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VOLUME THIRTY-THREE ◆ NUMBER TWO



- FD: Bangladesh & West Virginia
- Why I serve
- Recovery in the Jungle



THE
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

The NA Way Magazine, published in English, Farsi, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish, belongs to the members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission, therefore, is to provide each member with recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment, which speaks to current issues and events relevant to each of our members worldwide. In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff is dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around the world, as well as providing current service and convention information. Foremost, the journal is dedicated to the celebration of our message of recovery—"that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."

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From the editor

This issue of *The NA Way* reaches into many corners of the world and of our recovery program. Members share about the challenges and triumphs of living clean. Service bodies highlight the rewards of working together to help carry the NA message. And trusted servants reflect on the gifts we gain through recovery and service. This is a [World Service Conference](#) year, so of course we've included information and sharing about that experience, too.

We hope you don't mind yet another reminder about electronic subscriptions as a part of our ongoing cost-saving efforts. We've delayed the upcoming subscription database cleanup, which we hope allows plenty of time for you to make or prepare for a change. Please visit www.naway.org to check out current and past issues (back to 1997). Hover your mouse on the cover of recent issues to access and print the cover "poster." Display these yourself or frame them as NA birthday/anniversary gifts. And click around throughout each issue for links to area and regional websites, related information and articles.

Finally, it seems like it's been a while since this column included a heartfelt thank you. Recovering addicts all over the world share their recovery, provide information, and help make connections for *The NA Way*. Thank you for sharing your personal experiences, for your service, and for your ongoing support. And keep those cards and letters coming!

De J, Editor

IN THIS ISSUE

Feature	3	Service Center:	
• Recovery in the Jungle		Workshops around the world	9
Sharing	5	Fellowship development	13
• A silent influence		Why I serve	15
• Walking through		Calendar	18
• Medication: A conscious decision		NAWS Product Update	19
• The storm		Coming Soon	20
Basic caption contest	8		

Electronic subscribers can click here for additional content.

Cover photo: Street art by an NA member in Tauá, Ilha do Governador, Rio de Janeiro.
Photo: Joe T, Oregon, USA

The NA Way Magazine welcomes letters from all readers. Letters to the editor can respond to any article that has appeared in *The NA Way*, or can simply be a viewpoint about an issue of concern in the NA Fellowship. Letters should be no more than 250 words, and we reserve the right to edit. All letters must include a signature, valid address, and phone number. First name and last initial will be used as the signature line unless the writer requests anonymity.

Recovery in the Jungle

One keytag...

One Sunday when we were in the refugee camp at Calais, France, we were building a shelter for an Iranian family. One of the Iranian fellows congregating near us sat talking with me in his broken English. He offered me a smoke of his joint, which I obviously declined, and we continued to talk some more, with him saying that unless he made it to England he would kill himself, as he had no other options. Such is the desperate and hopeless nature of the Calais Jungle.

In my efforts to offer this wretched man some hope, I said he couldn't know what would happen, that you never know how life can change. "Look at my husband," I said, pointing to my husband as he built a shelter. "He was a heroin addict, homeless, in jails and hospitals, and now we have a family, health, and love in our lives." The man went quiet, and then asked me if I had heard of NA! I said I had, but he didn't believe me until I showed him my NA keytag—and then he started crying.

It turns out that this guy—this one man in 6,000+ living in the refugee camp whom I happened to talk to—had been six and a half years clean in Iran. He fled Iran and found himself in the arse end of humanity, his last hope, the Calais Jungle; and in desperation he relapsed. Now, at this darkest point when his faith was lost, his higher power reminded him that he is still involved, still a part of the NA Fellowship.

Six thousand people in that camp, and our ragtag little crew ended up talking to him. It blows my tiny mind. When has the phrase "never alone, never again" been more apt?

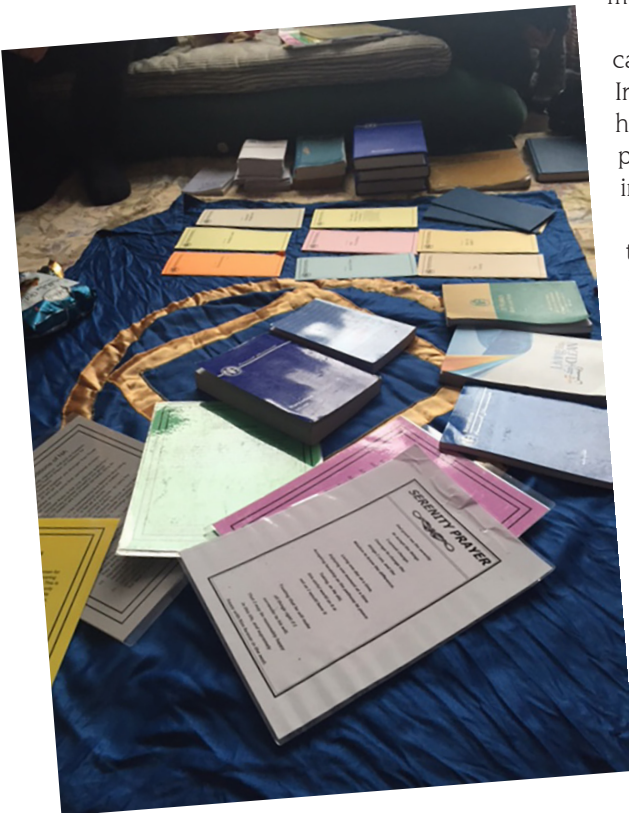
Since then, we have worked with other NA members from London, Brighton, and other locations in England and with several French NA members. We obtained Farsi literature and started meetings there in the refugee camp. Today a daily meeting with about 25 "local" members who live in the camp continues to meet.

Amanda A, Lancashire, England

...and twelve steps

What can I add to Amanda's testimony? The English NA members have been incredibly supportive, implementing the meeting and coming over several times from the beginning. Our outreach committee, Comité Aide aux Groupes (CAG), and individual French members have supported it, too, traveling there almost every Saturday. The support and coordination of the few Farsi-speaking NA members in Paris (including a guy who once lived in the Calais Jungle) are extremely valuable, as none of the Iranian members in the Calais Jungle speak French or English.

The first meeting took place Saturday, 28 November 2015, with three "local" addicts (camp residents) plus a dozen English and French addicts. One month later, there were



Literature at the Calais Jungle meeting

18 people at the meeting, including 15 Jungle locals! Most of them are Iranians, as the meeting is held in Farsi, but also because there are many thousands of meetings in Iran and so many people who know the NA program.

When we go over, we attend the meeting and we usually try to support them in some other ways, too—maybe some public information/relations service or helping to build a wooden shelter, for example. As we all know, this experience works both ways: for them, who sometimes feel so desperate, and at the same time full of determination; for us, whose the round-trip by car (seven hours) is always filled with laughter and sharing. And together, during the meeting, we all experience the strength of the program, the feeling of NA fellowship, and of a higher power binding us together, beyond culture and beyond language barriers. This is the meaning that comes to us through the Twelve Steps.



Calais Jungle meeting tent

Arnaud A, Paris, France



Get More, Give More

Subscription changes are coming!

In the October 2015 and January 2016 *NA Way*, we reported on our efforts to decrease costs by encouraging electronic *NA Way* subscriptions. Many of you responded, and we thank you for your choice to e-subscribe! We are grateful for your ongoing interest in and support of our recovery journal.

We do still have a large quantity of “duplicate” subscriptions. Some members have both a paper and electronic subscription. We believe many of these duplicates were entered in error or may have been the result of a switch to the electronic version without also discontinuing the paper copy.

In an effort to clean up our subscription database and decrease these duplications, after the April 2016 issue, we will discontinue the paper version of duplicate subscriptions. (We originally planned this for the end of February, but have delayed it to allow ample time to notify you.)

With the electronic *NA Way*, you enjoy additional content—and your e-sub contributes to our ongoing cost-saving efforts. We are not discontinuing paper subscriptions altogether, and if you still need the paper version, you will be able to resubscribe after the cleanup. We’ll email everyone who has a duplicate subscription before we make this change. This means all of us will get more, give more!

Adjust your subscription at www.na.org/subscribe
(or email naway@na.org with “get more, give more” in the subject line)

Thank you for supporting *The NA Way Magazine*

A silent influence

I never imagined that my immigrant condition in a country with a language and lifestyle completely different from mine could impact what seemed to be a solid recovery process. The urgent need to adapt forced me to drastically modify my daily routine. Due to the fact that I've always had a special talent for converting real motives into absurd excuses, little time went by before I began to feel afraid, sad, and sour.

The challenging process to adapt to my new reality dramatically shook my interior view. The work I did helped me to develop a new degree of paranoia. Personal relationships just about disappeared. My time and energy were exclusively dedicated to earning money to take care of my family. After a few months I felt so tired and depressed that the fellowship atmosphere in the few NA meetings I was attending began to seem insipid, and the messages I was hearing in meetings tasted like stale bread. After this, I lost any kind of contact with the meaning of recovery.

At one time I felt I had come to this country not to earn anything for the future, but instead to repay everything that I had done in the past. It was then that I decided to look for ways to obtain certain rewards for my sacrifice. I thought extramarital relations with purely recreational motives would not represent great danger. I was not able to see how addiction was taking control of my life in an insidious manner. In reality I was putting my head in a guillotine in a naive way. Beyond the immediate "rewards" I had achieved, my sexual escapades began to have consequences.

As I continued to accumulate years of cleantime (which I did not celebrate, nor was I grateful for, because I had lost the emotions of doing it and I didn't have a home group where I could share about it), other problems began to develop. First I started getting panic attacks, and then I had a perturbing agoraphobia, and finally I experienced the unfulfilling aftermath of anxiety, known as depersonalization. I felt like an empty human being walking on a distant planet.

I had almost 20 years clean and I hadn't used drugs (it wouldn't even cross my mind to do so), but I wanted to die to end the personal torture I had created for myself. The obsession to die tormented me from the minute I opened my eyes every morning. But my stubbornness did not have any limits. I tried to take things lightly, tried not to take things so seriously, even to the point where I would joke about it. But I forgot one crucial detail: Addiction does not have a sense of humor. My wife pushed me to attend NA meetings again. I had again become an intractable person. I was full of resentment and fear. I insisted on carrying on my own will. I felt like a victim and I accused everyone for my distress. I was indifferent to everyone else's pain.

When I could not stand myself anymore, I considered that perhaps I needed help. The desperation was such that I was willing to attend English-speaking meetings even though I never felt comfortable in them because I always had more to say than what I could express. However, I was then surprised to discover that there were two Spanish-speaking meetings in the area where I lived. In spite of the initial sense of relief that I felt, I quickly realized that attending meetings was not enough. If I really wanted to get out of this bottomless pit and begin to breathe the fresh air of recovery again, I would have to do everything that every member of NA around the world does: get a sponsor, work the steps, and be of service.

In the same way that addiction manifests itself, silently growing and injecting its poison, so also does God make us aware of His powerful influence through the program and the Fellowship of NA. At first it seemed like nothing was changing. Although I noticed some progress, I still had that sensation of insecurity and fear that something terrible could happen at any given time, and this would take me to continue looking

We entertained the thought that staying clean was not paying off, and the old thinking stirred up self-pity, resentment and anger.

Basic Text, Chapter Ten,
"More Will Be Revealed"

at people, places, and things as if they were something strange, far away, and different.

And then, suddenly one day, I became aware of the dimension of the miracle. I woke up in the morning and realized it had been a while since I had had those terrible death thoughts. I also realized that the lump of nerves I had carried in my stomach had disappeared. I went out in the street and the world seemed familiar to me again. Today I can face situations and problems and I can resolve conflicts without feeling any fear. I can look at life and find solutions while holding my head up again. I can travel by train or wait for a traffic light to change without feeling that constant sensation of panic. I also started to believe that living in this country had a practical sense for my family and me, but that is something that I will probably understand more in the course of my process. It is a tremendous gift.

...our program fills my heart with joy, gratitude, and hope.

This experience has taught me that there's no solid recovery for me if I don't maintain my spiritual condition every day. I have also been reminded with indolent cruelty that addiction is incurable and that an addict alone is in bad company. It is incredible that the excess of trust can quickly take someone with many years of solid cleantime to those old patterns of conduct that are so harmful, even without using drugs. Recovery is indeed a matter of life and death in more than one way.

For this simple and powerful reason, today I am writing my inventory and working the steps with my new sponsor, who is a priceless support for this new stage of my recovery and with whom I have a fantastic relationship. I also chair meetings of those two Spanish-speaking meetings in my area. And I am again happy, grateful, and proud to be a member of NA. Although I am aware that I have much work to do in this process of change and personal growth, I have

recharged the energy that comes from the love of the Fellowship, and the wisdom of our program fills my heart with joy, gratitude, and hope. Just what I need to move on with my recovery.

Fernando M, New York, USA

Walking through

It is a beautiful autumn day. I am walking city streets, the warm sunshine tickling my cheeks. Thoughts of her invade my consciousness like bolts of electricity, without warning. Appropriate, as she was very lively. Kinetic. I try my damndest to will them away, just like every other time she invades my thoughts—especially on a day like today, when I am moaning and groaning to myself. Always just to myself. Aloud is not allowed, for then I may have to admit how selfish and ungrateful I am.

I wonder to myself what she would do in this particular life circumstance in which I currently and begrudgingly reside. I don't contemplate it for long, because I know. She would do anything to be in my situation. Anything at all. She would grab this opportunity up and make the absolute best of it, for it beats the alternative. It is hands-down better than where she lies now: in her grave.

She and I share so many similarities. So much of our lives and stories are the same. Accomplishments, defeats, experiences. She has three beautiful babies, same as me. For all intents and purposes, she is me and I am her. Except I am here, trudging the road of my existence, and she does not and will not have this "opportunity" with which I have been blessed. This scares me. It also shocks me into some awareness that maybe, just maybe, I can do as she would and Just. Do. It.

If for no other reason or motivation—and my life is full of them: people who are more precious to me than they will ever know—today I do it for her. Just for her. Because she would happily do it if she were able, and somehow her lack of choice in the matter is now my passion.

It has been said that some people have to die so that others of us may live. That is less than the salve needed to repair a soul in grief, I think. Today, though, it may be a fitting life lesson taught by her, as only she could. She helps me in death just as she did in life.

Today, I will not complain. Not even to myself. It is a luxury she does not have, so it is one I will not allow. Just for today. I am a recovering addict from Winston-Salem, NC. I wrote this about a fellow recovering addict who overdosed. She went to sleep and never woke up.

Wendy M, North Carolina, USA

Medication: A conscious decision

I have come to realize that my psychiatric condition is not a character defect, nor does taking my prescribed medication constitute using or relapse. My psychiatric physician is well aware that I am a recovering addict, and knows my history of drug abuse. I have come to understand through my support network in NA that taking my medication does not mean that I am weak in character. I am not only an addict, but I have a psychiatric disorder that requires me to take medication. I have faced—and overcome—difficulties in our program as an NA member who takes medication.

When I first started attending NA meetings, I was told I needed to be honest, so I was. When I shared, I "put my life out on the tables." At that time I did not think this was a big deal, so I shared about my recovery situations that at times involved my medications and my psychiatric issues. Since then, I have been more discerning on what should be shared with my sponsor and what should be shared "in the rooms." Initially, no one said anything negative. In fact, I was welcomed with support and felt accepted and loved. However, after a short period of time members commented in meetings about how taking medications while in recovery

conflicts with the principles of the program and that depression and anxiety are character defects and choices. As these members spoke out, some other members began to comment in support of their opinions. The issue of medication was discussed, and a few quite vocally insisted that psychiatric medication should not be taken. I began to feel the weight of a stigma, and I began to believe they were right.

I had discussions with different NA members about how and why I should get off my medications. I felt weak and guilty for taking medication, and I soon gave in to their seemingly logical information and guidance. Therefore, I stopped taking my medications. Nothing good came of this. As my mood elevated, I began to experience psychotic symptoms and suicidal ideations. After getting regulated once again on my medicine, I sought out more experienced members in NA.

Once again, I feel the support and love NA has to offer. I do not believe this is an isolated issue; there are other NA members who are on medication and struggle with these same problems in NA. This article was not written to lay blame on anyone, but rather to shed light on my experience with psychiatric medication in NA. My hope is that by my sharing my experience, others who are struggling with this issue will be helped and know that they are not alone.

Joel M, Illinois, USA

The storm

I don't remember the sun. I don't remember blizzards or power outages. Sunburn and frostbite never crossed my empty mind as I scurried along the streets looking for the next high. For days, I stayed behind closed blinds and windows, unaware of the world outside. I remember knowing that I should have been thirsty. Some days I was so high I couldn't remember if I had drunk any fluids or not.

Once I was in the middle of my addiction, it became a raging storm. The more I fed it, the bigger it became. With my identity wrapped completely around the next high, I got lost in the storm.

As a child, I loved to sit with my dad and watch thunderclouds roll in. When the lightning got too close we would go inside. Unlike the thunderclouds, I didn't see addiction creeping up on me. There was no warning that I can remember. One day, I woke up and realized that I had to have drugs in order to function. Using provided a feel-good façade that I wanted desperately. There was no alarm or warning label telling me that one day I would wake up with my face in the toilet, or on the floor in the fetal position, waiting for the dealer to call back so I could begin my day.

Recovery is like a radar system. It signals me to change direction so that I don't have to sail back into that familiar storm. Addiction's ugly face becomes clearer the longer I stay clean. I see its entry points, its tactics, and its paths. The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous remove the power from addiction. They bring this storm into the sunlight where it is exposed and rendered helpless.

When I first got clean, I followed my sponsor around and did exactly what she told me I should do. I knew I had no radar; I couldn't see what was coming. I didn't want to use, but I had no idea how to stay clean. I trusted her to steer me in a safe direction. At such a low point, in desperation, I went into survival mode. She became my rescuer.

I changed people, places, and things...slowly. It was not easy for me to make friends. I had not had any in my

life, besides family, until I found recovery. Having no higher power at the time, I considered my sponsor and the people of NA a shield, protecting me from the storm.

I learned that all I need to do, if all else fails, is go to a meeting. There is always someone there who says something I can relate to. Throughout my life I always felt like a spectator, as if I were sitting on the sidelines watching life go by, watching others succeed. I felt different and useless. Something magical happens in NA. By the end of a meeting, I always feel better. I don't feel so alone. My problems and defects of character become manageable after I've been there for that hour or so.

NA brought the seasons back to my life.

NA brought the seasons back to my life. I feel the sunshine and it makes me smile. I feel the cold wind on a snowy day. I can open the window blinds and not be paranoid. I can be grateful for the life I've lived, mistakes and all. Recovery is not all sunshine, but today my problems are rain showers rather than an unending hurricane. I know that the bad weather I go through will end. As long as I don't pick up, it will end well. The worst thing that could happen is picking up a drug again.

I am grateful for the rooms, the Twelve Steps, and my first sponsor who guided me out of the biggest storm of my life. Without them, addiction would have surely taken me six feet under.

April P, Pennsylvania, USA



Basic caption contest winner

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Basic Caption Contest! We had a record number of entries this time, so it was very difficult to choose just a few.

The winning submission is from
Marvin H of Ohio, USA.



Artwork: Dan H, California, USA

And some other notable entries:

I thought this stuff was supposed to be fun...

Ken H, Okinawa, Japan



Bald Guy: It's my higher power.

Other Guy: Wow, that's taking it to a new level, dude.

Larissa C, California, USA



Working steps isn't easy, you know. For example, look at me—I don't have any hair left on my head.

Mohammad G, Tehran, Iran



Listen, kid, please let my experience be your instruction!

Sheila D, New York, USA



Look...I traded a bag full of dope for a bag full of hope.

John G, Leicester, Great Britain



See this white keytag? Come with me tonight and get one. It can change your life.

Roger R, Virginia, USA



The next BCC

Here's your chance to participate in *The NA Way Magazine* in a whole new way. Write a caption for this comic, send it to us, and you'll be magically entered in our caption contest. We'll choose the best (and maybe a few others) for publication in an upcoming issue. Your prize will be the satisfaction of seeing your name in *The NA Way*!

Email your entry with "Basic Caption Contest" in the subject line, and be sure to include your name and where you're from in the body of the email: naway@na.org.



Artwork: Ben C, Maryland, USA

Service Center: Workshops around the world

CAR/CAT workshops

During a [World Service Conference](#) year, members around the world gather to review and discuss the *Conference Agenda Report* and Conference Approval Track materials. These reports include the motions, proposals, and ideas that will be discussed at the WSC. Participating in CAR/CAT workshops helps members understand and express their conscience on the issues presented. These discussions are usually hosted by a home group, area service committee, regional service committee, or zonal forum.

This year, one regional delegate introduced a new idea of holding "CAR/CAT parties" and this is also a record year for the online meetings and webinars. We were fortunate to receive reports from several service bodies that recently held workshops—most of them CAR/CAT workshops, but some that covered other issues. Of course, there are thousands more around the world, so this is just a very small sampling. (And we always welcome your similar

submissions at naway@na.org!) For WSC information and materials, visit www.na.org/conference.

Zonal forums

Many CAR/CAT workshops are hosted by zonal forums. A *Guide to World Services in NA* explains that "zonal forums are service-oriented sharing and/or business sessions that provide the means by which NA communities can communicate, cooperate, and grow with one another." Zonal forums are not a part of NA's formal decision-making system, but World Services, regions, and zones often work together on a variety of fellowship development and other service efforts. Most zonal forums are designed to improve communication between regional service committees and to serve as a focal point for training and fellowship development within their communities. For more information on zonal forums and planning the future of the WSC, visit www.na.org/future.



[Click here for WSC info & materials.](#)

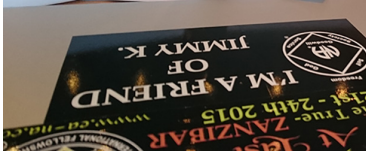
Midwest Zonal Forum

The Midwest Zonal Forum was formed at the 1987 WSC with the intent of facilitating communication between NA regions in the Midwest. Today, regions that are a part of the MZF are Chicagoland, Greater Illinois, Indiana, Metro-Detroit, Michigan, Ohio, Buckeye, and Upper Midwest. This year's CAR/CAT workshop was held in Detroit with approximately 65 participants who were treated to a tour of the [Michigan Service Office](#).



European Delegates Meeting

The EDM is a European-based forum of multilingual and multicultural NA communities inside and outside Europe whose mission is to further their common welfare and unity, support growth, and help fulfill NA's primary purpose. Participants gathered for the winter EDM in Reykjavík, Iceland. Although the EDM doesn't workshop the CAR, a portion of their discussion was on zonal representation and the future of the WSC. Some members traveled through a snowstorm to visit Gullfoss (Golden Falls) located about 100 km from the meeting location in the canyon of the Hvítá River.



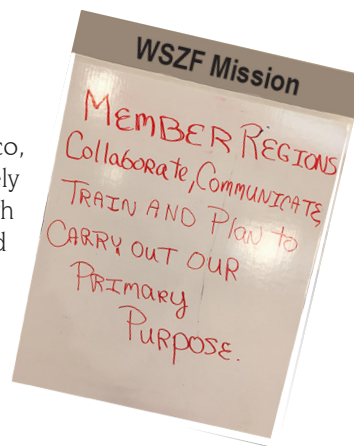
Jimmy E, Sweden



Helge B, Germany

Western States Zonal Forum

WSZF held one of the season's first CAR workshops in San Francisco, California, in early December. WSZF joins its member regions to collectively share service challenges and solutions in an annual meeting and through ongoing communication. WSZF provides training to benefit members and their service bodies. The WSZF includes Arizona, California Inland, California Midstate, Central California, Northern California, Pacific Cascade, Rio Grande, San Diego/Imperial, Sierra Sage, Southern California, Southern Idaho, Region 51, and Washington/Northern Idaho.



Multi-Regional Learning Event

This year's MRLE was hosted by the Northern New England Region in Alfred, Maine. There were approximately 35 addicts in attendance with eight regions represented—including quite a few new faces along with many respected longer-term members. The average cleantime was 16 years. We had productive and respectful discussions that included many insightful questions.

Tony F, Connecticut, USA



Egypt Region

About 25 members participated in the Egypt Region's CAR workshop 19 December. Since then (as of this writing) the CAR has been discussed at the South Cairo Group Support Forum with representatives of eight groups and the GSF trusted servants, with members of ten groups and trusted servants of the Area One Service Committee, and at a group in Alexandria (about 180 miles from Cairo) with approximately 40 members. Other sessions are being planned in upcoming weeks before the World Service Conference. This is the first time the region has had this number of CAR workshops and discussions.



Terry B, Pennsylvania, USA

Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference

The 32nd MARLCNA was held in early February in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the longtime location of this event. The [Mid-Atlantic Region](#) is composed of 15 areas, but MARLCNA draws members from all over the US East Coast and beyond. The weekend convention also includes a learning day focused during Conference years on the CAR and CAT. In non-Conference years, the learning day covers Issue Discussion Topics, NA World Services projects and updates, and other topics of interest to members of the region. Approximately 310 people participated in this year's CAR/CAT workshop.

Asia Pacific Forum

Twenty-two of the APF's member communities were represented by their RDs at this year's meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, held right after February's Thailand convention. Five trusted servants, four alternate delegates, and six others (translator, workgroup members, World Board members, and NAWS staff) also participated. China has not been represented at the APF recently, but a native Chinese member delegate (rather than an expat living in China) was able to attend this session. A brief CAR/CAT review was offered one evening, but the bulk of the meeting time was dedicated to strategic planning, fellowship development activities, workshops, and reports from member communities.



Chicagoland Region

This year we're trying something new: the CAR party, where people throw potluck parties in their homes or public locations to discuss and respond to the CAR. It seems to have taken off; many who never had an interest in the CAR before are now participating. Incidentally, the CAR parties in my North City Area are being hosted by younger members whose passion and service represent the most amazing NA renaissance I've witnessed in 28 years of recovery. (Watch for more about the North City Area in an upcoming issue of *The NA Way Magazine*.)

Louis H, Chicago, USA





Southeastern Zonal Forum

The SEZF's primary function is to facilitate joint, multiregional efforts with its member regions Alabama-Northwest Florida, Carolina, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Florida. The SEZF held one of this Conference season's first CAR workshops in early December in Charlotte, North Carolina, in the Carolina Region. Approximately 30 members attended the event. When the zone first formed, this workshop was held in Macon, Georgia, in February before the WSC, and was moved to Atlanta (also in February) about ten years ago. This was the first time our CAR workshop was held outside the Georgia Region.

Jeff P, Florida, USA



Rocky Mountain Zonal Forum

The RMZF serves regions of all or part of seven states of the "American Wild West" from Alliance, Nebraska in the east to Ontario, Oregon in the west; and from Raton, New Mexico, in the south to Browning, Montana in the north. One of this Conference season's first CAR workshops was held by the RMZF in early December in Salt Lake City, Utah, with about 30 members participating.



Shawn S, Wyoming, USA



British Columbia Region

The BCRSC is one of five regions of the Canadian Assembly of NA (Assemblée Canadienne). The BC Region covers 364,000 square miles, with 15 areas and almost 300 meetings. NA started in Canada in the fall of 1967 in Victoria, BC. This year, approximately 40 members participated in a CAR/CAT workshop held in Vancouver, BC. Members from six areas attended, all within the Greater Vancouver Regional District and its surrounding municipalities.

The Society of Service for NA (India)

Approximately 20 members representing eight areas attended the semiannual SOSONA (formerly SIRSCONA) RSC meeting in February 2016. They discussed the CAR motions and focused on the role of zones, future of the WSC, and ways possible future WSC changes might affect the region. The workshop was also an opportunity to inform members newer to regional service about World Services. India has two seated regions: SOSONA includes groups and areas west of the state of Assam; and the North Eastern Regional Forum (NERF) covers the area bordered by Bhutan, Burma, Bangladesh, and China.



Fellowship development

Fostering growth and unity



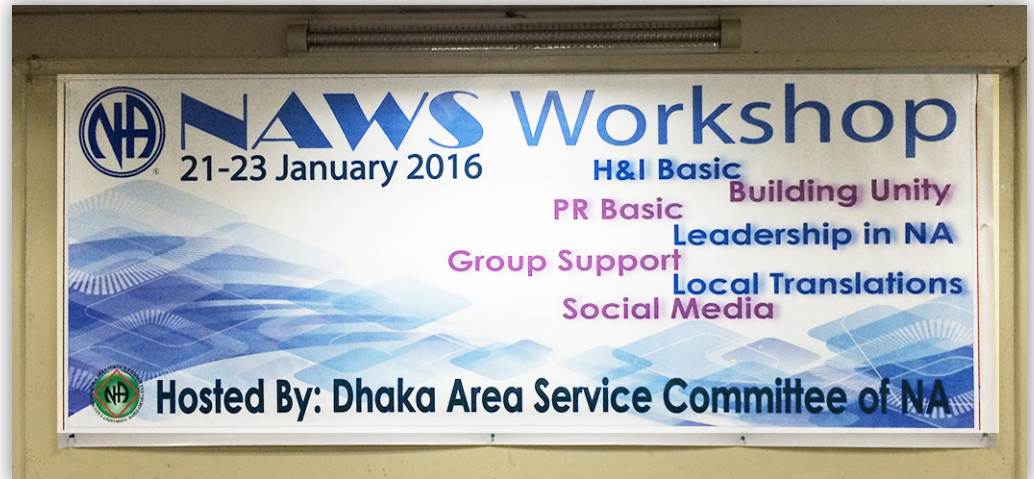
Bangladesh is a developing NA community that brims with promise. NA arrived in this South Asian country in the early 2000s, and it took some time to take hold and get off the ground. Most of the NA meetings here are in Bangladesh's two main cities, Chittagong and Dhaka, and functioning area service committees are established in both locations. Each area has held recovery events such as conventions and campouts, and the two areas work together on literature translation efforts. Bangladesh has participated in many Asia Pacific Forums and hopes to form a regional service committee in the future.

NAWS attended the Dhaka Area Convention in January 2014 and facilitated several workshops, utilizing local leaders to assist with the sessions. At that time, there wasn't a local language translations process in place. The communities tried using the Kolkata-translated Bengali literature, but it wasn't an easy fit. After much debate and consideration, Bangladesh formed its own literature translation committee and is currently in the last stages of preparing IP #1 for publication.

For a follow-up visit in January 2016, NAWs worked with the local community to identify a set of topics to suit their needs for an entire weekend of service workshops in Dhaka. We facilitated sessions on unity, group support, H&I and PR basics, leadership, and social media, plus a translation-focused session. Each participant eagerly interacted with other members, and the "magic" of unity filled the room. The two ASCs are working together to create a strong region.

The social media session was an eye-opener for these social media-loving members. Exploring anonymity in relation to the Eleventh Tradition revealed ways to protect themselves and other members. They got it! Almost immediately, private NA groups began to form on several social media platforms. Working together to strategize ways to announce NA events via social media and careful ways to acknowledge being in recovery provided useful tools.

Bangladeshi members are enthusiastic about Narcotics Anonymous. They want NA to grow in their country. So many have experienced the gratitude that comes with knowing how narrowly they escaped utter disaster—and the passion to see to it that the next suffering addict has the chance to experience the freedom they have gained.



Fanning the flame

Tonight a carload of us drove out to a new meeting that just started in Harrisville, West Virginia. Harrisville is pretty much "middle of nowhere," though it does have the one and only stoplight in Ritchie County. It's 45 minutes from the nearest NA area/home group. The woman who started the meeting reached out and even attended our [LSB \(local service board\)](#) meeting yesterday to seek support. Tonight I learned that she found out about NA many years ago when she was a psychiatric nurse and had to go to meetings with her patients. Now, years later, she found that she needed NA, so she started the only meeting within an hour of her home. Today, she has more than three months clean. She was elated when we walked through the door tonight. She was the only person there, and she cried tears of joy while sharing how grateful she is for the NA Fellowship. This is what it's about—the hope that spreads like wildfire and the members who continue to fan the flame.

Kristina C, Ohio, USA



Why I serve

*When we work to ensure the vitality of NA,
we're not working just for ourselves but for those yet to join us.*

It Works: How and Why, Tradition One



As we approach the 2016 [World Service Conference](#), here is a look back at one of the first sessions of the 2014 Conference. Participants came together as a community on Sunday, 27 April 2014, and shared in small-group discussions about their unified purpose and the spiritual principles of Tradition One—surrender and acceptance, commitment, selflessness, love, and anonymity. Then, inspired by a fellow member's sharing entitled "Why I Serve," everyone in the room was completely silent as trusted servants from NA communities around the world wrote their own reflections on the reasons they serve. Shared below are some of those writings, a few that were previously published in *The NA Way* and some that were submitted by members who participated in similar workshops in their home regions.

The main difference between my early years in the program and my later years of recovery is involvement in service. When I understood that service is what binds me to recovery, I committed myself to service. I serve as part of my journey of making amends. I started with a basic understanding that service helps me in my personal recovery. This turned into love of being a servant to others and to the Fellowship that saved my life and changed it from one big failure to a life full of satisfaction and feeling and doing the right things for the right reasons. Through service I feel connected and grateful, and I enjoy a life worth living.

Dror A, [Israel Region](#)

When I first came to NA I didn't know anything about our program. What drew me was the people who weren't using, who were laughing, playing, dancing, and loving one another as they were. This took my mind off drugs and made me hang out with people like me. As I participated in different events and activities, I started to take in the recovery part. I started learning and wanting to share our NA message with people I knew. Now I know how important service is. If I want to help other addicts, I can choose to be of service. I can be a part of NA and participate in making changes in our Fellowship by doing service work. My voice and heart (and yours) can be heard through my home group, my area, and my region! We do recover through NA and service.

Juanita B, [Pacific Cascade Region](#), USA

When I came to meetings I was young, without direction, and without capability to do anything but use. After I got clean, people told me that for recovery I should do steps, get a sponsor, and do service. I took those things seriously since I was so afraid of going back to using. Doing steps gave me insight into my behavior, and doing service has brought me even more. In service I learn how to live and participate. What I learn I can use in my own life. I learn in life; I give back through service. It's a dialogical process where I give for the use of NA what I learn in life so I can learn more. This is one side; the other is that when our services function properly, others can reach meetings and find recovery—and also find a way to learn in service.

Hannu S, [Finland Region](#)



At 65 days clean I was at an NA campout wondering if I was going to stay clean or walk away from recovery. I felt out of place with the members who were there, but I stuck around long enough to see some members I knew and liked, so I decided to put off leaving. While playing softball that day I was injured when I ran into another guy in the outfield going for the same ball. They ended up calling a helicopter to transport me to the hospital. During the flight I had a bone-chilling rush. I later found out that at that same time the addicts at the campout had circled up for a moment of silence and prayer for the suffering addict—me. That moment solidified my decision and commitment to recovery and the Fellowship of NA. This is why I serve!

Kevin H, [Southern Idaho Region](#), USA

I serve because it makes me think of others; it keeps me out of my head. I can't stay clean by myself, and service puts me in the middle of things. It makes me feel useful. It keeps me accountable. It teaches me more about the program. It gives me something healthy to do. Without service there wouldn't be a program, and I would be alone again.

Shannon C,
[Pacific Cascade Region](#), USA

I went to the first NA meeting in South Africa. It struggled to grow. I carried the bag for that meeting for five years until someone responsible enough was able and willing to take on the commitment. I then got involved in H&I, and loved it. Our H&I service really helped NA grow in our area. I served as RCM for our area, which increased my commitment to the Fellowship and allowed me get around to all the meetings in the area to keep the groups connected with the ASC. Today I serve as a regional delegate, and I can be a voice for all the languages of our NA community. We have numerous challenges in our region and I plan to make a difference, especially in taking the NA message to previously disadvantaged communities.

Dennis J, [South Africa Region](#)

When I worked my first Eleventh Step, I was asked what my desires were for my life. I answered that I wanted to be a good mother, friend, wife; to be a responsible and caring human being; to apply gratitude in my occupation; and many other things. My pen was moving so fast and my thoughts just poured out; and then I wrote "to have joy in my life," and I began to cry. All

of the years trying to be perfect, to gain acceptance of myself, trying to find peace, and it all came down to that one moment when I realized that I deserved to have joy in my life. As I wept in the moment of that realization, I found the peace and self-acceptance that I always wanted. I want addicts still suffering inside and outside our rooms to know that peace. That is why I serve.

Donna Lee P, [Central Atlantic Region](#), USA

The amount of personal growth I have received from serving our fellowship is unbelievable. I get to learn how to keep my fellow servants' needs and opinions equal to my own. I get to learn to disagree without being disagreeable here, and I can carry all of this into my relationships with my family, friends, and coworkers. NA has given me a life worth living.

Deb N,
[British Columbia Region](#), Canada

I started serving just to become the best and most recovering young addict in Sweden. I wanted to be famous! Through working the Steps, my motives have changed. I have many reasons to serve and they are mostly selfless. One day I will have kids, and I want them to have the best possibility to get clean if they start using. I also serve to spread love in a world where I used to spread hate and violence. The love I get from you guys is not mine to keep!

Jimmy E, [Sweden Region](#)

Today NA is growing a lot, but the growth of service does not follow this growth. I want to see a group with more servants than needed one day, with a waiting list of servants.

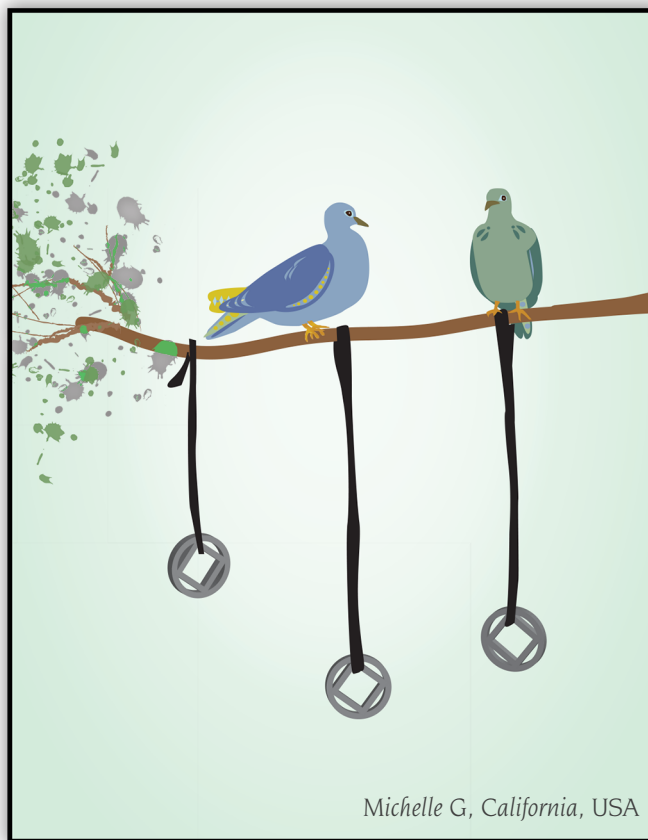
Nelson L, [Brazil Region](#)

Serving this fellowship is a gesture of love, respect, and gratitude.

It is to know that I can look into the eyes of an addict as he looks into mine and we recognize ourselves as fellows.

Francelle FS, [Brazil Region](#)

When I showed up, I wouldn't even put the chairs away. I had an acute case of superiority because I didn't use some of the drugs other people had. "Let the crackheads put away the chairs," I thought to myself. I had a hell of a chip on my shoulder, but I was afraid to be alone, so I stayed for a business meeting with three other addicts. When the door greeter position came up a member said, "I nominate that guy," and pointed at me. My



Michelle G, California, USA

heart sank. I hated hugs and would rather have been the toilet bowl cleaner (if there was one), but I accepted the commitment anyway. I started showing up to meetings as soon as the door opened just to be around other recovering addicts because I couldn't stand to be alone.

When I had about three weeks clean, I heard the man who was to become my sponsor speak. I got his number, called him, and he told me to meet him at his home group. When I got there he was setting up chairs. When I commented on this he simply answered, "This is what we do." I grabbed a chair and started helping. I haven't stopped since. I used to wonder what the reward is for being of service. One day, when mopping a meeting room floor for the thousandth time, I realized the reward is that I get to be of service and mop the floors.

Ivan P, Connecticut, USA

Editor's Note: The article that inspired these writings was published in The NA Way Magazine, [April 2014](#). Find other "Why I serve" sharing in The NA Way, [July and October 2014](#) and [January and April 2015](#).

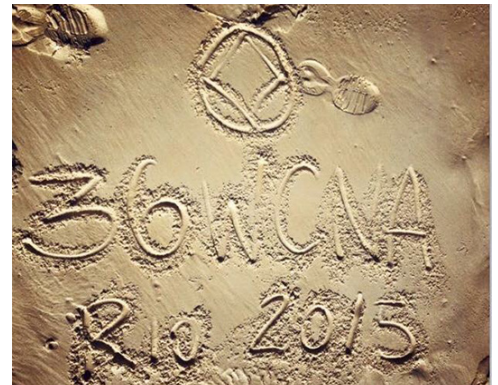
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CORRECTION: These photos in the [July 2015 NA Way Magazine](#) were attributed to the wrong photographer. Our apologies to Sergio S, São Paulo, Brazil, who took these photos!





CALENDAR

Multiday events and those occurring between publication dates are printed according to the schedule posted online. To enter events or to access event details, visit the online calendar at www.na.org/events. (If you don't have Internet access, fax or mail your event info to 818.700.0700, attn: NA Way; or *The NA Way*; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.)

Canada

Nova Scotia 20-22 May; Central Nova Area Convention 13; Holiday Inn Convention Centre, Truro; www.centralnovaarea.ca

Ontario 20-22 May; Ontario Regional Convention 29; Blue Mountain; www.orcna.ca

Denmark

Esbjerg 17-19 Jun; Camp Living Clean Denmark; Markbækplantage, Esbjerg; www.nadanmark.dk/events

Skanderborg 5-7 Aug; Convention & Camp 9; Audocicon, Skanderborg; www.namidtyjylland.dk/konvent/index.htm

Indonesia

Seminyak 3-5 Jun; Bali Area Convention 16; Puri Sarong Hotel, Seminyak; www.na-bali.org

Mexico

Puerto Penasco 10-12 Jun; First Area Oasis Convention; Hotel Penasco del Sol, Puerto Penasco; www.bajason-na.org

Peru

Cuzco 20-22 May; Peru Regional Convention 22; Hotel Royal Inka Pisac, Cuzco; www.naregionperu.org

Slovakia

Poprad 13-15 May; Czecho-Slovak Convention; Hotel Satel, Poprad; www.anonymninarokmani.sk

Spain

Malaga 20-22 May; Spanish Regional Convention 34; Hotel Las Palmas, Fuengirola Malaga; www.narcoticosanonimos.es

Switzerland

Zurich 6-8 May; Swiss Convention 22; GZ Riesbach, Zurich; narcotics-anonymous.ch

Tanzania

Zanzibar 21-24 May; East Africa Convention 4; Zanzibar Grand Palace, Zanzibar; www.ea-na.com

Ukraine

Kiev 7-9 May; First Ukrainian Convention & Conference; Kiev; www.uccna.org

United Kingdom

Llandudno 1-3 Jul; Northwest England & North Wales Area Convention 23; Venue Cymru, Llandudno; <http://ukna.org/events>

Bradford 15-17 Jul; First Yorkshire & Humberside Area Convention; Bradford Hotel, Bradford; <http://ukna.org/events>

United States

Arizona 27-29 May; Arizona Regional Convention 30; DoubleTree Resort, Scottsdale; www.arizona-na.org

29-31 Jul; Southeastern Arizona Area Convention 2; Hotel Tucson City Center, Tucson; <http://natucson.org>

California 10-12 Jun; California Mid-State Regional Convention 14; Visalia Convention Center & Marriott Hotel, Visalia; www.cmsrcna.org

2) 24-26 Jun; California Inland Regional Convention; Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort and Spa, Rancho Mirage; www.cirna.org

Florida 6-8 May; Daytona Area Convention 17; Hilton Daytona Beach Resort/Ocean Walk Village, Daytona Beach; www.dacna.org

2) 7-10 Jul; Florida Regional Convention 35; Rosen Shingle Creek, Orlando; www.frc-na.org

Georgia 5-8 May; A Little Girl Grows Up Convention 8; Hilton Hotel, Atlanta; www.alittlegirlgrowsup.org

Illinois 20-22 May; Rock River Area Convention 25; Holiday Inn, Rockford; ragsna.org/rock%20river%20area%20convention.htm

Louisiana 27-29 May; Louisiana Regional Convention; Ramada Inn, Lafayette; www.larna.org

Maryland 6-8 May; Baltimore Area Convention 12; Wyndham Hunt Valley Inn, Hunt Valley; www.bacnaconvention.org

Michigan 30 Jun-3 Jul; Michigan Regional Convention 32; Radisson Plaza, Kalamazoo; www.michigan-na.org/mrcna

Montana 17-19 Jun; Montana Gathering 28; Symes Hotel & Hot Springs, Hot Springs; www.namontana.org

Nevada 15-17 Jul; California, Arizona, Nevada Convention 22; Riverside Hotel & Casino, Laughlin; www.canacregistration.com

New Hampshire 24-26 Jun; Fellowship in the Field 26; Apple Hill Campground, Bethlehem; gsana.org/events/fellowship-in-the-field-xxvi-campout

New Mexico 19-22 May; Rio Grande Regional Convention 27; Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque; www.riograndena.org

New York 27-29 May; Heart of New York Area Convention 12; Crowne Plaza Syracuse, Syracuse; honyana.org

North Carolina 15-17 Jul; New Hope Area Convention 23; Durham Convention Center, Durham; newhopeconvention.com

Ohio 27-29 May; Ohio Convention 34; Crossroads Events Center, Lancaster; www.ohioconventionna.org

2) 1-3 Jul; Dayton Area Convention 11; Holiday Inn-Fairborn, Fairborn; www.dascna.org/convention

Oregon 20-22 May; Pacific Cascade Regional Convention 22; Riverside Inn/Taprock Event Center, Grants Pass; www.rogueredwoodna.com

Tennessee 20-22 May; NA in May; Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, Millington; nainmay.org

Utah 17-19 Jun; Southern Utah Area Convention 9; Hilton Garden Inn, Saint George; nasouthernutah.org

Virginia 27-30 May; Marion Survivor's Group Campout; Hungry Mother Lutheran Center, Marion; event info: mfisher71@hotmail.com

2) 5-7 Aug; Almost Heaven Area Convention; 4H Educational Center, Front Royal; na2day.Tripod.com

Washington 20-22 May; Washington Northern Idaho Regional Convention 31; Red Lion Hotel, Pasco; www.wnirna.org/events

2) 29-31 Jul; Seattle International Convention; Marriott Sea-Tac, Seattle; www.seattlenaconvention.org

Wyoming 13-15 May; Upper Rocky Mountain Regional Convention 17; Days Inn, Thermopolis; urmna.org

NAWS Product Update

Finnish

IP #2: Ryhmä

Item No. FI-3102 Price US \$0.31/0.26 €

Group Trusted Servants: Roles & Responsibilities
**Ryhmän luotetut palvelijat:
roolit ja vastuut**

Item No. FI-2203 Price US \$0.24/0.21 €

Portuguese

IP #28: Financiando os serviços de NA

Item No. PO-3128 Price US \$0.53/0.46 €

Group Trusted Servants Roles & Responsibilities
Reuniões de assuntos de grupo

Item No. PO-2202 Price US \$0.24/0.21 €

Portuguese (Brazil)

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Hungarian

The Group Booklet

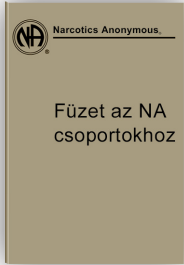
Füzet az NA csoportokhoz

Item No. HU-1600 Price US \$0.95/0.82 €

NA Groups & Medication

**Az NA csoportok
és a gyógyszerfogyasztás**

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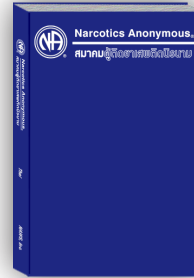


Thai

Basic Text (5th Edition)

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Item No. TH-1101 Price US \$7.90/6.90 €



Korean

IP #13:

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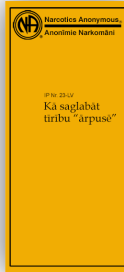
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Latvian

IP #23:

Kā saglabāt tīrību, "ārpuse"

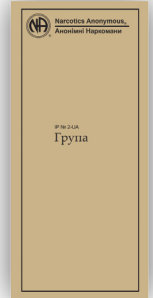
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Ukrainian

IP #2: Грyна

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Urdu

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Coming Soon

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Narcotics Anonymous

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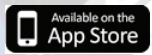
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