AVP/ Alternatives to Violence Project

Session 1  Focus topic: Trauma  Monday  8/17, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
Trauma is a perceived threat that overwhelms usual functioning or adaptability with a sense of terror or helplessness, constricting attention to self-preservation. It is a mental state of collapse and disorganization that occurs when one cannot resist or flee a perceived threat, instilling deep patterns of emotional distress. No instance is universally traumatic, so one can’t judge the event alone. Trauma is a feeling that is so overwhelming that one is reduced to terror and helplessness. Trauma is a normal reaction to an abnormal event or situation.

Session 2  Focus topic: Resilience  Monday 8/24, 10-11:30 a.m.
Resilience is the ability to bend without breaking, the capacity to bounce back after adversity, the ability to withstand hardship and recover.
Trauma causes a sense of powerlessness, futility and paralysis. One can also experience the secondary trauma of hearing about and seeing horrific stories. Trauma sets in when we feel our needs outstrip our resources.
If we experience the power of life as greater than human powers, then we become resilient to trauma and this sense of paralysis. Acting in love, integrity and kindness in the face of human tragedy is a joy, not a burden.

AVP / Alternatives to Violence Project is an experiential program that develops skills for positive communication, nonviolent problem solving and conflict resolution.

Guidelines for workshop participation
● We look for and affirm one another’s good points
● We refrain from put-downs of ourselves and others.
● We listen without interrupting; we don’t speak too long or too often.
● Volunteer yourself only.
● We observe confidentiality. What is said here stays here.
● Everyone has the right to pass.

Guides to Transforming Power  (Transforming Power is the power within all of us to shift a potentially violent situation towards a peaceful outcome)
1. Seek to resolve conflicts by reaching common ground.
2. Reach for that something good in others
3. Listen before making judgements.
4. Base your position on truth.
5. Be ready to revise your position if you are wrong.
6. Expect to experience great inward power to act courageously.
7. Risk being creative rather than violent.
8. Use surprise and humor.
9. Learn to trust your inner sense of when to act.
10. Be willing to suffer for what is important to you.
11. Be patient and persistent.
12. Build community based on honesty, respect and caring.