

## What is the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) ?

**It is a program of experiential workshops**, helping people change their lives.

**It is a community program**, offering a new approach for community groups, social service agencies, youth organisations and individuals who would like to participate.

**It is a prison program**, helping inmates learn new skills and attitudes that can help lead to fulfilling and non-violent lives.

**It is a program for everybody**, drawing its participants and its facilitators from all religions, cultures, races and walks of life.

**It is a personal program**, using our own experiences to explore how we personally respond to other people and to consider new ways of relating to others. The focus is not on dealing with other people's conflicts.

**It is an intensive learning experience**, offering two or three day workshops on two levels:

1. The Basic Workshop, and
2. The Advanced Workshop.

### It is based on

- Our power to transform
- Respecting ourselves
- Caring for others
- Expecting the best
- Thinking before reacting
- Seeking a non-violent path

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## Who runs the Alternatives to Violence?

The Alternatives to Violence Project began in 1975 when prisoners in New York working with youth gangs and young offenders asked Quakers to help develop workshops exploring non-violent relationships.

In 1991, AVP program was brought to Australia where it has been steadily growing ever since. AVP is now an independent network of volunteer organisations in each state.

The Alternatives to Violence Project (NSW) is an incorporated non-profit organisation with groups of volunteers in Sydney, Newcastle, Canberra and the Blue Mountains.



Alternatives to Violence

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# THE ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Workshops  
on  
Nonviolent relationships  
Conflict Transformation  
Communication  
Self esteem



"C'mon, c'mon—it's either one or the other."

Violence  
There are Alternatives!

### **How does the Basic Workshop work ?**

The Basic Alternatives to Violence workshop focuses on attitudes and skills which help resolve conflicts. Step-by-step experiences and exercises explore:

**Affirmation** - Building self-esteem and trust.

**Communication** - Improving both listening skills and assertive methods of expression.

**Co-operation** - Developing co-operative attitudes that avoid competitive conflicts.

**Community Building** - Acknowledging differences and recognising similarities.

**Creative Conflict Resolution** - Getting in touch with our inner power to transform situations and ourselves.

Alternatives to Violence workshops seek to assist individuals in personal growth and change.

AVP is not therapy or counselling.

Each workshop is limited to between 10 to 16 participants.

### **How does the Advanced Workshop work ?**

The Advanced Alternatives to Violence workshop focuses on things which contribute to violence. Some of the common themes explored are:

**Fear** - Reveals the hidden fears that underline anger, jealousy and prejudice.

**Anger** - Results in a deeper understanding of the personal situations that trigger anger.

**Communication** - Develops communication skills and the ability to communicate in tense and stressful situations.

**Stereotyping** - Builds awareness of stereotyping, bias and prejudice in personal relations.

**Power and Powerlessness** - Helps individuals understand power structures and get in touch with their inner power.

**Forgiveness** - Builds the groundwork for true reconciliation and freedom from guilt.

Participants must have completed a Basic workshop.

### **How to become a facilitator ?**

Begin by participating in the Basic AVP workshop and an Advanced AVP workshop. If you would like to become an AVP facilitator, discuss it with some facilitators. For aspiring facilitators, AVP provides training, including a Training for Facilitators workshop focused on developing team leadership methods and group process skills.

There are also many other ways you can support and contribute to the AVP program.

### **The Basis of the Alternative to Violence Project**

The Alternatives to Violence Project is a network of volunteers offering experiential workshops. These workshops 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.

The Alternatives to Violence Project builds upon a spiritual basis of respecting and caring for self and others. It is working both in prisons and with groups in schools and the community.

# *ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE*