

Introduction to Alternatives to Violence Project, Britain (AVP Britain)



What is AVP Britain and what do we do?

AVP Britain is a registered national charity, which helps people across society learn how to manage anger, handle conflict, and build better relationships with others. They run workshops in prisons and the general community, and a distance learning course for those who are unable to attend. Both formats are experiential, inviting people to consider their own behaviours and seeing for themselves what worked out well, and what didn't. As they say, 'we are all teachers and learners.'

The history of Alternatives to Violence Project

AVP was initiated by Quakers in 1975 in response to requests for help from a group of long-term prisoners in Greenhaven prison, New York, who wanted support dealing with an influx of younger, violent inmates. AVP's instant success led to it becoming an international conflict resolution programme. It initially spread within the prison system, then into the wider community, and ultimately overseas. AVP now has a presence in over 40 countries around the world. Although now independent of Quakers, it retains close ties, and in Britain Quakers make up the majority of members.

AVP started work in Britain in 1988, and became a registered charity in 1997. Currently operating with just three part-time workers, only the commitment of more than 100 volunteers has enabled AVP Britain to continue to deliver workshops – now online, and enrol almost 6,000 prisoners on the distance learning programme