choose to do so themselves. Our workshop facilitators are almost always volunteers, and we expect our participants to be volunteers also.

Sometimes, in spite of our best efforts to prevent coercion (requiring or giving the appearance of coercion, (requiring participating, prison inmates register in our workshops because they are, or believe they are, under institutional pressure to do so as a condition for parole. We find that this "motive" does not prevail for long. In our opening talks and discussion of the Community Agreements, we stress

(emphasise) that this is a workshop for volunteers, and if anyone is there because they have been made to be there by anyone else, they can leave now without consequences. Because of the experiential approach, participants usually decide very early in the workshop that they have more to gain from an AVP workshop than a certificate for their parole file. From that point on, they become volunteers in earnest.

"The process works by itself."

Over a period of years, AVP has evolved a structure, a process and a set of learning activities for workshops that work. If the facilitators stick to the process, the process will work. AVP seeks to develop skilled facilitators, but the team support and the very well thought out process results in an experience that is effective and growth-producing for everyone, even if facilitators are still refining (improving) their skills.

"The way for the program to grow is to train new facilitators. The rest will take care of itself."

Much of AVP's growth and success is the result of empowering people and training them to be facilitators. We do not have "star" facilitators. We have a team model which discourages (promotes equality) in styles of leadership and insists that no one conduct an AVP workshop alone, not only because such leadership encourages "stardom" but also because it fails to model the team cooperation that we consider essential for teaching cooperative behavior patterns. One of the key functions of our facilitating team "leaders" is to help other members of the team become better facilitators by encouraging decision-making as a team.

"We believe that people learn to be facilitators by facilitating."

Our basic training program consists of three workshops: the Basic Workshop, which focuses on affirmation and self-esteem, community, cooperation, basic conflict management skills and Transforming Power; the Advanced Workshop, which goes into more depth about consensus decision-making and exploration of specific topics of interest to the participants (fear, anger, forgiveness, man-woman relationships, among others). The third is the Training for Facilitators Workshop, which teaches people how to facilitate the Basic Workshop. After this, they are prepared to serve as apprentice facilitators on workshop teams, and they can begin to learn facilitation experientially by being facilitators. Incarcerated people must take the first two workshops to be eligible for the Training for Facilitators. Outside candidates sometimes are allowed to postpone an Advanced Workshop if they find the three consecutive levels too heavy a demand on their time and may not be able to continue the training program. But anyone, incarcerated person or outsider, who wishes to become an AVP facilitator, is required to participate in an Advanced Workshop before facilitating workshops.

We also offer Special Topic Advanced Workshops, which focus more deeply on a violence-related topic, usually one introduced in the advanced workshop. The topic is chosen by the workshop facilitators and prepared ahead of time, and the focus goes deeper than is possible in the Advanced Workshop. It is worth noting that this AVP journey is not just arriving at a set of techniques and "answers" but is an ongoing learning opportunity which will carry on throughout our lives.

"We walk our talk."

AVP is not just a set of exercises. As facilitators we set out to be role models of what the group is learning, both in who we are and how we work together. Part of AVP facilitation is to take responsibility for the communication of our feelings and for our continued personal learning, both within the workshops and in our personal lives.

"In a successful Training for Facilitators Workshop, the facilitators will find their role being as "coaches" rather than "teachers" or "leaders."

The goal of this workshop is empowerment: the facilitators do not empower others by constantly exercising tight control. For the purpose of training facilitators, the workshop facilitators are asked to become coaches while the participants try their hand at playing the game. If the coaching is well done, the game will be well played.

"The program is blessed with good training manuals."

In the beginning, AVP flourished and grew miraculously, even though there was little structure and there were no adequate training manuals to use. The underlying philosophy of AVP was (and is) very different from the average organisational philosophy. Drawing on human relations training and their own ongoing experience, early AVP facilitators wrote their own training materials using the creativity of volunteers. Developed in this way, the manuals have become an organic part of the AVP experience. Every facilitator now has a clear, well-written, training manual that he or she can rely on and even may have contributed to. The manuals are in a constant state of evolution and updating with creative ideas. Every facilitator may contribute to this process as she or he strives to produce high-quality workshops; this is backed up by an online resource of manuals and exercises.

"In our organisation, power seeps up; it does not trickle down."

Our organisational model is one of building from the grassroots up. This was the approach taken by Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. We believe this approach is essential to nonviolence training.

Our decision-making process is one of consensus. We are wary of too much formalisation, and we resist anything that might encourage a hierarchy among us. AVP is not about hierarchy; it is about community, acknowledging and encouraging the potential of all of us to grow and develop and working together by agreement and without coercion. AVP is measured and tested by its adherence to these values. If it loses sight of them, it will have failed in its mission, no matter how brilliantly it succeeds by any other standards.

"The true source of nonviolence is spiritual power. We call this Transforming Power."

AVP facilitators recognise it takes more than mere techniques and skits to defuse violence; it is about finding the power to change our own attitudes and behaviors. This power is found in all spiritual beliefs, including Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Native American and Buddhist traditions. We have facilitators who follow all of these (and other) spiritual paths and some who do not ascribe to any particular belief. We avoid promoting any religious doctrine in our workshops, but this does not prevent individuals from sharing about their own sacred experience from their perspective. Facilitators seek to embody their own spiritual power as an important element of their lives. However, the workshop is not a place to promote or preach any particular dogma or belief as each person will have his or her own experience of the sacred.

"Local coordinators."

Our system of workshop coordinators for each institution or community is essential to making the program work. The coordinator is a volunteer who organises workshop teams and arranges workshop schedules with the institution or in the community for which they are responsible. Most coordinators are lead facilitators/team leaders who lead by example. They conduct many workshops themselves and invite others to do the same. The local coordinator stays in contact with the wider AVP community to ensure the program stays true to the values of AVP.

"The AVP program is a "win-win-win" model."

The participants, whether in prison or in the community, win because they get the training and supportive community they need to cope with violence, both their own and others. The AVP facilitators win because they have an opportunity to improve their leadership skills and get new insights about themselves, other people and a nonviolent life. Prison administrators and staff win by hosting a program that will improve the level of cooperative and nonviolent behavior in their institutions, making their jobs more rewarding. Communities win and community life is enhanced when their members learn new skills to cope with violence and to build community.

Core Values of AVP

The Underlying Core Values of Our AVP Organisation and Workshops

Core values are the fundamental principles that guide our actions and behaviours. The following core values, appearing in no particular order, are present throughout AVP, from our workshops to our organisations, to our daily lives. They influence our behaviour and our way of thinking. They set AVP apart.

AVP-Trained Teams

A community of AVP-trained facilitators working in teams. We practise and model the attitudes, skills, processes and knowledge of AVP. This is present in workshops and throughout the organisation.

Shared Power and Leadership

Enabling everyone to participate in leadership roles. Acknowledging that none of us has all of the answers, we share responsibility and draw on the strengths and wisdom of everyone in the group.

Alternatives

The belief that we always have options and choices in any given situation. We choose how we respond.

Inclusiveness

The conscious effort to acknowledge and consider, without prejudice, all natural and social differences, perceived or otherwise, in the AVP Community. We seek common ground by identifying and embracing differences.

Good Within Everyone

The belief that there is something of value in all of us. We seek to affirm and connect with that capacity for good. We accept each person on their life journey.

Journey of Personal Exploration

The understanding that each person's path is different. We each empower our own path, and begin by being open to change.

Experiential Learning

Doing, listening, interacting with others, and reflecting on present and past experiences leading to reframing perspectives. Re-experiencing the self with peers.

Community

Building, rebuilding and maintaining a sense of belonging, connectedness and safety with others. Respecting and caring for oneself while respecting and being present for others.

Personal Nonviolence

Taking personal responsibility for not harming oneself or others. When we recognise there are alternatives, violence is no longer an answer to conflict.

Consensus

We are all part of this decision-making process seeking to reach an agreement that everyone can accept, work with, and apply.

Safety

Creating an environment that is conducive to collaboration, personal growth and taking risks to change ourselves and our relationships.

Accessibility and Consistency

Staying true to AVP best practices and ensuring our processes, learnings and organisational operations are open, clear and easily understood. This is how we can recognise AVP anywhere in the world.

Mutual Respect

Building strength and confidence in oneself while honouring and connecting with others.

Transforming Power

We are guided by our optimism that when we are open to Transforming Power, every situation has the potential to have a hopeful, positive outcome.

*AVP International & AVP USA
Joint Education Best Practices Team
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Getting Started

Introduction

Building and sustaining an AVP program takes work, organisation, dedication, and teamwork.

The first step in building a new local AVP program is to ask for help from an already established AVP program or from experienced AVP facilitators. If you know of an already existing program in your area or country, it is important to make contact with them before starting your own. If you need help finding your nearest AVP program, write to: info@avp.international.

When you start a new program, don't do it alone; start by building a team. All AVP programs must include at least one experienced AVP facilitator: either invite experienced facilitators from another program to train your team or go yourself or with a few others for training with an existing program.

In the Palestine Territories, an AVP facilitator spent time in the Jerusalem area studying women's rights. While there, she made contact with local organisations and people to introduce them to the Alternatives to Violence Project. Together with another facilitator, she offered a few Basic workshops.

Eventually, further requests developed, and more help was needed. This facilitator put out a call on the AVP International website requesting AVP facilitators to join her in providing workshops. Two US facilitators answered the call, and helped develop AVP programs in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Israel.

You can develop a more structured AVP program once the core facilitator team is formed. See [Develop the Organisation](#).

Steps:

- Establish a group of committed facilitators who have completed the Training for Facilitators workshop and the apprenticeship process, so they can offer AVP Basic, Advanced and Training for Facilitators workshops.
- Establish an AVP program that can support the delivery of workshops.
- Tell your national AVP organisation (if there is one) or AVP International that a new program is getting started - support and guidance are available. We are here to help.
- Develop a network of groups, people and agencies, schools, faith groups, etc. who may be interested in supporting AVP workshops.
- Give your AVP program a name. For example, identify your program by simple geography -- AVP Tanzania, AVP California, AVP Sydney.
- If you like, give your AVP workshops a different name. Programs sometimes adopt eye-catching names for their workshops such as Transforming Conflict in Your Community, Peaceful Pathways, Peace Leadership etc. - be creative!

Networking with other AVP programs

New AVP programs should never feel alone in their work.

- Register on www.avp.international to consult the facilitator directories and join the AVP community -- learn about ways of running a workshop, coordinating a team, publicising an event, etc.

- Visit the AVP International website regularly for discussions, updates, invitations -- see what's new!
- Find and contact the AVP programs near you, if there are any.
- Talk with existing AVP programs and the AVP International organisation for guidance on building organisational capacity and skills.
- A good way to keep up with AVP is to attend gatherings. AVP International holds World Gatherings, and your country or region may have its own gatherings as well. This is a chance to meet other AVP people and learn about what has worked and not worked for their programs.
- Join one or more of the AVP International email discussion groups, such as AVP-World, AVP-Discussion and AVP-Research, and discuss your ideas and concerns with AVP facilitators from around the world. Visit the "For Facilitators" section of the AVP International website, which will become accessible once you register.

Develop the Team

A core group of committed facilitators is essential to starting an AVP program. Four or five facilitators will do.

The best way to increase the team's competence and confidence is to facilitate workshops. For information on how to get workshops going, see [AVP in Different Settings](#).

- consider inviting facilitators from other AVP programs or from the AVP International Traveling Facilitator Directory to help develop a core group of local facilitators
- hold social gatherings for local facilitators to get to know each other -- it is important to continually develop relationships between facilitators in a new group, which can support team development
- find ways of guiding and supporting less experienced facilitators

New facilitators often appreciate guidance for a while. A mentor can provide a sense of security and ongoing feedback so that the new facilitator can gain confidence in facilitation. More experienced facilitators need to be very careful not to hold onto power or take over. It is important to share manuals and group roles so that everyone is playing an active part.

It is also very important that newly trained facilitators begin their apprenticeship experience as soon as possible after they complete the workshop training, while they are still enthusiastic. New facilitators also gain confidence by being on a team of experienced facilitators and leading parts of the agenda where they feel comfortable, as well as building their skills. Apprenticing also helps new facilitators bond with each other and identify with their AVP program.

Develop the Organisation

First, it is important to have an internal program structure that is working and building a track record of AVP workshops in the community, prison or other settings.

Develop the goals of the AVP Program

Both new and established programs will benefit from having a specific vision of what you want to accomplish in your program. This vision could include:

- The populations with which you want to offer AVP workshops, which may include local and international organisations, prisons, educational centres, faith communities, law enforcement, etc.
- The number of facilitators you would like to have available to facilitate workshops.
- The number of workshops you will aim to conduct in a certain time period (e.g. the next six months, this year).
- A way to establish financial viability.

These program goals will change or expand as the program grows. You may wish to arrange a special meeting of the organisation or a retreat to talk about and decide on these goals, for example. Involve as many facilitators as possible in setting the program goals so that everyone feels like they are contributing to the AVP program.

Schedule regular meetings to:

- decide where you want to begin -- community, prison, school, etc.
- discuss recent activities
- check in on progress with assignments
- plan future workshops
- develop simple policies and procedures
- have fun together!

See [Organisational Meetings](#) for guidelines on conducting meetings with your AVP group.

Program Mentorship

Mentors from outside your group can also offer helpful guidance to new AVP programs. These are AVP facilitators who have experience setting up programs and who are available to answer your questions as they come along. They can also help develop a short, medium or long-term plan for your AVP program.

You can find a mentor by asking AVP International or your national AVP organisation, if there is one, for recommendations.

Share the tasks and responsibilities

Sharing tasks and responsibilities helps build community within the AVP program. Not everyone associated with an AVP program needs to be a facilitator, but it is beneficial if everyone has taken both the Basic and Advanced workshops. There can be volunteers who don't facilitate but can help with support jobs. Others may only want to facilitate and not work on other tasks.

Some of these are related to workshops:

- registering participants and keeping contact with them before the workshop
- collecting participants' contact details -- particularly important at minis or demonstration workshops
- identifying and arranging workshop locations
- gathering workshop supplies, materials and handouts
- preparing workshop certificates
- arranging snacks and meals, if necessary
- providing or arranging accommodation for facilitators or participants, if necessary

- coordinating transportation to and from the workshop and elsewhere as needed

Others are for the organisation:

- setting up a draft workshop schedule -- you may want to start with workshops farther apart than you would like them, and then make them closer together as you build your program. Begin with a schedule you can actually deliver.
- developing publicity
- promoting workshops and other activities, if any
- fundraising and keeping track of current and potential donors (See [Finances and Fundraising](#))
- determining ways to cover program and workshop costs
- maintaining the databases (See [Databases](#))
- putting together facilitator teams
- keeping track of manuals, making sure at least one is available for each workshop
- making sure there are enough handouts and other relevant paper
- helping with workshop logistics
- being the contact person to communicate with the regional or national AVP program or organisation etc.
- being the contact person for public outreach
- collecting contact details of people who express interest in AVP
- maintaining contact with prospective participants and encouraging inactive facilitators to participate in some way
- networking with potential partners who will promote workshops or send participants: groups and organisations, people and agencies, community centres, libraries, social services, schools, churches, etc., who could be interested in AVP workshops (See [Partnerships](#))

You may wish to assign some of these tasks to a person who takes on a specific role, such as program coordinator, treasurer, workshop coordinator, registrar, etc.

Other tips:

Ask your workshop participants to fill in an evaluation sheet before the end of each workshop.

After each workshop, the facilitator team should complete a report that includes: recommendations from the team to the local AVP program, names of participants, workshop agenda, and a summary of the participants' evaluation sheets.

Use an email address such as avpiceland@gmail.com that is not linked to a particular person and a post office box, which will be easy to transfer to someone else. Phone numbers, however, are likely to change. These details need to be on brochures and websites.

Registering your organisation -- check with your local authorities to find out if you will need to register your AVP program as a nonprofit or non-governmental organisation. (See [Sustainability](#))

Insurance -- you may be required to have insurance even to start.

An AVP office -- if after you have built your core facilitator team and your program is under way, your group may think about opening an office. (See [Sustainability](#))

Promotion

To get people to come to your workshop, you need first to persuade them that an AVP workshop is worth doing.

Use your contacts to build a network of supporters for your program. This network can be used to share information about your AVP program, upcoming workshops, other events. It may bring in participants and future facilitators and could also be the start of a donor base for your work. (see Fundraising (link))

To build your network, ask your friends, facilitators and volunteers to identify five people they'd be willing to contact about the AVP program. Why five? It's a reasonable number and when 10 people do it, all of a sudden you've got 50 new supporters. Be imaginative. Neighbours, relatives, social friends, small businesspeople in your area, members of clubs you belong to - all of them are potential supporters of your work. Prepare lists, recruit people to make connections, and go to work gathering a new base of people who know about your program.

In person contact

Experience has shown that the most successful form of promotion is word of mouth -- what people tell others about their AVP experience. One-to one recruitment is by far the most effective, so get out and talk with as many people as you can! Almost as good is talking with groups in the community, where people hear you in person and can ask questions.

Sometimes people will express a particular need that a workshop can meet (for example, a mother wanting to take a workshop to learn how to help her daughter with problems in school). Therefore, It is not only important what you say about AVP but also how you listen -- do you hear a story of someone who could use AVP tools?

Prepare a short talk (one minute or so) about AVP. Include what happens in a workshop -- that it's active and participatory, and that a person can gain usable skills in conflict resolution and that it's fun! Think about what it was that you heard that got you interested. [see [Resources](#) for sample recruiting talks]

A workshop doesn't have to have Alternatives to Violence in its name, or be referred to as a Basic. People may be put off by the word "Violence", which might convey that AVP is only for violent people. Some examples of alternative names are: Peaceful Pathways, Alternative Visions of Peace, Transforming Conflict, Peaceful Alternatives for Life, Promoting Peaceful Communication, Conflict Resolution Workshops, We're all Valuable People.

And the word "Basic" says that this is the beginning of a sequence, which may not be the message you want at the start of recruitment. Be careful not to offend your audience by implying that they don't know anything about resolving conflicts.

Mini-workshops, often within a congregation or other existing organisation, can be a good way to get people interested without asking them to commit to a full workshop right away. See more under [Partnerships](#).

Make AVP visible in the community wherever you can. Arrange a table at a community gathering: a fair, a market, anywhere the public will be passing by. Remember, AVP is non-political; avoid getting involved in political rallies or protests.

Be sure to collect names and basic contact information from people who attend information sessions, or who show interest; keep these contact lists confidential and respect the privacy of personal information. See [Databases](#).

Print contact

A brochure describing AVP, its history and philosophy, levels of workshops, purpose of the workshop, and contact information will be useful. [see [Resources](#) for examples of publicity materials]

Posters, either with general information (with a phone number and a website) or announcing an event at a specific date and time, may bring in some people. Put your posters near where people gather and near the location of the event you're promoting. Universities and churches are possible places to try.

Online contact

In addition to increasing visibility for your AVP program and attracting participants, online contact can also be useful for keeping people informed about workshop dates and locations, as well as news of AVP and achievements.

Some suggestions for building an online presence for your AVP program are:

- Facebook - create a Facebook page with basic information on AVP and workshop dates. It's free and you can reach a broad audience quickly. You can add as many stories as you like to make your page lively and interesting, but stick to the AVP principles.
- Twitter - create a Twitter account and post short messages using keywords that Twitter will pick up and recommend you to others.

Think about using other popular social networks and listservs keeping in mind who you are trying to reach.

A website can be a good tool for AVP programs to communicate with the general public, participants, facilitators and the AVP community. However, a website requires design, development, hosting, and most importantly, maintenance. A website is only useful if it is kept up-to-date -- if you don't have somebody to maintain your website, don't start one.

If your program becomes a member of AVP International, you get a free, pre-designed website! For more information see [Membership](#).

Other ideas to promote your AVP program and workshops:

- interviews with local radio and TV stations
- newspaper or magazine articles
- leaving poster and brochure displays at local community centres, libraries etc.

Things you will need

Manuals

You will need a set of the three core AVP manuals:

- Basic Manual, 2002
- Second Level or Advanced Manual, 2005
- Facilitators Training Manual, 2013

You may use print copies or you may (unless you are in the United States) download these manuals from the AVP International website (registered users only). You can also buy print copies from the AVP USA distribution centre at www.avpusa.org, but the postage may be more than the cost of the books. Downloading and printing at your local internet cafe may make more sense.

The manuals are in English and have been translated into several other languages -- check with AVP International to see if your language is one of them.

An AVP program in Pennsylvania, USA, gives newly trained facilitators their own print copy of the Basic manual, as a token of appreciation for completing their training and their desire to conduct workshops.

Manual Libraries

If you can, build a manual library with enough copies of manuals for the group to be able to run AVP workshops and support facilitator training. Some AVP groups have copies of the manuals for each facilitator, and in other groups the facilitators share them.

Other useful manuals on the AVP International website include:

- Youth Manual, 2000, The Basic manual modified for younger participants
- AVP Sydney Concise Manual, 2012

Outside (non-AVP) references, available from other sources

- Help Increase the Peace Project (HIPP) Manual, 2004, another manual for youth produced by the American Friends Service Committee, www.afsc.org/resource/hipp-manual
- Pendle Hill Pamphlet Number 322, Nonviolence and Community: Reflections on the Alternatives to Violence Project, 1995, pendlehill.org/product-category/pamphlet
- The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet (derived from the Children's Creative Response to Conflict, an organisation on which AVP is modelled) crc-global.org/programs/conflict-resolution-course

Workshop kits -- things you will need to run a workshop. For a full list see [Workshop Materials](#). You may find it helpful to have two full sets of workshop materials to start. Things get lost or broken, so a backup set is a big help.

Workshop sites -- AVP workshops can be held anywhere a group can gather together. See [Location Criteria](#)

Databases & Record Keeping

It is important to have accurate, realistic and current records. You will need some of the information in your records to keep yourself informed about how your own program is going -- for example, how many facilitators are active or dropped out and how many new facilitators have joined the program. Some will be important to the larger AVP community: how many workshops you did in a given year (for your national program) or interesting variants you have come up with for an exercise or as an added support activity (for other programs). Also, potential funders will be interested in knowing how many workshops you have done in a given time period and in what settings.

Keeping complete records -- on an electronic database or on paper -- will also help you to stay in touch with and keep track of active and inactive facilitators, workshop graduates, potential participants and other contacts.

Keep this information confidential. Use these databases in a way that protects the identity and contact details of everyone.

Keep a record of where you have listed the contact information for your AVP program (AVP International, national databases, websites, publications) so it will be easier to update this information when changes occur.

Since different sets of people will need different kinds of attention, it will be helpful to maintain three separate databases.

Facilitators

- a. Name
- b. Email address
- c. Home address
- d. Phone number(s)
- e. How they joined the team
- f. Date of completion of training
- g. Apprentice, facilitator or team leader
- h. Workshop preference -- community, schools, prisons or other settings; Basic, Advanced, Training for Facilitators
- i. Comments

Participants

- a. Name
- b. Email address
- c. Home address (optional -- should at least give location: town or city, area of the city, rural region)
- d. Phone number(s)
- e. Dates of Workshop(s) completed or attended and not completed (the reason for leaving) or no-shows
- f. Original contact
- g. Comments

Other Contacts

(this will include people and organisations who have expressed interest in AVP, or that we might want to approach)

- a. Name
- b. Email address
- c. Address
- d. Phone number(s)
- e. Organisation, where applicable
- f. Why are they on this list? (potential partner, may send participants, provide a venue, host a workshop for their own people, donate food, etc.)
- g. Original contact, record of further contacts (times, people we met)

Organisational Overview

Organisational Overview

This is something to work toward as you set up your program -- you won't have all the answers to begin with, but you'll need them as you go along. It will be helpful to have a picture of what you are doing, where you are going and what you will need. It's a good idea to write all of this and review it before you sit down to write any proposal. That way you'll be prepared with the facts and figures when you're asked to submit something.

Having the following information at the ready will help prepare you to promote and sell workshops and to write grant proposals :

- Organisational data: Years/months in operation; number of facilitators; number of workshops given; number of people reached; sponsoring organisations (if any); registered status (if your AVP program is not a registered organisation, then research whether there is the option of a fiscal sponsor in your country).
- Contact information: Email address, telephone number, name of contact person.
- Credibility: What AVP work have you already done? Any evidence that you had success? Were your facilitators trained locally or by visiting facilitators from another country, or did your facilitators travel out of the country to get trained? Can you give testimonials as to its success from community members, school principals, prison governors, etc? Consult the [AVP International research database](#) for research or articles that might be helpful to support your AVP work. Funders are particularly interested in evidence-based research.
- Overall mission and purpose of your AVP organisation (you may borrow from the mission and vision of AVP International while you write your own).
- Description of the problem you're addressing with this project, with as much detail as you think may be relevant.
- Method: Delivering AVP workshops. If you're looking for funding for workshops, describe a Basic and an Advanced and what participants can learn in each. If you're looking for support for your overall program, also describe the training process for facilitators.
- Results you expect from this project: Use the word "may", recognising that results from AVP workshops are difficult to measure and are not the same for each workshop, or even for each type of setting; depending on the setting and circumstances, results may include reduced incidents of violence, improved communication, fewer incidents of bullying, improved grades in school, improved family relationships, fewer incidents of domestic violence, increased sense of community, among others.
- Evaluation: How will you know you have achieved the expected results? What evidence will you gather to tell (a) yourself and (b) the funder that the project did what it was intended to do? Funders or potential client organisations are sure to ask, and it's a very hard question to answer about AVP

workshops. About the only evidence you'll be in a position to provide is testimony, either from participants or about participants from teachers, supervisors, correctional officers or whoever is in a position to give it. But you will probably also be asked for something quantitative, and AVP is not in a good position to supply that sort of thing.

- Logistics: Propose a timetable for the project, where the workshops will take place and who will be involved -- both facilitators and participants. (Not by name, but "three facilitators from the community" and "fifth and sixth grade students".)
- Budget: Specific amounts, categories, rates of pay (if you pay people), and how much you have raised or will raise from other sources to help carry out this project.

Click [AVP-Mexico-Executive-Summary](#) for an example of what some of this looks like in a summary presentation.

AVP in Different Settings

Introduction

AVP workshops are designed to adapt easily to different cultures and settings. This part of the Guide discusses the particular characteristics of various settings and how they relate to AVP programs. Other parts of this Guide, such as Getting Started and Sustainability, discuss things that are common to all settings.

Some of the settings and target groups where AVP programs have been successful are:

Settings

- the general community in any location
- prisons and other forms of correctional facilities
- primary and secondary schools
- universities and higher education institutions
- non-profit organisations
- government agencies
- companies and corporations

Target groups

- faith communities
- drug and alcohol rehabilitation groups
- refugee camps and communities
- communities with a shared trauma
- aid workers
- gangs
- veterans' groups
- youth groups

(this is not a complete list -- there isn't one!)

Partnerships

AVP programs, whether in the community or not, can benefit greatly from partnerships with other

organisations or institutions. They can help by providing participants or contacts, donating food or venues ... the list is long. For more on how to develop and cultivate partnerships, see [Partnerships](#).

Community

Participants in community workshops (i.e. open to the general public) may be associated with an institution or organisation such as a faith group or a school or may be anyone, from any walk of life, who is interested and chooses to come. The more diverse your participants are, the better the workshop will be.

Organising and conducting community workshops require coordination, sharing of tasks, follow-up contacts, partnering with organized groups or organizations. That is to say, a community program requires a lot of work, both to start and to keep going! One benefit of having strong community AVP activity is that it provides a ready-made program for released-prisoner AVP facilitators to continue their AVP involvement, in the community.

Some of the main tasks for a community program are:

- promotion to attract people to attend workshops -- this requires the most effort.
- workshop organisation, including communication with participants and facilitators.
- logistics, such as finding a suitable place for the workshop or arranging food, transportation, and lodging.

Plan a Basic Workshop

Now that your AVP program has a facilitator team and you've been working on promoting AVP, it's time to organise workshops.

The first workshop you offer will be a Basic. Whether you follow that with another Basic or go on to an Advanced will be up to the team.

Workshops run best with at least 10 but not more than 20 participants. Each workshop must have at least two facilitators, one of them an experienced facilitator.

Address the cost issue. Set the workshop fee based on the actual expenses you will incur. It is also a universal AVP principle that no one is turned away for lack of funds. Keep these things in mind when you decide on an amount for the fee. For more information on workshop costs and budgeting, (see [Finances](#)). You can also ask participants to contribute with food or beverages.

In addition to paying for materials, you may need to cover costs for hospitality, snacks, venue rental, translation, etc. -- but do try to get a free venue if you possibly can. Ask for donations.

As for the venue, there are a few essentials. For a list of suggested criteria, see [Location Criteria](#).

Be patient with people who express interest in a workshop. They often have full lives and many commitments and may not be able to commit to the next workshop. Just gently keep in touch until the time is right for them.

Participants

Pay some attention to who's coming to the workshop.

- Couples or family members. They may appreciate the opportunity to speak more freely if they attend separate workshops -- or they may welcome the chance for shared exploration.
- Participants from the same workplace or social, religious or political group. You may want to limit this, so that they do not monopolise a workshop.
- Participants should take the Basic only once, but may take as many Advanced workshops as they like.

Mandated referrals

- Sometimes courts will require people to take anger management courses, which courts may interpret as including AVP.
- Keep only a participant's contact information and details of completion of workshops so that if the court requires information about someone's attendance, the local AVP program can honestly say "We keep only records of completion of workshops."
- Maintain confidentiality. Whatever any participant, court-referred or not, says in a workshop is confidential. You may need to communicate that to the court.

Mandated reporting

In many countries, mandated reporters are people who have regular contact with vulnerable people and are therefore legally required to ensure a report is made if they observe or suspect abuse or the commission of a crime. Check the requirements in your area and discuss with your team how mandated reporting might affect confidentiality in the workshop. If mandated reporting is a requirement where you are, ask mandated reporters to identify themselves during the opening talk.

Traumatised Communities

After hostilities have subsided, communities that have been scarred, sometimes permanently, from the experience of war and intense physical and psychological conflict are traumatised. Hostility can also linger and re-traumatise the population into states of numbness and marginalisation. AVP workshops and program development may be difficult under these conditions.

The Irish government has become interested in supporting peace activities in the West Bank. Because AVP has been established and growing in the region, the Irish government is considering directly supporting AVP's further development there.

If your AVP program is thinking about working in these communities, you will need to be particularly aware of:

- building trust
- remaining neutral to the political situation

- logistical or travel considerations
- safety

Refugee Camps

There has been an emergence of refugee camps around the world. These camps offer shelter and services to address the needs of people displaced by war, hunger, disease and other national disruptions in a society. AVP workshops have been held in refugee camps in Australia, Bosnia, Hungary, Kenya, Nepal, Somalia, Sudan, and in the Middle East.

Refugee camps pose a challenge, because levels of frustration and violence are often heightened. Discouragement and marginalization can cause people to resort to violence, as a means of survival.

AVP work in a refugee camp can be difficult and dangerous -- but also very rewarding. The first thing to do is to learn about the refugee situation in the area, and you can begin with the UNHCR, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees at www.unhcr.org. Click “Contact us” in the site footer and then the field office of the country you are interested in. A word of encouragement -- don’t be surprised if the person who replies has heard of AVP. And if they tell you not to go there, follow their advice!

You should also find out if there are organisations already working in the country, such as the International Red Cross or the Mennonite Central Committee. These organisations may be willing to sponsor AVP work or they may be able to offer advice on working with refugees.

War Zones

Active war zones are dangerous and unpredictable. People are focused on survival, and AVP workshops are probably not appropriate.

Prisons

Prison workshops hold a special and lasting place in the heart of AVP.

AVP began in a prison. Older inmates at Green Haven prison in New York State, USA were concerned that younger men coming in seemed to have no idea of any response to conflict other than violence. They wanted something that would help make the prison a less violent place – and that is still a concern in prisons today. On one hand, the stress of prison life makes a more challenging environment than the outside world. On the other, a prison is a small, contained community in which a firmly rooted AVP program may make a real difference.

AVP began in a prison because there was such an obvious need for better communication and resolution to conflict, and that need hasn’t changed. It’s a tough environment.

One of the challenges AVP programs face is working with prison administrations. Their priority, for instance, is security, and they will often resist anything that might seem to compromise it. Expect push-back, and be persistent when you meet it.

You may want to bring in experienced facilitators from outside your area to help your program get started. They may be experts in AVP matters, but you are the expert in your local culture, and once you have local facilitators trained, they should be the ones to approach prison administrations.

Recruiting participants is often a lot easier in a prison than in the community. Outside, people have many responsibilities and other priorities, and it is hard to get them to commit themselves to twenty hours of a program they don't know much about. Prisoners have much fewer demands on their time and often welcome a new program. And prison staff will probably make up the participant lists – just as well, since it's a population where you may have no chance to recruit. Building a team of inside facilitators will be easy - the hard part, as for any AVP program, will be recruiting outside facilitators.

Trying to use AVP to reform the prison system will almost certainly lead to the program being cancelled.

Note: This Guide uses the term prison to refer to any correctional or incarceration facility.

Starting a Prison Program

Decide what program schedule you can commit to initially, making sure that it is something you can sustain:

consider the people, finances, logistics and other resources you have available, or can reasonably expect. You will be making a commitment to both the prison and the people incarcerated there, and it is important to honour that commitment. It can be tempting, particularly with prison work, to want to schedule more workshops than might actually be possible. Focus on what you can deliver rather than on what you think the prison needs. You can think about expanding the program later. An eventual schedule to aim for could be one workshop per month.

You may want to begin by approaching a national or state agency for prisons, or you may want to begin by creating a program in one prison -- situations vary. Or, when you approach a local prison, the warden may send you to a state or national authority.

A Quaker organisation arranged an appointment with the new Director of Adult Facilities at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for a presentation on the benefits of AVP. As it turned out, the Director had been at San Quentin, a California prison, when AVP was active there for four years, and had seen the results on the yard. She knew exactly what AVP was and called it "awesome." She invited a group of facilitators to her quarterly all-wardens' meeting to hold a mini-workshop and introduce them to the program. Of the 33 wardens present, 22 signed up. The door was opened, and four years later AVP California was in 18 facilities and known throughout the Department of Corrections as a dependable and desirable program to have in "your" prison.

You may be lucky enough to be able to arrange such an experience, but don't do it unless you're in a position to follow through with whatever the administration may want.

If you can approach the Commissioner or Director of Prisons (local, state, national), their support can be invaluable initially as well as later on, especially when there is a change in the leadership of a prison. Some other people or groups to approach include:

- a staff member in the central government department responsible for prisons
- organisations with active prison programs
- faith-based programs (chaplains)

Research as much as you can about the prison system in your area. Ask yourself questions like, “Are there organisations already doing similar work in prisons?”, “What programs do the prisons offer?”, “Who should I talk with?”

If your AVP program is hoping to work with a particular prison, here are some approaches you might take:

- Find out if there is a successful AVP program or programs in other prisons in the country and ask someone at that prison to give a recommendation for AVP.
- Perhaps someone with your AVP program knows an inmate, this may also open up possibilities, especially if the inmate sees how valuable AVP would be in the prison. Contact this imprisoned person to see if they would be interested in following the steps outlined below for an inmate request.
- Consider talking with someone from another AVP program who has experience with an AVP program in prison. Contact AVP International for help with this.
- Find out if there is a prisoner support group of some kind in the community, a church with a prison ministry or another group already working in the prison. They already have an established relationship with prison staff and might provide an introduction. They may also be a source for your first outside facilitator trainees.

Also, requests for a prison program may come from:

1. A prisoner or a group of prisoners.

There may be a program in another prison in the country and a prisoner who has been transferred from there. An AVP facilitator may find themselves incarcerated. A prisoner’s friend or relative may have taken an AVP workshop outside.

Responding to a request from a prisoner is a good way for an AVP program to start, especially if AVP already has some presence in your region. In some prisons, prisoners can more readily catch the attention of prison staff they see every day than outsiders can.

If you are able to respond to a prisoner directly, be clear with them that the process for introducing AVP to the prison will take time. We cannot initiate a program in the prison until there are AVP outside volunteers in the area who can keep a program going.

2. A Government Official or Member of Staff at a Particular Prison

A government official or staff member may hear about AVP: 1) via conventional means (the media, internet, social networks); 2) from prisoners transferred from other prisons; 3) from a central government agency or department, etc.

In Mexico City, the wife of the head of social and cultural programs at one of the city’s ten prisons heard about AVP through her charity work. She took a Basic workshop in the community and then shared the experience with her husband. A few weeks later, AVP Mexico received an invitation to meet with the head of social and cultural programs and the prison administrator and within a month the first AVP workshop was held at Mexico City’s North Men’s Prison.

3. A deportee who has experienced AVP, particularly as a facilitator, and who wants to start a new program at a prison near their new home

An AVP program that receives this type of request should maintain periodic contact while the recently-returned AVP facilitator builds the elements they need for their new life.

Check to see whether formerly incarcerated persons are permitted to enter prisons in your area.

Initial Contact

Initial Contact or “Making your case”

Locally trained facilitators in the Palestinian Territory of the West Bank approached local prison and law enforcement personnel, including social workers, counsellors, psychologists, nurses, etc., about offering AVP workshops. The AVP Program in the West Bank was already established and had adequate history to make the program credible.

The goal is to get a meeting with prison officials, preferably including the person at the top of the particular prison, to present AVP and talk about setting up a program of AVP workshops. For the purposes of this text, this person will be referred to as the warden.

Prison officials will probably never have heard of AVP. You will need to describe the program – the three levels of workshop, the number of hours required, the experiential nature, that inmates become facilitators, etc. – and also justify its worth.

We believe that AVP reduces violent behaviour while in prison and also reduces repeat offenses. The administration will take some convincing, so bring articles and testimonies ready to share to make your point. Prison officials will not necessarily want to hear that an AVP program will make their jobs easier, improve their relationships with prisoners, or make the prison more peaceful. They are more likely to be interested in whether AVP reduces repeat offenses.

Introduce AVP with a brochure or other literature. You may wish to include a copy of the preface to this guide and the [Core Values of AVP](#). You might send them an article or two to get them interested even before you meet with them.

If the head of the prison supports you it will help keep the program functioning well, so it is important to establish a good relationship from the start, if you can.

The first meeting with prison officials may include:

- Warden or Assistant Warden (head of the prison)
- Chaplain
- Volunteer Activities Coordinator
- Social Programs Coordinator
- whoever in that prison may be able to advance your cause

Remember that these are your peers, so you should be confident in preparing and leading this meeting. You should feel comfortable meeting with prison officials on a professional level. Dress and act accordingly.

You may be asked for a bribe. Stand strong! AVP does not condone the giving of bribes for any reason.

Include at least two facilitators at the meeting if you can. Meet beforehand to decide on your agenda and roles (for example: who will be note-taker, who will take the lead, who will describe history, etc.).

Use your AVP skills — particularly listening. Listen to any concerns expressed about setting up a program. Offer to help in any way that is consistent with AVP ideals and methods.

If the officials ask for shortened workshops or for officers to be present in the room, or for any other changes to the standard AVP workshop, explain the reasons why the AVP workshop is as it is and do not agree to these conditions. Stress your commitment to protecting the integrity of AVP methods, values and organisation. Let them know that the policies and procedures have been developed over the more than 40-year history of AVP and have proven to be effective. Thus, we want to adhere to them to ensure the success of the program in their prison.

Tips:

- Arrive early. Bring copies of the information already provided. Include a basic introduction to the program and its benefits in your spoken presentation -- repetition never hurts.
- Take a copy of the Basic manual with you and be prepared to use the manual to support your statements about the key requirements for a workshop.
- Introduce yourselves, and include your experience with AVP and your professional experience (Don't be shy: you are making an important impression).
- Write down the names and job titles of everyone present. If possible and if time permits, find out their job responsibilities as part of the welcoming discussion.
- Present AVP's history and its worldwide impact, and explain that it started in US prisons and when and how it started in your country.
- If it feels appropriate, share research statistics on how AVP reduces repeat offenses and violence in prison. There is some research (in English) on AVP available [here](#).
- Consider sharing a story or example of what happens in a workshop, to demonstrate AVP's transformative nature.
- Mention that on being permitted to offer an AVP program, the outside people will observe all security requirements at all times. If you haven't received this information, ask for the guidelines for outside people entering the facility.

Once you have their interest, define the requirements:

- That AVP needs to offer all three levels of workshops.
- Each workshop requires 18-22 hours of workshop time, plus planning and debriefing time.
- That AVP has standard policies that do not change from one country to another: i.e. that staff not be present, that workshops must be offered to all inmates and that all participants must come to the program voluntarily.
- That a program goal is to train inmates as facilitators who will work on teams with outside facilitators. If the prison does not allow inmates to become facilitators, don't linger on this point at this time. You will probably find a workaround solution once the relationship begins to develop.

An important point here is that AVP must be voluntary. That's not an issue in the community, but in prison it can be, though probably not at the beginning of a program. After the program has been running for a while, the administration may require completion of a workshop as a condition for early release, or

offer some other incentives, or it may discipline prisoners for not participating. They may well put this rule in place without telling you. At that point (when you do find out) it will be hard to change their minds. So talk about it with the prison authorities at the beginning, and if you can, have it written into your agreement that there will be no reward for participating or punishment for not doing so.

Even so, you may find the administration insisting. You will have to decide where you make a stand on this question. Do you pull the program if the consequences are something you can't live with? Prisoners sometimes do say, "I only came to this program for the certificate (commonly believed to impress the decision makers for early release, whether it does or not) but now I'm really glad I stayed, I learned so much".

Note: If participants are required to take a workshop, they may not fully engage or participate, the workshop space may not feel safe, participants may withdraw, and the experience may be spoiled for others.

The prison officials may decide at this meeting to move ahead with a pilot program, or they may wish to read the literature and further study how it might be set up. When the prison accepts the AVP program, ask for a contact person to be assigned to you to work out the details for the AVP workshops.

You may need to repeat the introductory meeting from time to time as staff changes.

After five years of running a prison program, AVP Germany repeated this meeting with the staff, because the staff changes a lot and the new ones did not know about AVP. It became a problem when the prisoners asked about AVP and the officers said a lot of strange things about the program. We also left a presentation (PDF) for those who could not make it to the meeting and new officers afterwards.

Arrangements

The Details of Setting up a Workshop in Prison

Each facility will have its own way of doing things. Here are some general guidelines to get you started. Talk with your contact at the prison about these and other preparations.

The workshop arrangements with the prison should include at least the following:

- Dates and times for each session including meals, counts (roll call). Include time for teambuilding and debriefing with inside facilitators, even if you don't have any trained yet.
- Arrange, if you can, for counts to be done in the room where the workshop is going on. If you can't, find out all the details, especially how long the count is likely to take.
- Facilities: A room large enough for the group (participants + facilitators) in a circle, armless chairs (preferred), tables, and adequate wall space (with permission to use masking or painter's tape on the walls), cooling / heating where necessary, and any other items you might need.
- Arrangements for bringing in workshop materials and a list of items required to be cleared for entry.
- Arrangements for storing workshop materials at the prison, if possible.
- Ask about what you will be expected to take with you when you leave, and what you are allowed to take.
- Don't assume all the prison staff will know who you are or what AVP is; bring paperwork to identify you and show what you are there to do, who your prison contact is, and any other permissions granted.

- Arrangements for meals. Prisons will have fixed rules about this. If the prison agrees, it is better if the prisoners and outside people can eat together in the workshop space.
- Participant list with prisoner numbers, if necessary and relevant.
- If a new outside person is joining the workshop, check the orientation and entry requirements.
- Arrangements for reporting back to the prison about attendance, if the prison requires it.
- Arrangements for ensuring participants get recognition for having taken the workshop. If prisoners' files have a record of activities, their participation in AVP workshops should be included. Find out who is responsible for doing this.
- Make sure you know who to contact and how if something goes wrong.

It is very important to put into writing the details of each workshop (dates, outsiders attending, inside facilitators, materials) and to send them to the inside contact person in the institution in advance. Check with prison staff about what information they require and when.

Things often have a way of being forgotten, misunderstood or overlooked in prisons. Papers get lost, communications get forgotten. Take no chances. Get in touch with the contact person a few days before the workshop to make sure all the details are in place and be sure you do all your follow-up paperwork as well.

Prison Teams

Teams of "inside" and "outside" facilitators conduct prison workshops jointly. Inside facilitators, particularly those serving long sentences, give credibility to the AVP program among other prisoners and add to our collective wisdom. Inside facilitators become examples of walking the walk. If they aren't, everyone will know.

Before going into a prison, you will need a team of outside facilitators who are comfortable being in a prison and who are willing to commit to being available for workshops. As a first step, you might consider inviting experienced facilitators from outside your area to help with community workshops (see [Getting Started](#)) until there is a base of local facilitators for the prison program. A team of five outside facilitators is good to start, with one or two experienced or lead facilitators, which will give you a team of 3 or 4 for each workshop until you have trained inmate facilitators.

In Germany, prison workshop groups generally include 12 inside and 2 outside participants, and 1-2 inside and 2-3 outside facilitators.

Once you have your trained inside facilitators, they will be on all teams. Typically a prison team is one or, more commonly, two outside facilitators and two to four inside facilitators. Prison teams are often larger than community ones because prisons often have a large group of inside facilitators and apprentices who are eager for a chance in a workshop. If you are used to a small team, you will need to do some adjusting, and your team will learn how to assign exercises so everybody gets a turn and the whole team is involved. Be prepared to welcome taking a support role.

Outside Facilitators & Participants

Inviting outside participants to a prison workshop is a good opportunity for developing new facilitators. If the prison is reluctant to let community members attend a workshop as participants, talk with the prison about how important this is for the sustainability of the program. While training community participants through prison workshops is a good idea, if the prison will not permit this, it should not prevent a program from moving ahead, and new facilitators can still be trained outside.

The prison will probably have guidelines as to who is allowed to come in and what you have to do to qualify. To find this information, look online, ask the government department, or ask your prison contact.

Coordinate security requests for outside people coming into prison for workshops. This often means gathering the information required by the prison for their routine security check.

Outside participants will also need authorisation to enter prison. The process is likely to be the same as for facilitators. Check with your prison contact.

Be sure all outside participants and team members are aware of the volunteer guidelines and regulations for the institution. Having a personal conversation with first-timers in a prison is essential. It adds to their comfort and your assurance that they understand what identification to show, what to wear (and what not to wear), what they may bring (and may not bring), and appropriate behaviour. These points will determine whether or not you will get in.

It is important for outside people to understand: NEVER argue with security staff. You and the program will lose. If you feel very strongly about a certain issue or treatment, talk first with your AVP group, and if the group considers further action necessary, proceed carefully. It can be helpful to seek the advice of the prison human rights commission, where one is available.

Several AVP programs have created written guidelines for outside volunteers in prisons.

See [Guidelines for Visiting Prisons](#)

Additional Notes

Before Every Workshop

The specific arrangements for each workshop need to be confirmed with your inside contact in advance. The letter should be delivered to the prison officials setting up the workshop as well as to outside facilitators and participants. Include the following information:

- Confirmation of the dates and times for the workshop and the team building.
- Names of outside team members and any participants from outside who need to be cleared for entry into the prison.
- Names of inside team members and any special arrangements for them to participate in the team building and debriefing.
- Workshop materials (and any other objects) to be cleared for entry into the prison, if the prison requires it.

- Request that the inside contact person give this list to the prison entry check-in point, but carry it with you just in case it doesn't get there. It is always wise to bring enough copies of every document you might need so that you can give them to staff who may know nothing of your program or the arrangements made with prison officials.

Opening Talk

In addition to the points the Opening Talk usually covers, mention the following:

- AVP is independent, it is not a program of the prison (there are no staff in the room).
- AVP facilitators will not break confidentiality, with the exception of mandated reporting where applicable.

After the Workshop

- Deliver the final list of participants to the prison contact.
- If there have been any issues with security or prison staff, report these to your prison contact with a brief explanation.
- Thank your prison contact.
- Follow your local AVP group's policies for workshop evaluations.
- Experienced facilitators or the outside prison coordinator should call first-time outside facilitators and participants to debrief their experience in the prison.

Youth / Schools / Universities

There have been a number of successful AVP youth programs over the last 40 years developed in schools, universities, youth groups and youth incarceration centres, legal supervision offices, among others. Youth workshops can be important in reducing the number of people who end up in prison.

Many communities offer social and other services to youth. Partnering with these services can be helpful. Conduct mini workshops and have meetings with organisational leaders to develop interest in AVP. These organisations can often offer the venues, advertising, materials, etc. needed to support and host the workshops.

In Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA, a local AVP program approached and gained interest in AVP by a youth drug and alcohol use prevention program for inner city youth. A mini workshop was conducted which resulted in weekly AVP workshop sessions for the youth as part of their after-school program. The program director participated in the workshop sessions which convinced him that AVP could help prevent violence and substance abuse for the youth in his program.

School directors and counsellors can be approached and convinced that AVP could be a vital part of the school district's efforts to stem violence in the schools themselves, as well as in the community in which the youth live. The AVP workshops could be offered on a voluntary basis, promoted and supported by school personnel.

There has been much work done on how to provide youth AVP programs. The following link describes a model of developing AVP youth programs:

[AVP Youth Manual - Youth Programs in General](#)

Providing AVP Youth workshops will vary depending on the setting, partner organisations, and the needs of the sub-population, such as incarcerated, schools, colleges, community programs, etc. For example, who provides workshop materials, snacks and refreshments, time limitations, supervision by staff, getting parental permission, cultural and reading level considerations, etc. A major goal is to train youth as facilitators in order to generate credibility and enthusiasm for AVP in any youth venue or setting, as well as sub-populations.

Generally, the mechanics of the workshop, from logistics to refreshments, are common to both youth and adult populations. Facilitators can learn best practices from other youth program facilitators at local, national and international AVP Gatherings.

Sustainability

Chapter One, [Getting Started](#), covers starting a new AVP program. This chapter will discuss the next stage, developing the AVP program further so that it is sustainable and able to keep functioning over time.

Some things to consider to keep your AVP program sustainable are:

- a strong and committed team of facilitators
- having regularly scheduled workshops
- keeping your databases current
- updating the listings of the contact information for your AVP program
- partnerships with other organisations and institutions
- an organisational structure and plan
- financial security
- formal registration as a non-profit organisation with the proper authorities
- membership with the AVP International organisation

The guidelines in this chapter should be considered according to your local conditions, culture and customs, legal requirements, funding opportunities and the size and setting of your AVP program.

Staying True to AVP

It is easy to lose sight of AVP principles and practice as you deal with administrative issues, but it is those principles and practice that make AVP the powerful program it is.

- Deal with conflicts openly, using AVP practices. Talking behind one another's backs and allowing issues to remain unresolved create unnecessary problems for the group.
- Include the facilitator group in decisions about how the program will run.
- Make decisions by consensus.
- Rotate program leadership if at all possible to develop others' experience and reduce burnout.

Governance and Structure

Decide who will make the decisions for the AVP program -- how many workshops to hold, where to hold them, how to raise the funds you need, and so forth. These decisions may change over time. The team of facilitators may make these decisions together by consensus, or the board of directors or other governing body (if any), or the paid staff (if any) may decide.

Decide also whether you want your organisation to have independent oversight by including people from outside AVP or whether you want it to be entirely AVP-run.

A planning process will help you to be clear about the appropriate organisational structure for your AVP program. Fitting the structure around the group's activities is much better than trying to fit the group's activities around the structure.

Find out about the different legal structures permitted in your country and the restrictions and requirements that may be placed on your organisation, its activities and funding opportunities. You may be required to register as an official organisation, see [Registering as an Organisation](#). You may not be required to do this and may choose not to adopt any legal structure. Allow for the possibility that you may or may not adopt a legal structure later as your organisation grows.

Some things to think about as you plan are:

- What geographic area will your group serve? Is that likely to change? Are you the first AVP group in your country?
- What kinds of workshops are you doing and where are you doing them? Might that change?
- Will the group engage in any activities besides AVP workshops?
- How much funding will the AVP program need? From whom and for what? (see [Finances and Fundraising](#))
- Who will monitor the organisation's financial performance and reporting?
- How will your organisation report internally? And, as applicable, to your national AVP organisation, AVP International, donors or government authorities?
- Who will be financially and legally responsible if things go wrong?
- What are the insurance implications?
- How will responsibilities – management, governance and operational -- be organised?

When you have answers to these questions, you will be in a much better position to choose a structure for your group.

Registering as an organisation

Find out whether your organisation is required to register as a charity or nonprofit organisation in order to offer AVP workshops. Even if it is not required, it may be useful to be a registered organisation to give your program formal credibility, and this can open doors to receiving donations and other forms of support.

Your AVP program may need to register as an organisation to open a bank account.

An alternative to registering your AVP program as an organisation may be to approach another organisation that already has legal or tax status and ask if they will cover your AVP program under their status. Being able to do this will depend on the regulations governing the operation of the other organisation.

AVP International can help member AVP programs with letters of support and AVP International documentation, which may be needed to register your AVP organisation with the authorities in your country. See [Membership](#) for more information.

Advantages and disadvantages of becoming a registered organisation

The logistics of registering as a charity or nonprofit organisation and the particular requirements will vary from country to country.

Some of the advantages of doing this may be:

- It provides formal recognition of the AVP group in the community.
- It enables funding applications to be made by the AVP organisation, or in its name, to donors and funders. (Note: Most funders require registered status.)
- The representative of the AVP organisation can sign binding agreements or contracts.
- The organisation will be able to get a tax number, and charitable organisations are usually exempt from paying taxes.
- The AVP organisation will be able to write formal invoices or receipts to other organisations or companies for the costs of putting on workshops for them.

There are also disadvantages or challenges:

- There will usually be a cost for registering as a charity or nonprofit organisation, such as legal, notary or registration fees.
- The AVP organisation will take on additional obligations of financial reporting, which will vary by country. In Guatemala, the AVP organisation must report monthly to the tax department; in New Zealand, reporting is once a year. Failure to comply with these obligations will likely have consequences, ranging from fines to losing your registration.
- The AVP organisation will need to write a charter, constitution or bylaws -- a formal document that defines the purpose of the organisation and how it will be structured.
- The organisation will usually need to set up a board of directors (board of trustees, governing board, executive committee). These people together are legally responsible for acting in the best interests of the organisation and according to the charter. They are the caretakers of the organisation. They are legally responsible for ensuring that the organisation operates according to its charter.
- The board of directors carries legal and financial responsibility for the organisation, and the contracts or formal agreements the organisation has entered into, such as employment contracts or agreements to deliver workshops.

Offices and Paid Staff

Every group needs a working base. First, discuss the needs of your AVP program. How would you use a space? For meetings? To receive visitors? To have a private space from which to make phone calls and

attend to the administrative tasks? To have a central place for documents and materials that everyone can get to?

Think about starting in a facilitator's home and being creative about where you hold meetings. If that is not working, think about asking to share space with a compatible organisation such as a faith group or one of your partner organisations. See section on [Partnerships](#).

If shared space does not meet your needs you may choose to develop the resources to rent office space.

The focus of AVP is to hold workshops and to develop AVP programs. Getting caught up in running an office will distract your AVP program from its purpose.

You may staff your AVP program with volunteers or you may pay people. A paid coordinator could be a formal employee or someone who does this work in exchange for a stipend. Having a formal employee will mean taking on additional obligations according to the labour laws in your country.

Be aware that having paid staff changes feelings within the group and may cause conflict. If some members of your group are being paid for administrative tasks and some are not, there may be feelings of resentment. Or some members may feel that the one paid person should do all the work.

An office and staff will require a sustainable source of funding. Think carefully about all the aspects involved before getting into something that cannot be sustained; long term plans for funding and staffing must be realistic.

Organisational Meetings

Regular meetings, monthly or quarterly, are important opportunities to build community and to give everyone a chance to contribute to the AVP program.

Decide how often you will meet, whether you will meet in person or electronically, and who will call the meeting, send out reminders, set the agenda, etc.

Conduct the meeting like an AVP workshop session:

(If the meeting looks like an AVP workshop session, that will help keep AVP principles present with the group.)

- prepare the draft meeting agenda in advance and distribute it to the members of your group if you can
- suggested content for meeting agendas:
 - check-ins: all participants report on what's going on in their lives, having to do with AVP or in general.
 - gathering: an AVP-style gathering to help focus participants on the meeting. *Note: If your meeting is being held electronically, the person clerking the call may need to call on people individually in order to draw responses from everyone.*
 - secretary / note-taker: if someone has not been designated in advance, ask for a volunteer for this task ... after all, we work as a team. These notes will become the minutes for the meeting participants to approve.
 - agenda review: quick check with the participants on the call to ask if they agree with the agenda and whether they have any items to add.

- agenda items: what does the team need to talk about at this meeting? Is there any follow-up to report from previous meetings or items?
- light & lively, if possible
- set or confirm the date and time for the next meeting.
- closing: an AVP-style phrase to close the meeting. *Suggestion - A one or two word response with people answering “popcorn-style”.*

Possible topics to discuss might be:

- Recent activities and how they went
- Progress with assignments
- Upcoming activities and the preparations for them
- Future workshops
- Checking in on policies and procedures
- Possible expansion to a new area or setting
- Social events for the people involved in the AVP program

Keeping Facilitators Involved

Facilitators are the heart of any AVP program. Keeping facilitators interested, active and involved will go a long way toward having a program ten years from now.

Some ideas for maintaining commitment among facilitators are:

- schedule enough workshops to keep everyone involved
- assign AVP-related tasks, such as promotional activities
- keep everyone informed with email groups, social media and electronic newsletters
- ongoing program of [Continuing Learning](#) sessions and workshops to nurture, enrich and motivate facilitators
- introduce AVP exercises that are new to the group during organisational meetings
- encourage people to attend regional, national or world gatherings
- arrange social activities such as potlucks or shared meals
- publish newsletters

If you're feeling ambitious, consider hosting a gathering to bring together facilitators from different programs to increase familiarity with the larger AVP community, to share creative ideas or learn about work in other places where AVP programs are active.

Continuing Learning Workshops for facilitators

Arrange continuing learning workshops for facilitators to practice skills and learn new ways to conduct workshops. These workshops can also build community among facilitators. If there are other AVP programs nearby, invite them to join you.

Facilitators benefit from a program that improves their facilitation, team building and organisational skills, which in turn benefits participants too!

This is a good chance for your program to bring in wisdom from outside. You may think about inviting facilitators from other programs to present something new to your program or, if someone from your program has recently been to an AVP gathering or visited another program or country, they may present new learnings.

The 2013 Facilitators Training Manual has a large section on Continuing Learning with many ideas, agendas and learning activities or exercises for advanced facilitator training.

Possible topics for Continuing Learning Workshops:

- AVP Values and Skills
- Personal Development
- Team Work
- Group Dynamics
- Facilitation Skills
- Leadership in AVP
- Team building
- Practicing AVP principles, such as consensus, egalitarianism, honesty, in organisational meetings
- Practice new workshop activities
- Review the functional needs of the organisation

Contact with other AVP groups

AVP programs benefit from building relationships and maintaining communication with other AVP programs, whether they are in the same area or doing similar AVP work somewhere else in the world. You are part of an international community developing group identity and solidarity together.

You may like to assign someone the task of finding out about other AVP programs and communicating with them -- or your group may like to do this together. In addition, AVP International expects each country program to have a national contact who is willing to receive and share communications from AVP International and also share with AVP International information about local or regional developments, relating to AVP work or other relevant issues.

One of the benefits from networking is finding out how other people do things. Any AVP program may have a bright idea your program could profit from -- or profit from one of your bright ideas. The cross-learning and enthusiasm that result from sharing experiences with different groups can enrich a local program.

For instance, while the three core workshops are fairly standard, many programs have support groups, refresher training, or book groups, and there is no standard practice for any of them. If you're thinking of such an activity, find out what your neighbours are doing and join in if you can.

AVP International

Alternatives to Violence Project International is an umbrella organisation for a global network of local and national AVP programs.

Register on the AVP International website (www.avp.international) to learn about what other AVP programs are doing around the world and ways to get involved. Start some conversations:

- Send a message to AVP International using the contact form.
- Contact national AVP groups by clicking on the country name in the footer.
- Contact facilitators directly through the facilitator directory (registered users only).

The information on the AVP International website changes frequently, so if you don't find what you're looking for, send a message to info@avp.international.

Complete an AVP activity report once a year to share your work with other programs.

Workshop Teams

Apprentice facilitators

Participants must complete the Basic, Advanced and Training for Facilitators workshops before being invited to participate on a workshop team as an apprentice. There is no set number of workshops that a new facilitator must complete before being considered a full facilitator. Consult the AVP Basic and Facilitator Training manuals and the Best Practices materials for more information on the apprenticeship process.

Include your new graduates in a team for a basic workshop as early as possible after they have completed the Training for Facilitators workshop. Take a copy of your schedule of upcoming workshops to the last day of the training workshop for graduates to sign up to facilitate.

Forming teams

There are different ways to form the facilitator teams for your AVP workshops. Facilitators may be invited to sign up and this will form the team. The program coordinator may form the team and invite facilitators. Or you may have some combination of the two. Regardless, some things you may want to consider when forming teams for workshops are:

- Potential personality conflicts within the team
- Frequency -- have some people facilitated much more often than others?
- Level of experience, from apprentices to more experienced facilitators
- Strengths and weaknesses in facilitating exercises and activities
- Ability to read the room -- to sense the mood of the group and also pick up emotional signals from individual participants
- Ability to create a supportive atmosphere for fellow facilitators
- Comfort level with the participant population -- ask the team if they are comfortable with the participant group
- Communication skills -- ability to present instructions clearly and to draw out responses from participants
- Language skills, if the workshop will include speakers of different languages

Vary the facilitators on your teams so people are working with different teammates to develop their AVP skills and to explore new ways of presenting AVP concepts.

Team Size

A typical team is three or four facilitators, but the only number not permitted is one! At least one member of the team must be an experienced facilitator.

Large teams get more people involved but there are also drawbacks. Some things to think about are:

- team members will facilitate fewer exercises, but will have the opportunity to watch and learn how others facilitate

- managing the team and giving everyone an opportunity to facilitate

- there's more to facilitation than leading exercises -- for example, talking with participants in breaks or taking someone aside when they are upset is facilitation too

- you may assign two facilitators to an activity, perhaps with one person facilitating and one supporting, or one may set up the activity and the other lead the debriefing. The less experienced facilitator may lead the exercise and the more experienced one can help out as needed.

Mentors

Mentoring will happen naturally and team members will learn from each other - the more experienced as well as the new. More experienced facilitators will see things from the perspective of new facilitators, while new facilitators will appreciate useful tips. Mentoring involves feedback; see Suggestions for Giving and Receiving Feedback Among Team Members in the Basic Manual.

Partnerships

Developing relationships outside of AVP may help your AVP program to grow and remain sustainable. The more your program is connected with other people and organisations in your community, the easier you will find your work to be.

Partners give and partners receive. AVP has plenty to offer another organisation, and there are many things other organisations can provide to support your AVP program.

Benefits an AVP program may gain from a partnership:

- Participants
- Future facilitators
- Funding or access to funding sources
- Logistical support: Workshop location, food, transportation, accommodation
- Administrative support: printing, bookkeeping, photocopying, tax advice, advice on legal procedures
- Insurance for workshops, if necessary
- Office space
- Promotion
- Networking

Partnerships can be fertile ground for recruiting volunteers for your AVP program, either facilitators or support people who help in a variety of practical ways.

Benefits an AVP program may bring to a partnership:

- A service to the partner's clients
- Better teamwork among the partner's staff
- Strengthening the other organisation's work
- Promotion of the other organisation's work
- Access to the AVP worldwide network
- ...and of course all the benefits that come from AVP workshops!

And don't be surprised if another organisation is thinking the same way and comes to AVP for help in community building or working on internal relationships.

AVP is generally an inexpensive program, making it attractive to many organisations.

A partner organisation has no input into the how AVP workshops are run or into the workshop material. AVP retains ownership of all its materials. The other organisation may incorporate AVP exercises or techniques into their own programs, but may not put on "AVP workshops" without trained AVP facilitators.

For the purposes of this guide, we have described three different kinds of non-AVP partners.

Program Hosts work with the AVP group to run an AVP program, usually on the host's premises. Some examples are: NGOs or charity organisations, prisons, schools and universities.

Clients receive a service (AVP workshops) from the AVP group. Some examples are: faith communities, NGOs or charity organisations, businesses, service agencies.

Allies provide some sort of support for AVP programs. Some examples are: faith communities, NGOs or charity organisations, appropriate professionals (social workers, counselors), local businesses.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are charity institutions, including community-based organisations, that are independent from any government agency and serve different populations in a variety of ways.

Of course, your natural partners are within the greater AVP family. See [Getting Started](#) for suggestions on working with AVP International, your national AVP organisation or nearby AVP colleagues.

Program Hosts

A program host is an institution that works with an AVP group to develop and run an AVP program. Participants and at least some of the facilitators come from within its own population. The program will train its own facilitators and become free-standing.

Program hosts have clearly defined communities; they are often schools, universities or prisons. For work with specific types of host, see [AVP in Different Settings](#).

A program host recruits participants for workshops and will arrange or provide the venue. Recruitment of participants will be different from one type of institution to another -- students at a university have far more choice in their activities than prisoners or even school children. The host may also provide promotion, food and such supplies as paper, photocopying, markers, etc.

The AVP group will run the workshops and may sometimes provide promotional materials.

It is a good idea to have a written agreement to prevent the host institution from imposing conditions later on, such as shorter workshops or some say in the content of workshops. The written agreement will probably be a Memorandum of Understanding rather than a contract. See [Formal Agreements](#).

Occasionally partnerships result in the partner developing their own AVP program with their own team of AVP facilitators who run standard AVP workshops. The international AVP community recognises these local programs as AVP groups if they maintain ties with the larger AVP community.

Additionally, these organisations can then offer workshops to other organisations, which can bring AVP to the populations they serve. Replicating this process will spread AVP in the country/region, etc.

Clients

A client organisation invites an AVP group to put on a workshop or a series of workshops with their staff, volunteers or (occasionally) the organisation's own clients.

The organisation provides the participants. They may provide a venue, food, supplies etc. There is not an expectation that facilitators will be trained, or even that the participants will take another workshop, though that may happen. (We love it when it does!!)

There may be no exchange of money, or there may be payment to the AVP program, perhaps a fee for service (from a corporation) or just reimbursement for expenses (from a nonprofit or service agency).

The relationship with a client may be ongoing or one-time. AVP is providing a service, and the client may or may not want it repeated.

There may be a contract-type agreement. See [Formal Agreements](#).

Examples of client organisations:

- Community-based organisations, such as a service for homeless people. A workshop for staff may greatly improve the atmosphere!
- Drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres. AVP workshops could be part of a treatment program for people learning self-respect and healthy communication.
- Orphanages. AVP can make the environment happier for both the children and the staff.
- International service organisations, which may have an established affiliate office in your country (for example, Catholic Relief Services, Red Cross, American Friends Service Committee, Oxfam). Before approaching an international organisation with programs in your community, find out if another AVP program is already working with that organisation somewhere else in the world. Referring to this may

help to open doors. Or find out if the international organisation is supporting another organisation in your area, and ask their advice on how to make contact with the international organisation.

- Government agencies, such as prisons, police forces, child and family services, public school systems. (See [AVP in Different Settings](#))
- Corporations. Major corporations are interested in improving workplace relations and often budget significant amounts for courses for their personnel. They may require the AVP group to have legal status for the money transaction.

After developing a relationship with a client organisation, you may wish to ask their advice on navigating complicated institutional regulations, local knowledge of different systems such as taxes, registries, how to get into local networks, etc.

That knowledge may save your having to pay for an expensive accountant or attorney -- you can profit from the experience of your colleague organisations who have already dealt with the problem you're currently facing.

Allies

An ally is an organisation or person with which your AVP program would like to build a long-term relationship, rather than a one-time donor (though any help is very welcome). One-time donors may become allies, of course -- keep that in mind as you work with them. Allies are gold, and they should be carefully looked after.

Individual allies may be members of someone's faith community, friends or family members, the lovely lady who runs the bakery down the street -- can she donate pastries for workshops? put a poster in her window?

Allies are not involved in the workshops or the organisation but want to help. Allies support AVP groups by referring potential participants or by providing something that helps the program.

An ally may provide:

- a space or food for workshops
- accommodation for visiting AVPers
- transportation for either out-of-towners or locals
- referrals of participants for workshops
- referrals to places we might approach for participants, services or donations
- promotion (posting flyers, spreading the word, mentioning the workshop in a newsletter or on their website, talking about AVP to colleagues or friends)
- translation or interpretation either for workshops or for the AVP program (for translations of manuals, contact education@avp.international)
- help with such tasks as working on databases, bookkeeping or making travel arrangements
- advice on taxes or legal procedures
- some other kind of help for the AVP program (office space, photocopying, insurance)
- regular financial support, such as an annual donation (see [Donors and Donations](#)).

For referrals of participants: social service agencies, counselling or drug treatment organisations, etc.

Other possible allies could include: community centres, libraries, local restaurants, and faith communities.

After several years of holding workshops in prison, AVP Germany asked the prison service to donate annually to the program to cover travel, food and other workshop costs. AVP Germany had demonstrated the benefit of the AVP program, and the prison service wanted to ensure the program would continue.

Then there's the person who seems to know everybody in town and can make any number of helpful connections for you.

Hartford Friends' Meeting (Quakers) in Connecticut, USA, has been ally of the local AVP group since the early 1990's and makes a small annual donation to help with the cost of manuals. Some of the group's facilitators also come from this faith community. The Meeting community appreciates reading about local AVP activities in their monthly newsletter which, in turn, makes the AVP group feel supported.

Some organisations, such as the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), operate in many countries and have established relationships with AVP groups. In South Africa, for example, MCC invited AVP South Africa to run its peace clubs in schools, and in other places they have provided pass-through services for AVP groups to receive donations.

It might be helpful to approach MCC in your area and mention these relationships, referring to their support of AVP programs in other countries.

Allies may also be willing to share their knowledge of local networks, or tax, legal and registry systems, or they may even share their bookkeeper. That knowledge may save your having to pay for an expensive accountant or attorney. Allies will have contacts different from yours, and those contacts could end up sending participants or helping support your program.

Starting a Partnership

For any potential partner, think about ways to make an initial approach. Prepare a few short sentences that will get them interested in finding out more about AVP. It is also good to have a brochure that you can give them if they seem interested. (See [Helpful Resources](#))

If you are looking at an organisation as a possible program host or client, your first assignment is to persuade somebody in that organisation to talk with you, and then that AVP workshops will complement their work. Be respectful of the work the organisation is doing and how they do it -- you are not going to "fix" their programs.

For a potential program host, you will need to describe the sequence of three workshops and the apprenticeship process, because you are hoping to build a long-term relationship and an in-house facilitator team.

More often than not, potential clients who have heard about AVP's work will approach AVP. A good way to make that more likely is to hold community workshops and advertise them well so as to become a known presence in your community. If you are the one approaching a potential client, first find out as much as you can about what they do and with whom and be clear in your mind about why AVP would be helpful to them. Potential clients will be interested in the benefits of AVP in general, and specifically for their community. Try to discuss relevant themes -- for example, self-esteem and empowerment for a battered women's shelter, improved communication and teamwork for a corporation.

For potential allies who may refer potential participants to workshops, you may need to describe the sequence of three workshops. Otherwise, you may want to highlight AVP's contribution to the community. You may also offer to give a public thank you for office space or baked goods.

Selling points (use as relevant)

- AVP has a record of delivering workshops since 1975 (mention some of the countries where there are active programs and also some of the [Different Settings](#)).
- The local AVP group is part of a global network.
- Our facilitators have been trained in the program and have completed an apprenticeship with experienced facilitators.
- The workshops are interactive and participatory, a set of guided experiences for participants, rather than being classroom or lecture style.
- Research, evaluations and testimonials show that AVP workshops are effective. (See [Research](#))
- We have a set of manuals to support the delivery of workshops and facilitator training, which are the same worldwide.
- We can design our workshops to respond to the needs or issues of each group of participants.

It is important that the partner organisation understand and respect AVP's values and neutral position on religious and social causes. AVP should not be seen as a mechanism to further their cause and agenda.

What to do next

If the person you are talking with shows genuine interest in AVP, offer to hold "mini" or demonstration workshop at their organisation. See examples of agendas of various lengths in the [Helpful Resources](#).

Follow up with the person or their organisation. If they are not ready to commit to holding a full AVP Basic workshop with their staff or program beneficiaries, invite them to send a few people to your next open community workshop. If they would like to talk further about AVP, arrange a meeting.

It is very helpful to have the support of whoever has the appropriate decision-making authority in the organisation, so meet with that person if you can. For a program host, that will probably be the highest official (for example the head of the school, the warden of the prison), while for a client, it may be someone in a human resources or staff program department.

The First Meeting

Once you have confirmed a place and time for the meeting with the representative of the potential partner organisation, you may choose to send an article or two describing some successes of AVP and other literature to give them some more background on the AVP program.

Remember that these are your peers, so be confident in preparing and leading this meeting. You should feel comfortable meeting with administrators on a professional level. Dress and act accordingly.

Include at least two facilitators at the meeting if you can. Meet beforehand to decide on your agenda and roles (for example: who will be note-taker, who will take the lead, who will describe history, etc.).

Use your AVP skills — particularly listening. Listen to any concerns the potential partner expresses. Offer to help in any way that is consistent with AVP ideals and methods.

Stress your commitment to protecting the integrity of AVP methods, values and organisation. Let them know that the policies and procedures have been developed over the more than 40-year history of AVP, do not change from one country to another and have proven to be effective.

AVP workshops require 18-22 hours, plus -- for program hosts -- planning and debriefing time. If you are asked for shortened workshops or for non-participants to be present in the room, or for any other changes to the standard AVP workshop, explain the reasons why the AVP workshop is as it is and do not agree to these conditions. As your group is able, try to accommodate the organisation's preferred schedule for the workshop as long as you don't change the total number of hours.

Participants are asked to come to AVP workshops voluntarily. If participants are required to take a workshop, they may not fully engage or participate, they may withdraw, and the experience may be spoiled for others.

Tips:

- Arrive early. Bring copies of the information already provided. Include a basic introduction to the program and its benefits in your spoken presentation -- repetition never hurts.
- Take a copy of the Basic manual with you and be prepared to use the manual to support your statements about the key requirements for a workshop.
- Introduce yourselves, and include your experience with AVP and your professional experience if you think it is relevant (don't be shy: you are making an important impression).
- Write down the names and job titles of everyone present. If possible and if time permits, find out their job responsibilities as part of the welcoming discussion.
- Present AVP's history and its worldwide impact, and when and how it started in your country.
- Consider sharing a story or example of what happens in a workshop, to demonstrate AVP's transformative nature.

When the organisation accepts the AVP program, ask for a contact person to be assigned to you to work out the details for the AVP workshops.

Formal Agreements

Sometimes partnerships are informal and sometimes there is a formal written agreement with the partner, such as a memorandum of understanding, collaboration agreement, or contract.

An informal agreement may be enough for a program host. For a client, especially if there is an exchange of money, you will probably want a contract. For an ally, you probably don't need anything, though if the ally is letting you use their office space you may want some agreements -- such as use of the photocopy machine, the printer or the telephone. Again, a memorandum of understanding will probably be sufficient.

Before you sign a formal agreement with another organisation, you may wish to ask AVP International to review the text of the agreement. Write to legal@avp.international.

Things to include in the written agreement:

- Standard workshop requirements: number of hours, number of participants, voluntary participation, outsiders in the room, etc. -- this is not a negotiation, it is simply stating the conditions for an AVP workshop
- Intellectual property: if the partner organisation wants to include provisions regarding AVP materials (for example the AVP manuals and other print materials), note that your AVP group has permission to use AVP intellectual property, but cannot license or give rights on it -- involve AVP International in any conversation about this.
- The AVP name: the other organisation agrees to use the name or logo of AVP only with permission -- for example adding the name of your AVP group to the other organisation's website or flyers. Think about the advantages and disadvantages for your AVP group.

Confidentiality and reporting. The partner may ask you to give them information about workshop participation. You can certainly report on attendance, but not on things that participants say during a workshop. Stress that the workshop's effectiveness depends on trust, and that one of the requirements for trust is confidentiality.

Finances & Fundraising

Wherever you are or whatever type of AVP program you have, there will be costs. That never varies. What does vary is the kind of costs there are and how your group chooses to address them. Rather than looking to big NGOs in your area, look to AVP. You can learn from your AVP colleagues in other places, who may have tried things that would work well for you. But don't think you have to do what they do; use their ideas as a starting point for creative approaches of your own.

The success of an AVP program is not measured by its budget. While it's true that all AVP programs have some costs, most of what we do can be done on very little money. Before you ask yourself, "How can I raise money?" ask, "How can I do this with what I have?" Get creative about working with very little.

So don't get caught up in the money. Putting on workshops is your purpose, not raising money. The success of a program is not measured by the size of its budget.

This section of the Guide has two parts, first Finances and then Fundraising. The Finances section has suggestions on evaluating your money situation and preparing budgets for your AVP program.

The Fundraising section discusses fundraising plans, and how to approach various types of donors. And although we discourage applying for grants, the Fundraising section offers some suggestions you might find useful.

Early in the development of your program, it will be important to have a meeting to discuss money -- how it comes in and how it goes out. Be cautious about what your group is setting up as a pattern and what you are committing to, especially if you do not have a sustainable source of income.

Before your group sits down to talk about money, ask everyone to read at least the Finance section of the Guide.

Finances

Financial Organisation

The group should decide how to account for its financial dealings and status. The group's accounting practices will of course need to comply with legal requirements for a program with official status. There should be a way to record what goes in and out. For a small program, a simple ledger should do the job. Asking for receipts for purchases will help keep track of expenses.

Accounting skills are not vital to AVP, but they are to sustaining a program, so if your group doesn't include someone good at managing money, find someone you trust who is and who is willing to help.

For some, a local faith community might assume responsibility for the financial accountability and control of the way funds are accepted and dispensed. For example, a separate fund or committee of the faith community might handle receipt of fees and donations that will support the AVP program.

The Money Meeting

You should think about money and how you will manage it early in the formation of your group, so money issues don't take you by surprise and also so that your group isn't always talking about them. There are some decisions that you can probably make once and then not revisit unless you have to.

What will you spend money on? This may be nearly nothing or it may have to include travel, lodging, food or even venue rent.

Where will your income come from to cover your costs?

Your program may be one that runs on practically no money, or it may have significant expenses. If you do have significant expenses, you will need to talk about financial transparency and accountability, so that everyone knows where the money comes from and where it goes.

Basic bookkeeping is a good place to start to record the income and expenses of the AVP program. This can be as simple as a notebook with two columns, one to record the money that comes in and the other for the money that goes out. Or you can use an Excel spreadsheet on a computer.

Designate one person in your group to be the treasurer, who will be responsible for keeping track of the money. The treasurer should produce a financial report once a year, quarter or month, depending on

whether there are a lot of transactions. A second person should review the details of these reports and check the numbers. (Neither of these people needs to be a facilitator, just someone your group can trust.)

Donors will appreciate an annual report showing where their money has been spent.

You will also need to decide where to keep the money. If your facilitators simply chip in the money as needed, you won't need a bank account, but if you have larger expenses you may. Or another option may be to use the account of a faith community or social agency with a line item for your AVP program.

Find out, if you don't already know, the banking requirements of your country. In some places it may be nearly impossible to open an institutional bank account; in others, it may be required. You will certainly need a bank account if you are receiving money from abroad.

You will have to make decisions about a few questions at the start, because you probably won't be able to change them later. Will you offer facilitator stipends, and if so, how much? What does someone have to give up to facilitate a workshop?

Begin by discussing some general policies on topics such as:

- facilitator stipends
- sitting allowances
- workshop participant fees
- fees for organisations which ask us to put on a workshop for their people

This may seem early for a new organisation, but money can create difficulties if not dealt with well. Money changes the dynamic! Make decisions on these issues before they become a problem, because once money problems arise, feelings get strong.

The Finances section is still in development. Other topics that will be added include Start-Up Costs, Money Out, Money In, and Budgets

Fundraising

[Edit This](#)

Remember that the purpose of your program is to conduct workshops, not to raise money, and that is where your focus needs to be.

The income we discussed in the finance section is money that your own activities generate, such as workshop fees or fee-for-service from a client organisation. Here we discuss ways of getting help from outside the sphere of your own workshops.

Do you need to fundraise at all? That depends on whether your program will cost more than it can bring in in workshop fees. The easiest way to “fundraise” is to find ways to economise on costs or get what you need for free. If you can't do that, you're in for some work. Raising funds takes up a lot of time, which means less time to spend developing your program.

AVP prides itself on being a network of local, grassroots groups and organisations, operating on small budgets and people power. International NGOs usually have a much more developed administrative network, which includes fundraising departments and permanent funding campaigns. AVP groups that try to imitate the large NGOs will quickly become distracted from their purpose, which is to hold workshops, and will find it difficult to survive.

There are three general types of donor, and each requires a different approach:

- Individual donors (family, friends, community members, others)
- Institutional donors (faith communities, businesses, other NGOs)
- Grants (charities, government, foundations)

Don't forget **in kind** donations. Food for your workshops, bookkeeping, paper supplies for workshops -- if you can get any of these free, that's fundraising. (See [Allies](#))

Please don't ask other AVP groups for money -- they have costs to meet too. "Facilitators do not ask other facilitators for money" is a core principle of AVP across the world. Note that AVP International does not currently provide direct financial support to local AVP groups.

You may feel that money from some sources is **unacceptable** because of the way it was earned, and receiving that money may connect your AVP program to its source; you may not want AVP's name associated with it. For example, a company that manufactures guns inherently counters the basic premise of AVP. You may also have reason to question the ethics of a company or foundation.

Fundraising Plan

If your AVP group has decided that it needs to fundraise, take the time to make a fundraising plan. Keep your initial plan as simple as possible, addressing your current needs. This plan will change over time as your program grows. Use the program budget you developed in the [Finances](#) section as the basis for your fundraising plan. Include a calendar of fundraising tasks, with names of the people who are assigned to doing them.

And before the fundraising plan, you should have a program plan. With that, you can present a coherent picture of your work to a potential donor.

Do some research! There are thousands of websites that help you fundraise. Do a web search for tips on fundraising in your area. Try searching with the keywords "fundraising" or "fundraising plan".

Take a look at www.thefundraisingauthority.com for interesting articles and advice on many aspects related to fundraising.

It is tempting to undertake a fundraising event, such as concerts or dinners. Before you take it on, think about what you are trying to accomplish: some events are designed to raise money, some to make new contracts and strengthen the AVP community with money a lower priority. Whichever you are doing, know that fundraising events usually involve a great deal of time and work, and often don't bring in enough to justify the trouble.

While you're at it, you might want to consider fundraising products, possibly t-shirts or mugs with your logo on them. You will have the expense of the initial purchase, which will pay itself back over time and bring in some money for your organisation.

If you have been in operation for some time, you will have a list of contacts. This would not be your participant database but people or businesses that have helped your work in some way. Some organisations send an annual fundraising letter to their network, and there will be suggestions for how to word it on any number of websites.

Then if you need more than usual for some particular purpose (sending delegates to the World Gathering, starting a program in a new place), that might be the time for a *fundraising campaign*, for which you name something you want to achieve and set an amount that you need to raise. There is often a deadline. Then you publicise it to everybody you can think of, with special appeals and perhaps events.

Keep fundraising opportunities in your mind, because you never know when an opportunity may arise and it's good to be ready to take advantage of it. But it doesn't have to dominate every discussion. Designate a small group to carry out this work and keep track of who is doing what -- although it's everybody's job to be on the lookout for opportunities.

Click [here](#) for general fundraising tips.

Donors & Donations

Fundraising is about communicating with people in a way that gets them to act - to give you money. There are three key ingredients in a persuasive communication:

1. The credibility of the speaker and of AVP. The donor needs to have faith both in AVP as an effective program and in you as someone who can carry out the work.
2. The emotional connection with the audience or reader. The project has to feel important, it has to matter in the lives or communities of the people you are talking to.
3. A logical plan to get the job done. Even if the donor believes in you and the issue matters to them, they still have to be convinced that you have a well-designed and well-managed plan to accomplish the task.

People like to help. And it's people who should be the focus of your fundraising rather than institutions. An advantage of asking individuals for donations is that they are usually willing to give to your program in general. People want to help your work and trust you to use their gift for the benefit of your program. But know your audience. Sometimes it may be more effective to say you need to fund a particular project, such as two months' worth of workshop meals or bus fare for two travelling facilitators, than to say, "please help our work."

Start by looking locally, then expand your scope if you need to. You have a network of contacts. The core of anybody's network is friends and family. Moving beyond that are people who have taken a workshop, then people who have expressed interest in taking one, then people who have had some contact with AVP information, perhaps at a community event, see [Promotion](#). Some, probably not all, will be interested in helping AVP succeed, which may include giving some money.

Building relationships with people will make asking for a donation much easier. Let them know why your work is important to you, why it matters to the community, and what it might offer to them.

Ask for a small contribution. How small is “small”? Go with your best guess on what would feel comfortable to the person you’re talking to.

Be prepared to answer the question, “What do you need?” Will the person you are talking with donate \$20 for workshop supplies? \$100 for the meals for a workshop? \$500 to bring in facilitators from another AVP program? \$1,000 to send a facilitator to the world gathering? It helps to be able to say what different amounts will buy, or what it costs to run your program for a year. Demonstrating that your program doesn’t operate on a large scale makes the point that every little bit helps.

Your best sources are your local sources. It is worth the time to build relationships with them, because they are the people who know you, who know your community, and to whom you can keep going back.

Fundraising within your community can also be an outreach method, bringing you new contacts and friends.

What are some other kinds of prospects for charitable giving? Local clubs, societies, associations, workers’ unions, giving clubs of small donors who pool their money, sports teams, employee organisations within companies, and more. This isn’t library or internet research - it’s basic community networking, outreach, using your program’s inner circle to explore your community.

Making a Presentation

You might be asked to make a presentation to a local club. Or perhaps you want to prepare and send out a fundraising appeal, a letter or card, asking people to help support your work. Preparing the same kinds of information is going to enable you to write and speak persuasively. See [Organisational Overview](#) for a suggested list of things to think about in order to present your AVP organisation.

As you put together your own presentation, use common language. Instead of saying “AVP workshops are experiential”, say something like “in AVP workshops we practice communication skills, community building and conflict resolution”. Make it your own.

Include an action request (“will you support us?”), a phrase that people will respond to (“finding other ways to resolve conflicts”), and what your volunteers are already contributing to the work (“facilitate workshops”).

Here’s a hypothetical example:

AVP Guadalajara has been holding workshops regularly in the local prison for 3 years. Our 8 volunteers facilitate workshops helping people find other ways to resolve conflicts. The local high school has a bullying problem and has asked for our help. Will you support this new project?

See [Promotion](#) for other tips on presenting your AVP program.

Donor Relations

Record-keeping is important, so you knew who gave what, when and (if relevant) for what purpose. Get people on mailing lists until they ask you to take them off!

There should be a way that anyone who solicits funds can know who has been asked for what, and when, so your donors aren't receiving repeated requests. This can be, for instance, a record of contacts with donors in your spreadsheet.

The “secret” about individual giving is that it becomes a habit - people develop a connection to you and your organisation and repeat their gifts. But they won't repeat their gifts without the occasional reminder from you, and your database will tell you whom to remind and when.

Finally, maintain the relationships and keep people up to date on what you're doing. DON'T just take their gift and then ignore them! A simple thank-you note, email or card is a good place to start. But if you can, provide some kind of regular newsletter, bulletin or other communication that tells your donors what's happening in “their” organisation. Good news about the recipient of a gift can be the best thank you.

Think about hosting a dinner or other social event to thank your donors.

About Donations

Most institutional donors require registered status (see [Registering as an Organisation](#)), as it enables them to hold the organisation they donate to accountable for spending the donation they have given. Funders usually require the AVP program's legal representative to sign an agreement that the money will be spent for the purpose for which it was intended.

Some countries may not permit charities to receive donations from outside the country while others may place restrictions on charities receiving government or foreign funding. Sometimes in-country donations to certain types of charities are tax deductible; consult the appropriate tax authorities in your country.

You may well want to ask a faith-based organisation to support your work. If you do, make it clear that AVP is non-religious and open to people of all faiths, and it cannot promote any one religion. However, the message of AVP harmonises well with that of many faiths, so religious groups may well want to support your work.

Foundations & Grants

Applying for grants is difficult and time-consuming. Think carefully about whether you want to go down that path, and remember that grantmakers are unpredictable. Remember that there are other good organisations pursuing the same money -- yours will not be the only application the foundation receives. In particular, unsolicited proposals to strangers at large foundations will probably get you nowhere. Your fundraising efforts will be more successful if you develop a base of local donors.

A foundation is a charitable organisation that makes grants to non-profits and community organisations. A grant is a gift of money, usually one-time, to an organization rather than an individual. Many corporations and businesses make charitable donations either through their own foundations or through smaller gifts to local programs and charities.

Many foundations are too big to make grants of the size an AVP program typically needs.

Foundations range from small to enormous, and so do their grants. You will be best advised to look at ones that make grants in the range you're looking for -- the enormous ones won't look at you if your total budget is under, say, a million dollars.

There are many more smaller foundations offering smaller amounts. Look for these smaller foundations in your own country, because small foundations in other countries will have no way to evaluate your program, and funders want their gifts to be effective.

In addition, the laws in the foundation's home country for making out-of-country grants may be very complicated and more than most small foundations can deal with. And the laws in your own country may make it complicated or even illegal for organisations to receive donations from abroad.

A grant this year may not be repeated next year, and you want to be sure you haven't landed yourself with more program than you can maintain.

An AVP group once received a US\$1 million grant and used the money to train hundreds of facilitators. When the money was gone, so was the program. They were unable to sustain the program without any additional influx of cash. You can't rely on foundations to be steady supporters.

How do you find foundation donors?

The Grantsmanship Center is an online resource that can be of real help to AVP programs: <http://www.tgci.com/international-funding-sources>. But it will take time and patience to wade through all the entries.

For these or any other potential foundation funding sources, do your homework, explore the foundation's website, especially the FAQ section. Find out what kinds of program the foundation funds, their geographical coverage and how large their grants are. Eliminate the ones that fund, say, environmental organisations or schools, or anything else that isn't AVP; focus on ones that fund activities that might fit AVP. Look at their list of grants: if their grants are much larger than the amount you're looking for, they won't waste their time on you.

Foundations will probably not make a grant for your whole budget; don't ask for more than 20% of your budget, and probably a good deal less. Also, say what that particular grant will go for, since foundations and corporations tend not to make grants for "general operating expenses," but prefer to support specific projects with clearly defined objectives, timetables and budgets. Funders are unlikely to give startup or seed money for AVP programs; they want to see that you've been active for a while.

In any case, a foundation will want you to write a proposal to document your program and your request.

Proposals

Many foundations do not accept unsolicited applications. Their website will tell you whether or not they do, and when their deadlines are. Follow the instructions you find on that foundation's website.

A letter of inquiry (LOI) is the first document you'll submit. That will describe your organisation and its work and give information about how long you've been in operation. The website will often give you a form you can fill in for the letter. If the foundation decides not to fund you, they will probably reply and say so.

If the foundation is interested, they will probably invite you to submit a proposal. The proposal application form will ask for whatever information the funder needs.

When you write a proposal to a grantmaking organisation, figure out what you will need to do the work you're covering and then add 10-15% more, because there will be some general organisational costs needed to make the work happen. The application form may provide a place for this information, often with a percentage limit.

For tips on submitting grant proposals, click [here](#).

You may be interested in approaching an international aid organisation. You can find which ones are working in your country by looking online.

The United States AID program (<https://www.usaid.gov>), for example, supports social service and humanitarian organisations around the world including Latin America, Middle East, Africa, Southeast Europe, Southeast Asia, etc. The website gives very detailed information in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Creole on how to apply for a grant. Of course, if your country does not have good relations with the US, you may not want to pursue this approach.

Organising Guide Resources

Following you will find a list of links to documents referenced in the text of this Organising Guide.

[Information on membership with AVP International for AVP groups](#)

[Suggested Agenda for a Demonstration Workshop](#)

[List of Materials for AVP Workshops and Workshop Kits](#)

- [How to prepare the Transforming Power Keys](#)

[Criteria for venues or locations for AVP workshops](#)

[Guidelines for Visiting Prisons](#)

[Sample Workshop Evaluation Form 1](#)

[Sample Workshop Evaluation Form 2](#)

The AVP Organising Guide is certainly not a “finished product”. This Guide is a “living” document, encouraging ideas on how to improve it. At the end of each page in the online version of this Guide, there is an invitation to offer comments. Help build this Resources section by sending materials to materials@avp.international.

Thank you, for helping to develop the content of the AVP International Organising Guide.

Membership

AVP International invites national, subnational or local AVP groups or organisations to consider applying for membership with our growing global organisation.

There are facilitators and groups holding AVP workshops in over 50 countries around the world. The primary function of AVP International is to support these workshops by sharing materials and knowledge, and connecting our global network. Becoming a member of AVP International means having the support of a global organisation for the work being done on the ground, in the community, in schools, prisons, organisations, refugee camps, etc. It also means being a part of something bigger, sharing information and experiences and learning from and about each other.

See the Cover Letter and Membership Agreement below for details on the benefits of membership with AVP International and also the responsibilities and expectations of member AVP groups and organisations.

[AVP International Membership Agreement July2016](#)

[AVP International Membership Cover Letter July2016](#)

Suggested Agenda for a demonstration workshop

Suggested agenda for a “mini” or demonstration workshop (2 1/2 hours)

Welcome

Opening talk: Who we are, purpose of this workshop

Introduction of facilitators and participants: “One thing I hope to get out of this workshop is...”

Adjective (or Positive) Name

Affirmation exercise

Light and lively

Introduction to Transforming Power or Concentric Circles

Evaluation

Closing: “Something I enjoyed about this workshop is...”

[Download: Suggested Agenda for a demonstration workshop](#)

Location Criteria

Workshop Venue or Location Criteria

There are really only three things that are essential for where workshops can be held: sufficient space for the group to gather, enough light to see each other, and privacy. AVP workshops have been held in all types of locations from open-air on a beach to fancy hotel ballrooms.

Some things to think about when arranging workshop venues or locations:

Space

- enclosed space
- climate control
- walls - ask for permission to use tape on walls or windows (blue painter's tape will not harm painted surfaces)
- natural or artificial light - will the workshop hours be affected by the availability of light?

Chairs

- sufficient for all workshop participants and the facilitator plus a few extra chairs
- moveable, sturdy chairs -- remember there's a lot of moving around in an AVP workshop
- without tablet preferred

Work surfaces

- tables or surfaces for small group activities (4-6 people)
- extra table (or two) or surface for the facilitator team and workshop materials
- moveable, preferred

Other considerations

- bathroom facilities
- wheelchair accessible
- access to the location before the workshop starts

[Download: Workshop venue or location criteria](#)

Workshop Materials

Workshop Materials

- all facilitators should have, as a minimum, a copy of the basic (2002) and advanced (2005) US reference manuals (print or electronic); manuals in different languages can be downloaded from the Resources section on the [AVP International website](#)
- each group should also have the facilitators training manual (2013) and the youth manual (2000) to provide copies of these to facilitators as needed
- gather two sets of workshop materials (*see below*)
- prepare transforming power [mandalas](#)
- prepare transforming power [keys](#)

- prepare sets of [broken squares](#)
- collect up items for light and livelies (*see the AVP Basic, Advanced and Facilitators Training Manuals for details of specific items needed*)
- gather two sets of items and materials for all exercises (*see the AVP Manuals*)
- copy handouts, transforming power guidelines, evaluation forms, report forms, workshop certificates, etc. - making copies in bulk is often much cheaper than simply copying what you need for a specific workshop
- have two large containers (plastic, cardboard, strong cloth bag), one for each set of workshop materials

Suggested list of Materials needed for any AVP workshop:

- Large / poster size sheets of paper
 - use the cheapest type of paper possible (eg. newsprint)
 - 30 sheets, approximately, are needed for each workshop
- Masking tape
 - if possible, use painter's tape (often blue) as this will not damage wall surfaces
 - two rolls
- Large markers
 - selection of darker colours that can be seen from a distance (ie. avoid yellow, light orange, light brown, etc.)
 - check the markers from time to time as they will dry out
 - 7-10 markers per set of materials
- Coloured markers (felt tip pens) or coloured pencils
 - markers will dry out over time and pencils will need to be sharpened
 - different colours and multiples of each colour
- Pencils and pencil sharpener
 - 25 per set of materials
- Pens
 - check pens from time to time to make sure they work
 - 25 per set of materials
- Scrap paper
 - 20 sheets per workshop

[Download: Workshop Materials.pdf](#)

Guidelines for Visiting Prisons

It is virtually impossible to offer guidelines that would be applicable in every prison or correctional facility around the world. What is offered here is only a starting point. Ask the prison you will be visiting for a copy of their rules and dress code. Talk with other people you know who have visited prisons about their experiences.

- do not be surprised if things change from one day to the next in terms of what you can and cannot bring into a prison
- do not ask inmates why they are incarcerated --- it's not your business and it's probably not relevant to the AVP workshop

- be courteous and respectful, but not familiar, with the prison staff
- do not ask for special favours or for the rules to be changed just for you
- set your own boundaries as to what you will share with inmates about yourself
- personal relationships with inmates will affect the AVP program
- there is always someone watching what you do in prison

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I join the international AVP email discussion group for AVP facilitators?

After you have become a registered user on the [AVP International website](#) and you are signed in to that site, visit the For Facilitators section for instructions on how to join the different AVP International email groups (listservs).

Does AVP International offer seed grants or financial support for local AVP programs?

AVP International is not able to offer financial support to AVP programs and groups at this time.

I've heard of an AVP newsletter called The Transformer, where can I find it?

The Transformer is a publication produced by AVP USA.

You may be able to access past issues by visiting <http://thetransformer.us/> or by navigating through the facilitator pages on the [AVP USA website](#) if you are a registered user for that site.

Can AVP International help an AVP program to set up a nongovernmental organisation?

AVP International can provide paperwork to support an AVP program to set up a nongovernmental organisation. However, the AVP program must be a recognised member of AVP International. See [Membership](#).

Are there foundations or other funding sources that can be approached to support an AVP program?

Take a look at the [Foundations & Grants](#) section of the Organising Guide. Do you have any suggestions for other AVP groups? Share your story about applying for funding on the forum.

What should I do when only 3 people are booked for a workshop?

The AVP workshops were designed for groups of 20 participants. When there are fewer than 20 participants, the dynamics of the workshop will change and the facilitator team will need to accommodate this. The local AVP program could decide what its own parameters are for workshop size. Consult the [AVP Workshop Elements booklet](#).

How can I talk with someone at AVP International?

Send a message via the contact form and you'll receive a response inviting you to a conversation.

[Contact Form](#)

