



A newsletter from the Asia Pacific Areas of Narcotics Anonymous

Welcome to the new look APF newsletter.

The newsletter pages are enhanced for 1997 / 98 browsers which support style sheets, however if you are using an older browser you are not missing out on any information just a little formatting.

Vol 1 Number 5 April 1995

The Forum- a brief history

The Asia-Pacific Forum began with a few individuals in the Pacific rim area are having informal talks about how they might be of service to the Fellowship in this part of the world. Simply by the geography of the area, even those who live in countries with a developed NA service structure have often felt very isolated from the rest of the fellowship. We have great empathy for those NA communities who are just starting out on their own road to recovery, knowing that it can often be a difficult and frustrating path.

At the 1992 World Service Conference in Dallas, the first informal meeting was held, at which we had several RSR's, RSR Alt's and other interested participants from the Asia-Pacific area. We were all greatly excited about the possibilities of what might accomplished if we were to pool our resources, and made a commitment to meet again. That opportunity came at the 2nd Annual Aotearoa New Zealand Regional Convention in October 1992. We had, in attendance, representatives from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the Philippines and Hawaii. We were in contact with NA members in Hong Kong and Guam and although they were not able to attend personally they were enthusiastic about being a part of our forum. We were also very pleased about having in attendance, two trustees, Kim J. and Pete C., whose attendance was funded by the WSC Their attendance let us know that the WSC views our work as a benefit to the NA Fellowship as a whole.

At that meeting we established goals and priorities which are just as valid today as then. We join together to discuss issues of mutual concern, address common needs, exchange ideas and share experiences to further our primary purpose of helping the addict in need. Our goals are to develop and support NA in the Asia-Pacific area, to support translations of NA literature into languages in use in the Pacific basin, to support outreach, H&I and public information efforts in our area, to maintain and support communication among NA members, communities and regions in this part of the world, and to work with world services in this effort. Our next meeting wasn't until the next World Service Conference in Los Angeles in April of '93. We were grateful to have Peter, from India, participate with us at that meeting. We were able to review our progress with each other and try to further identify areas that we might be of more help to the fellowship. Fellowship members from South America also sat in, and they have since established a forum themselves.

The formation of these forums is an indication of the increasingly important role that they can play in NA. We were asked and gave a report to the full Conference as a part of the Board of Trustees Development Forum. We met several times with members of the WSC Translations Committee and participated in their committee meetings. We exchanged progress reports on our translation efforts and gained new insight on just what it takes to get a piece of literature translated and approved for publication. World Services has been very supportive of our efforts. We have members of both the World H&I and PI committees helping us.

Next we met at the WSC meeting in Atlanta, in April of 1994, and our most recent meeting took place this past February in Auckland New Zealand. We were pleased to have in attendance at that meeting two representatives from Malaysia, as well as Garth P. a Board of Trustees member. Given the great distances and expenses involved it is very difficult for us to meet on a regular basis other than at the annual World Service Conference, and even then not all of our members are able to attend.

The needs of the Asia-Pacific area are just beginning to be addressed. With the growth of the Asia-Pacific Forum, established NA regions are reaching out to developing NA communities in this area and we are all

learning from each other. The Hawaii Region has established an Asia-Pacific Forum Ad-hoc Sub-Committee to facilitate support of the Forum, and to affirm its role as a valuable part of NA services in this area.

Besides literature and translations we need to further identify other needs in the Asia-Pacific area. It means a lot to fellowships here just to have contact with other NA fellowships, to know they're not alone in their journey. We thought of possibly sharing minutes of our R.S.C. meetings, or maybe a summary of them containing the items that might be of mutual interest. Also an exchange of letters, personal or speaker tapes, T-shirts or any other items we think might be useful. In the areas of H&I and P.I. there is much we can do. How do we let the public know we exist, and how do we establish credibility? Many developing NA communities lack such basics as a simple format of how run a meeting, what a G.S.R. is and his function, the duties and responsibilities of a treasurer, what a secretary does, and how to obtain literature and service materials that would be of benefit to themselves. How do we approach those in hospitals, treatment centres and prisons to help those in need? Many are not even aware of some of the materials available to them, designed to help developing groups. Of course, the largest stumbling block to the development of NA in our area is the lack of translated recovery materials for use by our non-English speaking members. We began an Asia-Pacific Forum Newsletter with our first issue coming out in November 1993, and this is proving to be a valuable tool.

We are mostly very young fellowships and do not have the resources of some of the larger fellowships. Most Regions have difficulty in sending a R.S.R. or other representative to the WSC and could not do so without Development Forum support. For those not receiving support, the combination of long distances and limited funds makes it a choice between attending the conference and providing much needed services to the local fellowship. We would be in support of some method that might help those in more isolated NA communities attend. In some regions participation is limited only to those fortunate enough to have sufficient funds of their own to attend forums such as the WSC or ours in April. Attending a quarterly is just not possible. Many individuals with much to offer are excluded from service at the world level as a result, and the voices of their fellowships are not fully heard. There was some discussion as to the possibility of having some means by which the members of this forum who do attend the conference might represent those who cannot, yet desire to participate.

NA has grown tremendously over the years. As a result NA's service structure has been increasingly stretched to its limits, made even worse because of a constant shortfall of operating funds. Regional forums such as ours bring the decision-making level down a step closer to where the work is actually done. Many people involved with Regional Forums believe that they may eventually be integrated officially into a changing NA service structure. As the fellowship has grown, the annual World Service Conference has become very top heavy and it is ever increasingly difficult to accomplish all the work they have to do. There is much debate, pro and con, regarding changing NA's service structure but perhaps with the inventory currently being conducted we might gain new insights into how NA might be better able to serve the fellowship.

At the present moment, the formal structure of our forum is kept to a minimum. So far, there hasn't been a need for us to be so formally organised as to elect officers. Those participants who desired to be involved are simply dividing up the tasks to do at the time, and setting to work. As we continue to grow and take on more tasks, though, we will be faced with the possibility of becoming more formally structured. Hopefully when and if that occurs we will continue to operate as we have, making decisions based on a group conscious under the guidance of a loving Higher Power always considering the minority viewpoint. We welcome every one's input and help. We can accomplish much as we join together in service, for our own recovery as well as others.

The Asia-Pacific Forum Conference meeting in Auckland a success!

The recent meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum was quite a success and enjoyed by all. Many thanks to the Aotearoa-New Zealand fellowship for their warm hospitality and support. We had in attendance Chris T. - past ANZ Chairperson and past RSR, Catherine-ANZ Alt. RSR, Robert H. and Wagner N. -representing Malaysia, Tony S. -FSO Secretary, Garth P. -BOT member, Larry R. -Alt. RSR and chair of APF Ad-hoc Sub-Committee Hawaii Region, Lib E. -Australian RSR, Simon-Australian Alt.-RSR and past chair of RSC, Lyn R. - ANZ FSO Director and Redmer Y. the ANZ RSR.

Our statement of purpose, written in 1992 at APF Palmerston North, NZ is still very valid.

We, the NA Regions and communities of Asia-Pacific have joined to discuss issues of mutual concern, address our common needs, exchange ideas and share experiences to further our primary purpose.

This forum is intended to compliment the existing service structure of NA.

Goals to develop and support NA in this part of the world.

- a. To support translations of NA literature into our languages.

- b. Support outreach, H&I and P.I. efforts in Asia-Pacific.
- c. Maintain and support communication among NA members, communities and regions among this part of the world.
- d. Continue working with World Services in our efforts.

So now we need to look at just how we can best realise these goals. The Hawaii region has formed an ad-hoc sub-committee of the Hawaii Region for the Asia-Pacific Forum as a means of "officially" linking the two service structures and providing a means by which the Region might provide funds and other services. Since the inception of the forum Hawaii has been very involved and the last two years has made the support of the Forum the #1 priority on its discretionary spending list.

All Regions and NA communities in the Asia-Pacific area are urged to explore ways in their Regional meetings how they might be of service. Below are some of the Asia-Pacific Forums short term and long term goals.

1. Should we come together as a more formally structured group, electing officers?
2. Be represented at the WSC by delegate from APF.
3. Have each participating Region or community elect representative to the Forum. (each region needs to decide for themselves the best way that they wish to participate.)
4. Develop and refine scope of the Newsletter making sure that it be representative of all members of the APF.
5. Develop Forum wide meeting list for publication and distribution.
6. Further identify needs of our members.
7. Promote a meeting of the World Services Translations Committee in our area.
8. Examine ways to raise funds to support the Forum.
9. Identify members and resources to assist with translations.

Our meeting in Aotearoa-New Zealand was very enlightening and beneficial for all that attended. Complete minutes of the meeting are available to anyone wishing them and may be requested by writing this Newsletter.

Translations

At the World Service Conference held earlier this year we met with the Translation Committee. Part of our discussions included the idea of having a future WSTC meeting held at one of our Zonal Forum meetings. The idea was well received by everyone. This year they met in Amsterdam and from what I've read and been told it was quite a success. We will be making a request of the appropriate WSC Committees to approve a meeting of the WSCTC in December in Kuala Lumpur. The Asia-Pacific Forum was in full support of this and will co-ordinate a meeting of the APF to occur either just before or after their meeting. All Regions who are able will ask the support of their regions to fund other members who do not have resources of their own to attend this event.

Translations are our number one priority!! We feel this to be the greatest obstacle to the continued growth of our fellowship in the Asia-Pacific area.

We have made some progress with assisting with the evaluation of I.P. #1, Who, What, How and Why and I.P. # 16, For the Newcomer into Mandarin. Below is a brief report.

Just a brief report on a meeting I had with an exchange student from Beijing who has had experience with Chinese-English, English-Chinese translations, with most of his work in the technical field, though.

Firstly the translations we have are written in complex rather than simplified characters. He felt they were translated by someone from Hong Kong or Taiwan, where they use those characters. Mainland China uses the simplified characters and most people are not able to read both.

He said the very slight differences in the characters used in Mandarin vs. Cantonese v s most other dialects spoken in China would not be a problem.

He also felt that the pamphlets were translated word for word or phrase for phrase because some of grammar and sentence structures used were not correct. Most people reading them would have no trouble understanding them but a more educated person would be aware that they didn't flow well.

We only had time to go over "Who, What, How and Why" and "For the Newcomer" in any detail. I've enclosed notes that I made. Hopefully this helps. It's a start at least.

Uschi

We also have planned a meeting to begin an evaluation of the Japanese translations of chapters 4 and 6 from

the basic text, which has been sent to us, by WSO translations, Fellowship Services Team. We have identified a Japanese speaking member here in Hawaii and will be meeting with members of the fellowship visiting here from Japan.

Uschi and Jayne at the WSO have always been very helpful and we appreciate all that they have done to help us in our combined efforts to provide translated literature to the fellowship. Any members with language skills and/or translation experience are urged to call or write them c/o WSO Translations. The address is on the last page of the Newsletter.

We are all pleased to have Tata, who has been the Philippine RSR and active with his local translations committee, as a nominee to the World Services Translations Committee. More awareness is needed about the importance of continued efforts with translations in the Asia-Pacific area. Lack of translated literature is one of our greatest obstacles to reaching out to the addict.

Funding

We in the Asia-Pacific area face many problems in funding ourselves to any event we might attend, whether it's to the annual WSC meeting or our own Asia-Pacific Forum meeting. We are separated by many thousands of miles and must travel by air. Many of our fellowships are not financially able to fund themselves. Many of us belong to developing NA communities that are not even able to take care of their more basic needs. We can help ourselves, with those regions who are able, to hold fund-raisers or to contribute directly to accomplish our common goals, and try to equalise the costs among ourselves.

We feel that World Services needs to re-examine the way in which it allocates funds. We feel that sometimes instead of using funds to send WSC members to events, better to use some of those monies to help fund participants of those events themselves. Instead of spending three to five thousand dollars sending two or three world members from the Mainland, send one and let the rest be used to bring in participants who would not otherwise be able to attend. Or instead of funding people at all, fund the event itself, and let them participate in the decision making process of how the money is used. Or possibly include Forums into the budget process at the WSC conference, allocating funds with conference approval, to be used by Forums to conduct service oriented events. We believe that, in time, our forum will be taking on, more and more of the basic services of NA.

F.S.O. Australia - F.S.O New Zealand

We were pleased to have in attendance both Tony S. the FSO Australia secretary, and Lyn R. the Aotearoa-New Zealand FSO Director. There was discussion as to how the Fellowship Service Offices might be more involved in supporting the Asia-Pacific Forum, with possibly the role of the FSO expanding to include other Regions. The APF members from Malaysia have expressed that, at times, they have experienced problems with their communications with the WSO. Possibly, FSO Australia might be better able to provide some services.

Could the FSO Australia Office take on a larger role in printing and distributing literature in the Asia-Pacific area? Possibly compile and distribute a list of all meetings in the Asia-Pacific area? There are many other areas of need that the FSO might fill. The belief is that the closer to home we can provide services the better. Ideally we would like to see World Services become more decentralised and the FSO could help.

New Contacts

We have responded again to our new contact in the Peoples Republic of China and will continue to follow up as necessary. We sent them a copies of the Basic Text, It Works, How and Why and a variety of pamphlets. We wish them well. Hopefully as we progress with the Mandarin translations we will be able to provide them with some literature in their own language.

As an up-date we just received this newspaper clipping from the Malaysian fellowship, taken from the March 13th issue of "The Malay Mail."

"GROUP CURE"

PILOT PLAN

US-style way to check growing drug

Addiction in Yunnan

KUNMING, China

There is something troublingly tentative about Guo Liping's latest pledge never to pump another syringeful of heroin into her arm.

"This time I'm going to start afresh," said the former restaurateur, who is in her 20's.

"I owe it to the doctors here at the hospital who helped me detoxify. I won't relapse again."

Guo has good cause for caution.

The expensive voluntary "cure" she has just undergone at an army hospital in Kunming, capital of drug mired southern Yunnan province, is her second in less than a year.

"The last time I left this clinic I also made up my mind not to use drugs," Guo said outside the hospital, where all of her fellow patients were also second-timers.

"But many drug-using friends visited me. They took heroin in my presence and told me it was okay to use a little, just once or twice. I wouldn't get hooked again."

Sadly, Guo and thousands like her find it impossible to resist the needle's lure after voluntary rehabilitation or as will become increasingly common under a new State edict issued in January-six months of forcible detoxification in a police-run boot camp.

"Drugs are everywhere," said addict Wang Feng from his bed at the army clinic.

"When I get out I'll have to go to another city. Everyone I know uses heroin. I know I can't resist."

Of the 70 detox centres in Yunnan, a poor province awash in heroin from south-east Asia's opium-growing Golden Triangle, none offers the intensive psychological group therapy and "after care" that decades of Western experience has shown to be the only effective long term treatment.

"At this point China's drug-rehabilitation system has completely failed," said Kunming psychiatrist Li Jianhua, who plans to open China's first after-care clinic this year.

"There is no after-care, no counselling for them at all. Almost all return to drugs. Some relapse into heroin abuse on the first day."

Therapeutic

Addiction to drugs, alcohol and tobacco has soared as 16 years of market reforms have enriched China's people and eroded the Stalinist social controls that virtually wiped out opium after the 1949 communist revolution.

Doctors believe Yunnan has at least 100,000 heroin addicts and say drug abuse is a growing scourge in most major cities.

Li hopes a pilot project in Kunming using the Daytop and Narcotics Anonymous concepts pioneered by former addicts in the United States will become models for all of China.

After five years of campaigning, including the organising of seven Daytop training seminars in Beijing and Kunming, Li persuaded officials to try the idea and even to kick in 24 million yuan (RM 7.14 million) for a Daytop centre.

A new building will take up to five years to finish, but Li and associates at the Yunnan Institute of Drug Abuse hope to get started in mid-1995 with grants raised by Daytop International from the US and other governments.

Daytop executive director Gerald Jeremiah said by telephone from New York that China was not unlike other Asian countries in adopting forced detoxification in spite of its extremely low success rate in the absence of aftercare.

He said he hoped China would follow Thailand and Malaysia, which are shifting away from force in favour of Daytop's model of supportive, family-like "therapeutic communities" where addicts help each other.

"The focus in China right now is on the drug itself," he said.

"Our concept is that the drug is not the problem, but only a symptom of a deeper (emotional) problem."

"Addicts have to want to save themselves, but must also admit that they can't do it alone," said Li.

"They need the strength of the group to make it."

Reuter

Letters

We received letters recently from Japan, India, and China. Many thanks for your input and comments. Keep the letters coming. It's your ideas and suggestions that will make this newsletter a valuable addition to our Forum. Along with receiving a letter from Haripal, the chairperson of the ASC Forum, he sent us minutes of their RSC meeting held in Khandala on Jan. 27th 1995. Members attended from Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Imphal and Bombay. They too must travel long distances to meet. They just recently hosted their 3rd. Bombay Area Convention. We hope it was a success for everyone involved. The Calcutta ASC will be holding a convention in January 1996.

Khandala on Jan. 27th 1995.

The first letter below is from our new contact in the People's Republic of China, and the subject of the article reprinted above. We wish him well and will continue to support him as we can.

46 Da-Guan Road

Kunming, 650032

Yunnan Province

P.R. China

Thank you very much for your pamphlets, books and letter on November 29, 1994. I am reading the materials that you gave me. They must make me better understand your program. I will do my best to translate "Narcotics Anonymous" and "It Works, How and Why" to Chinese and carry the message to the addict who still suffers. I believe that the helpings from WSO will play an important role in Kunming program of recovery.

Thank you very much for your kindly assistances.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely

Jian-hua L

Psychiatrist in Yunnan

Institute of Drug Abuse

Regional Forum of India

c/o Bombay A.S.C.

P.O. Box 16489

Mahim,

Bombay-400 016 India

Hi! We send warm greetings from India.

We first heard of the Asia Pacific Forum when a representative from India participated in the WSC. However this is the first time that we are communicating with the forum as India NA.

We thank you for your invitation to your conference of Feb. 1995. However we regret that we were unable as India NA to come to a decision and send a participant to the conference.

We hope that this is the beginning of a good working relationship between India NA and the Asia-Pacific Forum.

India is a vast country with different languages. The NA communities are spread over great distances. We are

unable at present to work as a Regional Service Committee. However we meet as a forum of ASC's. We understand that Australia region had a similar situation we would encourage you to send us ideas and experiences to more effectively carry the message of recovery to the still suffering addict and what role India NA can have in the Asia Pacific Forum and NA as a whole.

In loving service

Haripal V.

(Chairperson-Forum ASC's)

January 16, 1995

First of all, I would like to send my warmest thoughts to you at the beginning of the New Year.

Thank you very much for sending me the Newsletter - Volume 1 Number 4. Although I am a Nar-Anon Member, I appreciate receiving it. I can translate it into Japanese and pass this precious information to the NA group in Yokohama, to which my daughter, a recovering addict, belongs. I will be a translator until someone in Yokohama NA starts translating the newsletter so that they can share experience, strength and hope with the other members in the Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Hiroko

MANY THANKS !

I personally wish to thank the mainland groups of NA who have generously contributed literature to the Indian fellowship. The cost of our literature makes it very difficult for them to purchase. One group has donated 100 basic texts which they have distributed equally among their five areas. Again, many thanks, all your help is much appreciated.

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE

Below is a list of members who would like to write, and be written to. If you would like to add your name to the list, just write to the newsletter and we will include your name and address in our next issue.

Laura J - Tony W

3035 Ferry St. 227 Jacquelyn Court

Eugene, Oregon 97405 Ladson, South Carolina 29456

USA

Steve R - Robert H

5949 Library Road 17 Jalan 17/21-1

Bethel Park, PA. 15102 46400 Petalina Jaya

USA

Harold P

PO Box 2051

Kealakekua, Hawaii 96750

USA

Meetings in Malaysia

Open Meeting

Friday- 8 p.m. at St. Andrews Church, No. 29, Jalan Raja Chulan,

Kuala Lumpur. (open meeting)

H&I Meetings

Tuesday- 9 p.m. at Rumah Pengasih, Jalan Syers, Kuala Lumpur.

Wednesday- 9 p.m. at Sea Park, P. Jaya

Contact persons:

Wagner N Tel. 03-298-1619 (office)

Tel. 03-291-4639 (office)

Robert Hon Tel. 03-756-3524 (home)

Hock K Tel. 06-731-097

We would like to develop an Asia-Pacific wide meeting list for possible publication in this newsletter. All Regions and NA communities should send their schedules to us c/o this newsletter.

Additional Resources

The World Service Office also provides a variety of services to addicts who are geographically isolated. They produce a phone line directory that lists all known NA phone line numbers in the world, as well as an International Meeting Directory, which lists all registered meetings outside the continental United States. They also will send out a free Group Starter Kit and informational packets upon request. You can write or call to find out where the nearest NA meeting or office is. There is a WSC Ad-hoc Outreach committee that will provide useful information for you. They can be contacted through the office and if you have an existing Outreach committee they would like you to register with them. You might also find the Narcotics Anonymous Loner Group helpful. It is a means by which geographically isolated addicts can communicate with one another by mail. This "Meeting by Mail" allows recovering addicts to share their experience, strength, and hope through regular correspondence. The "Meeting by Mail" is a bi-monthly newsletter published by the Loner Group. If you wish to receive this newsletter write to; Loner Group, PO box 9999, Van Nuys, CA. 91409-9999, USA.

There are two other publications that you might find helpful. One is the Newsline that you can have sent to you free of charge. NA groups, registered with the WSO, are sent this publication automatically. It contains notices of up-coming NA conventions and events, as well as a lot of useful information about the Office and the many services they provide. The NA Way Magazine is another helpful publication. This fellowship magazine contains many articles of recovery written by addicts for addicts. We suggest you or your group subscribe to the magazine so that you can receive issues on a monthly basis.

The most important service NA offers is the experience, strength, and hope of the recovering addict. Remember, the "therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel." So if it's possible, contact another recovering addict either by phone or mail. If you contact the NA World Service Office they will assist you in reaching the nearest recovering addicts. Remember that you don't have to be lonely, even though you might be alone.

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

PO Box 9999

Van Nuys, CA. 91409

USA

Send us your letters

I can't stress strongly enough how much we want your comments, suggestions and input. We want this newsletter to be your newsletter, an open forum to provide all of us a way to share with each other.

It is extremely important that you send us your ideas, comments and articles for inclusion in this Newsletter! Write us at:

ASIA-PACIFIC NEWSLETTER

PO BOX 90397

HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96835-0397

USA

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM YOU MAY CONTACT:

LARRY R - LIB E

6312 Kaiwiki Pl. 23 Metropolitan Rd.

Honolulu, Hawaii 96825 Enmore, 2042

USA

Ph. (808) 396-2316 Ph. 02 565-1875

Fax (808) 395-6809

UP-COMING CONVENTIONS

HAWAII

May 26,27,28 & 29th, 1995

9th Annual Big Island Gathering

PO Box 391

Kealakekua, HI. 96750

Phone: Jenny (808) 968-8479

Archer (808) 967-8518

The Asia-Pacific Forum Newsletter is distributed free of charge by the Asia-Pacific Forum to its members. We invite your input and suggestions. This newsletter is intended to be a place where the NA fellowship in the Pacific Rim and Asia can share experience strength and hope in print. Send us your articles about recovery, opinions on NA matters, and features. All submitted manuscripts become the property of this newsletter.

The Asia-Pacific Newsletter presents the experiences and views of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The opinions expressed herein do not represent the views of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, the Asia-Pacific Forum, or its Newsletter. Any publication of materials does not imply endorsement.

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