

Alternatives to Violence project in the West Bank, Palestine

The Alternatives to Violence Project is based in Hebron, supported by Bridgend Quaker meeting.

The project is part of the strategic development of Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) across Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, which started in November 2007. The initial aim is to train key groups of people in non-violent behaviours so that they are able to deal with the conflict in their lives in positive ways and transfer these behaviours to others. Ultimately, the intention is to promote more peaceful relations between the Palestinian and Israeli communities.

Most of the women who have participated in the AVP workshop suffer from diverse problems inside and outside their families. They joined the AVP workshop to learn new methods and ways to decrease the violence they face. During the training, the women took time to talk about themselves and their problems. They used the AVP Mandala and exercises about tolerance, empathy, values and concentric circles to help address problems and conflicts within their families (with children and their husbands) and to gain self-esteem. In time the women began to be able to talk about themselves assertively, recognizing their strengths and weaknesses. Taking part in the training also helped the women form supportive relationships in the group.

Some participants wish to become trainers in the future, so a Training for Trainers course is planned.

