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For Immediate Release

July 20, 2017

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O.J. Simpson Credits **Alternatives to Violence Project** training to helping him deal with conflict while in Lovelock Correctional Facility

Lovelock, Nevada - On Thursday, July 20, 2017, after 9 years of incarceration for armed robbery, O.J. Simpson sat in on his Parole hearing. During the hearing he stated the programs and steps he took to rehabilitate saying: "I took two courses (Basic & Advanced) that I guess you guys don't give much credit to. It's called Alternatives to Violence. It's the most important course anyone in this prison could take as it teaches you to solve conflict through conversation."

OJ Simpson is one of thousands of persons who have been incarcerated that have benefited from these trainings. Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops and trainings are currently given in 32 states and more than 50 countries. In 2016, AVP conducted workshops in 109 correctional facilities in the USA. More than 15,000 persons who were in prisons were trained in 1,033 workshops by more than 1700 facilitators who were also incarcerated.

"This is the first time I felt like a human being in 30 years, AVP saved my life," Jason Guinn (now paroled Facilitator in Texas).

Since 1975, when a group of Quakers were invited into Green Haven Prison in upstate New York, the Alternatives to Violence Project has been a powerful force for transformation inside of prison and in community groups in the USA and around the globe. Participants practice in an environment where they can be open and honest. They learn trust and communication skills, practice empathy, build community, and practice resolving conflict nonviolently. The training is also given in communities and schools with a vision of creating a more collaborative world where we are able to work through conflicts rather than avoid them or resort to violence.

"AVP has opened up a whole new world for me that I never knew existed. I used to think, where there is a will, there is a way, and I usually meant a violent way. Now I think that

where there is a will, there is a non-violent way, and I am going to look for it," Dependable Dale (now paroled Facilitator in Indiana).

AVP-USA is an association of community, school and prison-based groups offering experiential workshops in personal growth, community development and creative conflict resolution. Founded in prisons and developed from the real life experiences of prisoners, AVP encourages every person's innate power to positively transform first themselves and then the world we live in. Alternatives to Violence Project brings together diverse groups of people to build Dr. King's nonviolent, "beloved community." Together, we will build a more peaceful and equitable world. For more information please visit <https://www.avpusa.org>.

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