

ASIA PACIFIC FORUM

Aotearoa New Zealand - Australia - Bangladesh - Cambodia - China - Guam - Hawaii - Hongkong - Indonesia - India
Japan - Korea - Malaysia - Maldives - Nepal - NERF - Pakistan - Philippines - Singapore - Saudi - Thailand - Vietnam

A Network of  Communities

Asia Pacific Newsletter

28th Edition

APF Communities Edition

Welcome to the May 2007 Edition of the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) Newsletter; the theme for this edition is "APF Communities". We held our last APF Meeting at Nagakot, Nepal in March and the delegates were invited to provide news about their communities. Some of these reports are summarized in this edition to give you an overview of the NA communities in our part of the world

and more community news will be included in upcoming editions. We have as usual also included other news and member's recovery experiences. We hope you enjoy this edition.

Please note we will be updating the APF Newsletter Masthead soon to adjust the list of communities.

If you enjoy reading this Newsletter and believe that other people would like to read it, please print copies and take them to your home-groups and service meetings for distribution.

Asian Pacific Forum Statement of Purpose

The Asian Pacific Forum is made up of the NA communities from the Asian Pacific Zone.

1. The Regions and communities of the Asia Pacific have joined together to discuss issues of mutual concern, address our common needs, exchange ideas and share experiences to further our primary purpose;
2. The forum is intended to compliment the existing service structure of NA;
3. Our goal is to develop and support NA in this part of the world;
 - a) to support translations of NA literature into our languages;
 - b) to support Outreach, H&I and Public Information efforts within Asia Pacific;
 - c) To maintain and support communication among NA members, communities and Regions within this part of the world; and
 - d) To continue working with NAWs in our efforts.

Minutes, reports and other information about APF activities are available on our website:

www.apfna.org

Hi Guys, from Paolo the APF Secretary

The APF Nepal 2007 was a great experience for me. I can't begin to explain the closeness I feel to all delegates and guests who attended. Imagine, we are all working our own recovery and doing service. Our journey in recovery brought us all together in service in Nepal . . . on top of the world. It is fantastic how our Higher Power (HP) works.

I felt that this APF 2007 was really most productive and unifying for our communities. I have learned so much from the different NA reports and workshops. I was also inspired by the tradition 2 sharing of Tom Mc. But the best thing about the APF 2007 for me is that we all agreed to explore whether the APF can have

fellowship development trips for Asia; a sure sign that our APF is maturing.

Thank you Danny U. for your service to the APF as Treasurer and much more! You have helped me and others to be better in service in NA and APF. I would also like to welcome Anindita as our new treasurer. I loved the NA Nepal convention. The countdown was out of this world. The chanting, dancing, clapping, jumping and tossing people in the air made me also jump, dance and shout. Simply inspiring! . . . I love being a recovering addict in Nepal. Kudos to Suyash, Sushil and NA Nepal for the wonderful convention. This APF 2007 is one I'll never forget. Keep coming back . . . Namaste.

Email articles or stories of recovery for the APF Newsletter to:

newsletter@apfna.org

Service in NA - a member's story

When I put my hand up to be the Group Service Representative (GSR) of my home group I had no idea that I was opening the door to major opportunities for changes in my life.

Firstly here was the challenge of writing my group report on time, remembering to take the 7th Tradition funds to the Area Service Committee (ASC) and facilitating the group conscience. I really wanted to get things absolutely right and was very angry when anyone gave me any suggestions. I wanted to control things.

By making many mistakes and finally having to accept help I finally grasped that I was only human, that I wouldn't die if I made a mistake, and that getting help makes things easier.

My experience on the ASC taught me that things don't have to happen in my time, that other people may in fact be right even when they disagree with me, and that things get broken and then fixed and NA won't disappear just because we sometimes fight and get things wrong.

I worked on committees with people I didn't easily like and found that I can cooperate and even admire people whose opinions are very different to mine. I learnt that it was more important to get the work done than to change people so that they are more like me.

When I went to the Region I found out that NA is truly run by NA members, that there were no kings and queens and that all the important decisions are made by

everyone just sharing their ideas and praying for the clarity to understand each other. I just had to get my reports in on time, take the money and organise myself to read and understand the material. (This turned out to be great training for going back to school later on).

When I went to the APF I was encouraged to offer the experience of my home Region to new NA communities by sharing guidelines, discussing history and talking about the mistakes and successes of our service committees. I also had to write my report, remember to send our contribution to the treasurer on time and read all the material and send reports and articles to the APF Newsletter.

When I attended our APF meeting I found that sharing about recovery, talking about sponsoring people, discussing the steps and how to start meetings were just as valuable to community growth as sharing our service minutes and participating in the formal parts of the meeting. I found that the time that we spent sharing with each other outside the meetings were important golden opportunities to help each other.

This reinforced for me that service is really all about recovery and that we cannot successfully carry the NA message unless we live by spiritual principles and are prepared to support each other.

I am still an active member of my home group, and whenever we elect a new GSR I cannot help wondering where service will take them.

NA in Hong Kong – the Nepali connection

Recent Changes to NA in Hong Kong 2006 - 2007: excerpts from notes from a member; Stuart G

When I arrived here and found that there were no English speaking NA meetings here, some of the English speaking addicts told me about the Nepalese groups at Kowloon Park and Yuen Long. There are more than 20 members of the groups, meetings have remained solid, growing slowly and steadily carrying the message of NA to the large Nepalese community here as well as to methadone clinics and detoxes in Hong Kong.

When we got a couple of English speaking meetings off the ground we contacted the Yuen Long and Kowloon groups and formed the Hong Kong Area of Narcotics Anonymous (HKANA), and joined with the China Region. Most of our members are Nepali speakers, and, where necessary, meetings are bi-lingual.

It would have been much harder to get the English speaking meetings started here without the support, unity and strength of the Nepalese groups.

Finding Recovery in Hong Kong – a visitor's story from Bablu from Kolkata

I arrived in Hong Kong thinking of NA Hong Kong and that was pure excitement for me.

The next morning I phoned the only phone number NA has here. The guy who picked up the phone spoke good English and sounded happy to have a member from overseas visiting their fellowship and looking for a

meeting. So we arranged a street corner rendezvous to make the Kowloon Park meeting.

We walked down the spread out Kowloon Park till we reached a pavilion in the middle of a water-body next to loud fountains and other park sounds.

Sitting there were about 10 guys surrounding the spread out IP's and NA literature, everyone and

everything was on the pavilion floor. The guys here were originally members from NA Nepal. The meeting began with the preamble readings in both Nepali and English. Members shared in their mother tongue, Nepali. So here I was sitting in a NA meeting in a foreign country listening to sharing in another foreign language alien to the country we were in! I can understand Nepali so I could follow their sharing.

Over dinner I slowly got better acquainted with the guys. They told me they do H & I in Hong Kong for their Nepali brethren in local detox units but that none was fluent enough in Mandarin to carry the message to the Chinese addicts seeking recovery. This too shall pass with a little help from NAWS, I am hopeful.

Each guy shared how he was practicing the spiritual principles in his daily living – survival against all odds in a country which is easily ten times more expensive to live in than Nepal. Yet they had found their footing and were developing a brilliant foundation for new members to join in.

There are 3 groups in Hong Kong and they have formed an ASC. I keenly await that glorious day when we will be headed for the 1st. Hong Kong Area NA Convention followed by the APF Conference. It is bound to happen & together we can make it happen.

Notes from the APF Administrative Meeting March 17, 2007 from Tali, the APF Chairperson

We want to thank all the delegates and members who attended the APF 2007 in Nepal. Another successful APF meeting took place with the help of everyone.

The Admin Committee met at 10 AM on March 17th, 2007. We thanked Danny for his excellent job as treasurer and welcomed our new treasurer Anindita from India. Danny will complete a closing treasurer report to be distributed at the end of April, will assist us through transition period and Anindita will provide a treasurers report in September 2007. Our Bank Account will remain in Hawaii for the next year.

Kimmy from Hawaii is our new point person for merchandising and Ursula from Aotearoa New Zealand will be serving on the committee along with Tali. All delegates are invited to help, submit merchandise and raise contributions on this committee.

We changed the language from PI resource person to PR resource person; Erik from Hawaii is interested in serving the APF as PR resource person. If anyone else is interested in helping out with this please contact the Admin Committee.

Mark will continue working on the Strategic Plan, we want to thank him for all his work; he is doing a great job. Hamish and Paolo will be asked to prepare an explanation of delegate roles and responsibilities for us.

We will be reviewing our statement of purpose, meeting agenda, how to assist members to participate in discussions and our voting procedures; any guidelines will be developed and distributed before our next APF meeting for discussion and delegate approval.

The meeting evaluations indicated that the community reports and discussions were valuable and that some delegates found the complexity and language requirements of the NAWS Presentation challenging. We will bear this in mind when we develop the agenda for future meetings.

Officially Hong Kong is now part of China and we will be removing them from our roll call.

A reminder that as per our guidelines all Delegates will be required to send in a report three months by June 07.

A Farewell Message from our outgoing Treasurer Danny U – Indonesia – In Loving Service

Hey All, what a privilege it has been serving the APF as the treasurer and a member of the Admin committee. As happens in NA, the commitment looked a little scary and felt a little bit over my head when I was elected but with major assistance from HP and some of my recovery brothers and sisters, I was able to rise to the occasion. I love and respect our Forum very much and it really is an unusual and very powerful version of the 12th step that we are practicing with NA brothers

and sisters coming together from so many varied countries/cultures/languages to discuss our common purpose of carrying the NA message to the still suffering addicts throughout our zone. It has been great serving with so many other dedicated members, doing this together with you guys and gals absolutely inspires me to continue to be of service to our wonderful fellowship.

Email articles or stories of recovery for the APF Newsletter to:
newsletter@apfna.org

Hello from Faizal A. the Regional Delegate from Malaysia

I attended the APF meeting in Nepal as the delegate for my Region, and I felt that the most valuable thing that happened at that meeting was the opportunity for all the community delegates to meet together in person in one place and share our problems. We found that most of the problems facing the other communities are the same as the ones we face at home. I hope that we have

more time at the next meeting to listen to each other and to work on the challenges that we have identified for our communities by brain storming solutions. One of common major difficulties is the setting up and maintaining of literature translations committees but then, I guess that's why it's called a challenge.

China Delegate's Community Report from Sam B

Hello from China: we have 5 groups, 9 Meetings in China, and our membership totals 60 to 75. Our newcomer count is impressive as we had only one meeting in China at this time last year. Our meetings are in Hong Kong/Kowloon (4) Southern China, Kunming (1) South-western China, Beijing (2) North-eastern China, and Shanghai (2) Central Eastern China. Our four Areas are all over 1000 or so kilometres from each other.

Our www.nachina.com website is a tool that links us with members from all around the world. We are proud that the information on our site is in Chinese as well as English. We have a PI Sub-Committee based in Shanghai and a Translation Sub-Committee based in Beijing.

We hope to host the 1st NA China Convention in Shanghai May 18th to 21st this year. More details will follow. The China Region will also examine the possibility of hosting the 2010 APF around the time of

the World Expo where China is expecting 70 million guests. We will try our first mini-convention and assess our capacity to host something bigger.

Our key challenge remains continuing to develop an official relationship with the government that will allow for further growth of the fellowship

A glossary for Chinese translations has been started, 4 IP's have been printed and IP #1 is up for approval by NAWS for publication. The Group Booklet is being evaluated and we have applied to have key tags approved and produced. The Little White Book is also in the works. We are in contact with Singapore and Malaysia regarding translations into Chinese.

If anyone wants or knows about members who speak and write Chinese that want to become involved please write please contact David H. CLTC-Chair Person on: post_mortem666111@hotmail.com Please note the underscore between the t_m

Kia Ora from Aotearoa New Zealand' Hamish A

We hold an Annual Regional Gathering 2007 where all GSR's and members of the wider fellowship come together to identify what the fellowship would like us as a region to do to serve them. It is also where we give feedback and report directly back to the fellowship what we have been doing since the last Regional Gathering, elect the Regional Delegate alternate and confirm the Regional Delegate. We also hold NAWS issue discussion workshops eg Home Groups (see later in this newsletter)

Our Region also host conventions and campouts; the 25th Anniversary of NA in New Zealand will be held during November 2007 in Auckland. Check out events on www.nzna.org for dates.

The position of Public Relations Coordinator was filled in 2006 and has been extremely busy since. The committee has been working with Areas to ensure all

messages to the email lists are answered and on how to improve communication between the Areas. Achievements to date include a new PR statement to go on the new web site, a how to start a meeting guide, increased communications with in our community, using the email address pr@nzna.org and a presentation of our survey results at a national addictions conference.

Translations into Maori; our indigenous people's language is continuing; we now have an ad-hoc Regional committee working on the glossary of terms. We have completed a 'welcome' key tag. Our history book was launched at a fellowship event in October 2005.

After the 2006 APF meeting an email list was set up, with the purpose of offering support/contacts for women members of the APF: wahine@nzna.org

Indian Regional Report – Mandar D

India is a vast country with the second largest population in the world, which would also suggest that there are a large number of addicts in our Region but only a small percentage has received the message of NA.

The NA India Region has 12 Areas who have formed their Area Service Committees and have rendered support to the SIRSCONA (our Region), though a few of these Areas do not have an ASC functioning currently. NA meetings are also held elsewhere in India

Our Region has approximately 96 groups which conduct 160 recovery meetings, this is apart from H and I and institutional meetings. There is only one “special interest” recovery meeting reported, which is a “Woman’s only meeting”, held in Kolkata. Woman form a very small percentage of membership in our Region, though there are many woman addicts in the Region.

An estimated 3000-3500 regular members form our membership. In our efforts to carry the message of NA, our Areas have formed SIRSCONA, i.e. Society of Indian Regional Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous. The SIRSCONA meets every six months and the schedule falls during Feb and Sep. We meet in one of our constituent NA Areas which propose to host the SIRSCONA meeting. The meeting is scheduled over 3 days and on an average 5 to 6 NA Areas out of 12 are represented at this meeting.

We have not formed Sub-Committees at the regional level, except for our Web Service Committee. The

tasks of other sub-committees is taken care by the executive committee members of SIRSCONA.

The site is hosted temporarily for review at <http://www.nabombay.org/sirscona/index.htm> [courtesy NA Bombay] and will replace the earlier SIRSCONA website

NAWS conducted workshops in Bangalore and Delhi in Sep 2006 preceding SIRSCONA. Members from Nepal and Bangladesh were invited to Bangalore to attend the workshop and the SIRSCONA meeting as observers. In Feb 2007, NAWS also conducted a workshop in Bombay for Bombay and South Mumbai Areas. They proceeded to Orissa, where they conducted another workshop for Orissa Area during the Area convention.

In the latter half of 2006 and early 2007 we had Area conventions hosted by Bangalore (Sept), Sikkim(Nov), Bombay(Jan) and Orissa(Feb).Campout’s were held by Kolkata (June) & Pune (Dec).

We face problems like communications, lack of sufficient/committed members in our service structure, literature translation-as India has a large number of languages, etc.

We experience issues like attracting new members in service, encouraging more Areas to participate in the Regional business meetings, reaching out to members without their respective translated literature of known language & reaching out to most institutes/treatment centres in India.

Workshops and Meetings in India: a letter from Ron M’s (World Board member)

On September 2nd through 12th, 2006 I along with NAWS staff members Jeff G. and Shane C. travelled to India. This was the first time I had ever visited this country. The first leg of our trip took us to a 3 day RSC with SIRSCONA held in Bangalore. This was followed by our attendance at the Bangalore Area Convention. Trusted servants from Nepal and Bangladesh attended the Regional meeting, workshops and convention. The Indian fellowship is vibrant with an influx of many new members. They are eager to provide services and attract new members. The convention workshops had well over 100 members in attendance. From Bangalore, our travels took us to New Delhi for more service

workshops which had approximately 70 members in attendance. During the course of the trip we facilitated 11 workshops finding members eagerly embracing and participating in service. At times language posed challenges; there are 7 different languages spoken regularly. However, this did not negate our ability to find our common bond and focus on efforts to better carry the Message of Recovery. NAWS continues to work closely with the Regional servants of India to assist with Fellowship Development and translations issues. I wish to thank the local members for their warm welcome.

Travelling and workshopping in Kolkata - Letter from Tom Mc (World Board Member)

For years I have heard stories about Calcutta. As soon as I stepped off the plane I expected the smell, the unbelievable poverty and a mass of suffering humanity. Maybe I was in another world in my head because I

was not been hit with the shock that I was told about? Leaving the airport there is a sign that says "welcome to Kolkata, The city of Joy". I cannot think of another city I have been to that welcomes you like that.

Driving into and about Calcutta is an experience for the brave of heart, the traffic is just wild, flying in every direction, bikes, motor bikes, rickshaws, taxis, trucks, buses, cars, people, dogs, trams, trolleys, you name it? Everyone beeps their horns continually, sometimes for no reason and all the mirrors are pulled in so they don't get knocked off. They move within inches of one another. In the five days I was there I didn't see one accident. There are apparently no rules so you just drive as you need.

I feel amazingly safe here; the people in the streets smile at you and look you in the eye and the children I saw were laughing and are happy.

The NA fellowship is a lot of fun. They are passionate

about everything; at one meeting we went to they were yelling and cheering the speaker on. Most members speak some English but they prefer to speak in Bengali. The Caste system in India does not exist in NA; they embrace our "Regardless of" principle and it's never been a problem.

We were asked if we were willing to facilitate an impromptu service workshop. There were over 60 members that showed up and we decided to focus on Atmosphere of Recovery, Leadership and Consensus Building. The members loved it; they said never again will they have workshops that are not interactive. This was the first time they felt they were part of a process.

RD Report Pakistan North

We have three groups/three meetings a week with a membership number in Pakistan (North) of around 150. Two of our groups are in Lahore so the distance is not big and members can reach at either of the meeting without much difficulty. The third group is in Islamabad which is about 400Km from Lahore. Some of the members attending the Lahore meeting come from the nearby cities and have to travel for about 60 to 70 Km. Some of them are not able to attend the meetings regularly for that reason. We have a LTC and do H&I work but believe that there is a dire training need for effectively running our NA meetings, Literature Translation, and H&I services. Pakistan (North) organized a convention in March 2006 at Lahore.

No literature has been approved so far but Urdu Key Tags have been approved by NAWS. The Glossary in Urdu has been submitted to NAWS for the approval and we plan to complete the Basic Text and get as

many IPs completed as possible by the end of this year

Around 20 new members joined the fellowship in the last year and none of the previous members relapsed. Members are becoming more and more committed to extend their services for the NA cause and more people are becoming eligible and willing to be the sponsors for the new coming members.

Some of our biggest challenges are the slow rate of growth of new members and although a number of treatment centres talk about NA they do not encourage their clients to attend NA meetings outside of their facilities.

There is a lot of poverty in our community because the economic scenario of Pakistan is not very happy one and many people are unemployed. For this reason collections in our NA meetings are very meagre and hardly meet the expenses for the tea or coffee served at the meeting.

The NA Sponsorship Book – posted on the NA Middle East list server

I read the new literature book "Sponsorship" recently and I was amazed by the wealth and variety of experience contained in that book. In fact, I'm reading it for a third time currently. It has enlightened me immensely in my misconceptions and cleansed the misinformation that I have stored in my head over the years.

My understanding of Sponsorship and my step work with my sponsor and sponsees has taken a different meaning altogether after reading the book. I'm grateful that I read that book and I intend to continue to seek wisdom and clarity from the book again and again in my recovery.

Also, being from a part of the world where there is a

scarcity of Sponsors who can guide sponsees thru the steps, I have personally seen and experienced every kind of sponsorship mentioned in the book "Sponsorship" working wonderfully well in my country. Of course there are certain exceptions where it doesn't work, but majority of such exceptions occur in the traditional way of sponsorship here.

I strongly believe that sponsorship is all about two addicts sharing their recovery with each other. The heart of NA beats there. So as long as we are honest and committed to working the steps in the relationship, it works. If I'm not honest and willing, then even the best sponsor in the world cannot help me.

Take what you can and leave the rest. Hugs ~ Tahir.

Report from the Maldives Delegate - Rado

The Maldives is experiencing a very new NA Fellowship and has lots of challenges which we have been trying to tackle and are successful till date. We are conducting 2 meetings on every Saturday and Thursday night. The Saturday night meeting is in English and Thursday night meeting is in Dhivehi (our local language). A service structure had been elected to serve the fellowship.

The main challenges for our fellowship are Literature Translation and carrying the message across a community made up of many small islands. Its easy for those who are in Male' (Capital) but the geographical separation of other 200 islands makes addicts impossible to attend the meetings since they have to travel by sea and there is no ferry services available. Often there will be a boat once in a week or longer.

Thank you NA HUGS and LOVE

Building Strong Home Groups – A NAWS Fellowship Discussion Topic

Some of the discussion regarding Building Strong Home Groups in October 2006 at the NZNA Convention included:

When we start going to meetings, many people will give us advice about staying clean. This generally includes going to more meetings, getting a sponsor, doing the steps, staying out of sexual relationships for awhile and joining a group. For some of us this is the first time that we have been welcomed to join anything for some time, for others it is the first time that we have felt that we belonged anywhere.

Belonging to a Home Group means that we go to the same group each week, help the other members to set up the meeting and attend and participate in the Group Conscience. By joining a Home Group we find that we feel more secure, that we learn about commitment and have a special place to celebrate recovery milestones. We find that we can share more intimately and give each other more support when we get to know people by seeing them every week. Through our involvement with a Home Group we start to take responsibility for welcoming newcomers and providing an atmosphere of recovery that encourages them to come back and find out more about NA. For many of us this is our introduction to NA service

Service in Home Groups: Home Groups pass on 7th Tradition funds and support the Area through sending a GSR to Area meetings and asking members to take on other service positions. By participating in Group

Consciences members find their voice and experience the right to speak and have an opinion; this contributes to the development of our NA community and gives members a sense of being valued. Home Groups also give us the opportunity to cooperate with each other by putting out the chairs and literature and showing each other how to carry the NA message.

Strong Home Groups carry the NA message by making meetings attractive e.g. having tea and coffee available, setting up the meeting on time, putting on the lights, greeting people and encouraging others to do the same. Strong Home Groups encourage people to stay after the meeting to get to know each other, celebrate clean time anniversaries, give out key tags and literature, pick a nice venue, create smoke free entry-ways for people and perform loving service.

Group members can demonstrate the principle of “you have to give it away to keep it” to newcomers by encouraging them to join the group, finding service positions that assist that member to feel like they belong, sharing about how service enhances their own recovery, demonstrating an attitude of gratitude, sharing thoughtfully and honestly, showing up regularly, sponsoring others and being a sponsee.

Strong Home Groups also carry our regular inventories about their meetings and Group Conscience to ensure that they are carrying the NA message as well as they can.

A Recovery Story from Australia from Sue

Hi. My name is Sue and I'm an addict. I grew up in an average dysfunctional family with a very angry frequently drunk father and a control freak for a mother. She used to tell us it was our fault dad was so angry. The only way I could survive was to cut off from my feelings (this was encouraged in our house). I read or was very depressed for most of my childhood. Till, that is, I found alcohol. I went from introvert to life of the party just like that. Then as each drug came

along I got into it. I loved them; they gave me freedom from myself.

When I found heroin I thought I'd found the missing link, the answer to all my problems. It gave me so much energy and confidence. But my love affair with the drug was based on an illusion. What it gave, it ended up taking away. It wasn't long before I started going on methadone programs and visiting doctors to try to get drugs to survive.

As heroin stopped providing me with the hours of feeling good, I got into other drugs just so I could feel OK. By the end of my using I rarely got more than five minutes relief before I was hanging out again. The illegal drugs ended up a minor part of the problem. I was on a large dose of methadone for about 13 years and gobbled bucketfuls of tranquillisers and barbiturates.

My life revolved around getting my methadone and guzzling alcohol, pills and, when I could, trying to shoot heroin, my veins had mostly collapsed even in my hands and feet. I rarely went out unless to get money or score. I just stayed in the one room, watching TV for years on end. I felt like I was going to die of boredom!

I thought what I needed was a new drug and some new veins! Or a legalised heroin program! Finally an old using friend, who had been clean for a few years, started taking me to meetings. I was so bored that I went. People at meetings were really nice to me and I wanted to please them. So when they suggested I went into detox I went - even though I thought the idea was mad. After all, detoxes didn't let you watch TV.

In Christmas 1987 I went in for a long and horrific detox. But when I got out, I didn't know how not to use. And worst still, the education the detox gave me on addiction ruined my using. I now knew what was in store for me. Sitting in the gutter doesn't feel so bad when you think you are having a rest - when you know it's as good as it gets it is unbearable. I felt so mad that I thought if I used again I would end up in a locked ward of a psychiatric hospital. I knew I wanted to stay clean so I went back in for what is hopefully my last detox and then spent 4 months in a recovery house. My brain slowly began to calm down and the voices in my head grew quieter.

I still felt really bad physically. I had used for a long time and I didn't spring back into life. I was forty years

old and felt about 90. I did relate to the stories even though I was a older than most of the other newcomers. We had addiction in common.

At first I found it hard to sit still - I felt so uncomfortable. Concentrating or talking to other people, even recovering addicts, was hard. So I sat in meetings, lots of them. I felt safe there. My pill taking left me with huge problems with concentration. I could no longer read very well and found it hard to concentrate. Every time I noticed that I was drifting off in a meeting, I kept pulling my mind back in the room and tried to focus on person sharing. Sitting near the front helped with this. Eventually, like most things, my concentration improved. Funnily enough, I ended up making my living in recovery by reading and writing.

As I stayed clean my life started to improve but gratitude came slowly. By joining groups, I had begun to feel part of NA but I was sure I couldn't stay clean. When I turned a year clean, the best birthday I've ever had, I felt valid - like I might really be able to do this recovery thing. I started to feel grateful - I could see feel the difference in my life.

I've had problems dealing with the other forms of my addiction, particularly work and food and, like many others, have a liver that needs help. I've experienced a few rock bottoms and stayed clean through them. I'm currently in a steps group - the steps still help me to grow and change.

After 19 years of recovery, I still love my meetings and feel lucky to live in Sydney where there are plenty. My favourite form of service is carrying the message at H&I meetings. This helps me stay grateful.

I love going overseas to conventions and seeing recovery thrive in other countries. I like my life and am a grateful member of NA.

My APF Meeting: Sushil from Nepal

This was a great APF on the top of the world. It's being really hard for me to find the best thing that happened at the APF meeting cause every moment I spent there was exciting. However, I think that the best thing was starting our Strategic plan for the APF to make our primary purpose more efficient and effective in our community. Mark H did a very good job at presenting this session. I believe this type of planning will be very effective in improving our service efforts.

The APF always has lots of newly recognized communities, and new communities have lots of challenges to grow. Sometimes they expect a lot of support from this forum and that the APF will meet all their needs, so one of our main challenges is to keep this forum sustainable. However I think that we have the potential to meet this challenge effectively.

The Nepal community had the opportunity to learn about hosting our fellowship. We were able to attend the workshops and have the feeling like we really are the part of this world wide fellowship. We also benefited from leadership cultivation; in summary we experienced the diverse experience, hope and strength to make our community more dynamic.

After the APF every part of our service structure like the RSC, ASC & Sub committees and groups have became reactivated (not that they were paralyzed before).

We hope that the next meeting can be focused on more technical issues like PI and H & I demonstrations.

With Hugs Sushil

Upcoming Events

The 207 NA Bali convention is on the first week of June. This year our theme is “Nothing to Fear” Please come along and in the spirit of unity support us in our primary purpose of carrying the NA message here in Indonesia. This will be a bi-lingual affair so no matter what language you speak, you have nothing to fear.

You can get more info at: http://www.na-bali.org/english/events/en_bali_convention.htm

APF Newsletter

The APF Newsletter assists the NA communities in the Asian Pacific Forum to communicate about their activities between APF meetings, and provides information regarding Narcotics Anonymous in Asia and the Pacific to NA members and the public via the APF website.

The APF Newsletter is focussed on providing a description of the activities of the APF NA communities and committee members, and includes personal stories of recovery and the service experience of the members within the APF and other NA communities.

From the Newsletter Committee

Thankyou to everyone who assisted us to develop this edition of the APF newsletter. We will be including more community reports in the next edition and welcome letters, articles or reports from any members recovering in our communities. We would like to thank Anindita for being an important member of our committee over the last year and wish her well in her new position of Treasurer of the APF. We also want to welcome David K and Ron B onto our committee for the next year,

This newsletter was compiled by the APF Newsletter Committee consisting of: Bella (Aust), Geoff (China) Sue H (Australia) David K (Malaysia) and Ron B (Australia)

Send material to < newsletter@apfna.org >