

POLICY ON FACILITATOR/PARTICIPANT RELATIONSHIPS

(Approved October 5, 1995)

1. AVP's community facilitators may not have personal relationships with prison inmates or agency participants where our workshops are being conducted. This includes exchanging of letters, gifts or favors regardless of how innocent the intention. The prison and agency systems within which we work have specific regulations that we are required to know and observe to the letter. Those regulations are hereby incorporated into AVP policy.
2. Should personal a relationship develop between a community facilitator and an inmate/agency participant, s/he must first have his/her volunteer status terminated by the prison/agency through the Community Relations office. S/he should notify the AVP prison/agency coordinator(s) at the same time. Besides personal liability, the entire AVP program at a particular prison/agency is at risk if this procedure is not followed in the order stated.

Nothing here is meant to imply moral judgment about facilitator/participant relationships. Rather, the intent is to:

- a. alert new facilitators to the very powerful forces that await them in their prison/agency work
- b. give all facilitators tools with which to gently decline invitations of personal relationship
- c. protect the inmate/agency participant, who can be in a very vulnerable position in such a relationship
- d. protect the integrity of the AVP program

It is our policy that before new facilitators participate on workshop teams, they read the following materials: 1) Queries on what it means to be a member of an AVP team; 2) Queries on sexuality and AVP; 3) Gathering of women Friends going into prisons; and 4) What we wish we had been told when first going into prisons.

Experienced facilitators have volunteered to be available to all new facilitators for the purpose of processing feelings and emotions after workshops. We encourage new facilitators to identify a same-sex mentor from the experienced facilitator pool