

QUERIES ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER OF AN AVP TEAM

By the Participants in a Training for Trainers Workshop - Amawalk, NY, November 1981

- Am I willing to accept the discipline, dedication, intensity and stress that participation on an AVP team involves?
- Am I willing to give of myself with no guarantee of personal benefit, satisfaction or growth?
- Am I willing to commit the time required to develop the understanding and skills needed to become an effective team member?
- Do I have the courage to face the murderer in me, and the prisoner in me, and my own inner violence that is implicit in developing alternatives to violence?
- Is my love deep enough and wide enough and large enough to include prisoners and strangers, and even myself?
- Am I fully aware of AVP participants as having great strengths, resources, and their own inner growth direction, which I can best help by recognizing it, affirming it, and trusting it?
- Am I aware of the potential for growth in a prison experience, recognizing in what ways we are all prisoners and searching deeply for the meaning of freedom?
- Am I recognizing my own part in our beginning team work, remembering that a group is an organic whole and that each person's inner leadings and awarenesses, even as beginners, are valid and need expression if the group is to reach its highest potential?
- When confronted with a contrary opinion, angry feeling, or negative feedback, can I open myself to the meaning of it, and receive the gift that is being offered?
- Is affirmation the desire to love and be loved, and if so, is it a projection of this need in each of us, rather than a deep sharing?
- How can we refrain from judging ourselves and other people by the conflicts we haven't resolved?
- Am I loving myself and sharing my gentle love and strength with you?
- Am I recognizing all my own energy which sometimes takes the form of rage or fear?
- What is this place inside you and me from which I can respond defenselessly?
- Can I be healthy by not expressing my negative feelings?
- How can I express negative feelings so the other person or group to whom I express them is bettered? Am I freed from holding on to these feelings?
- When someone says "I don't want to be with you right now," can I accept that as a statement rather than feeling rejected?
- Do I allow time to consider the needs of the individuals in the group, including myself?
- Do I listen to the feelings and words being expressed, and reflect them for the sake of mutual understanding?
- Are we mindful of the truth in each other's positions and uncomfortable feelings, searching for new ways to express and develop an integrating experience and a caring community?
- Do I give counter-suggestions or disagreement respectful attention, considering carefully the validity of all viewpoints, before going along with one?
- Can we move back and forth from reflection to action, from positive to negative awareness, from strong commitment to open searching, from joy to pain, welcoming the opportunities of life's paradoxical focus?

- Do I allow and accept support from my teammates as I am willing to support them? Am I sensitive to the kind of support that is needed?

AVP Basic Manual