

# **A Way Home:**

## **Experiential Group Learning as a Means of Personal & Community Awakening**

*Everyone's a star!  
And everyone has a unique and precious bit of illumination  
to guide us all home!*

### **The Circle is the A.V.P. Habitat**

*Ask for Agreement on Ground Rules or "Cooperative Agreements":*

Look for and affirm one another's good points  
Refrain from Put-downs of Ourselves or Others (even jokes)  
Listen without Interruption  
Don't Speak too often or too long (K.I.S.S. – Keep It Short & Simple)  
Volunteer only Yourself (and your own personal information)  
Observe Confidentiality  
Everyone has the Right to Pass

Ask if anyone else wants to add something they need...

### **The Basis of the Alternatives to Violence Project (A.V.P.) format is Transforming Power**

One definition of Transforming Power could be:

**"Healing is a thought by which two [or more]  
minds  
perceive their Oneness and become glad."**

- A Course in Miracles

What's yours?

Building on that transformative foundation,  
create a safe space to grow yourself and your community  
by building exercises thoughtfully  
(there are tons to choose from or create your own!):

*Affirmation*  
*Communication*  
*Cooperation*  
*Trust*  
*Ever Increasing Depth of Sharing*  
*Playful “Light & Livelies” to Balance Intensity*  
*Conflict Resolution*  
=  
*Skill Development & Sense of Unity*

### Examples of Simple Exercises:

Affirmation – Affirmation Whip: Everyone in turn mentions one positive trait they possess.

Communication – Dyads where each takes 2 minute turn “Something I’ve overcome is...”

Cooperation – Small groups build something with newspaper and masking tape and describe

Trust – Trust Walk: People take turns touring their blindfolded partner over & around obstacles

Increase Depth of Sharing – Facilitators model by going deep into their own personal realms

Light & Lively – “Mrs. Mumbly”: Ask around the circle, from person to person

“Have you seen Mrs. Mumbly?” (and related questions), but show no teeth!

Conflict Resolution – Hand Push: Partners, numbered 1 & 2, are hand to hand, ask #1s to push on #2s – notice how 2s react. Back in circle debrief. (generally 2s push back, how does that relate to the rest of humanity’s dealings, etc.?)

- Ideally events are co-facilitated by a team with agendas created by consensus.
- No one is “teacher.”
- The group is oriented to each exercise by one of the facilitators.
- The exercise is performed and then “debriefed”:  
“What did you notice? How did that feel? What did that remind you of? How does that relate to your life, etc.”
- The wisdom is culled from the life experiences of all participants (and therefore comes with tremendous buy-in!)