

ASIA PACIFIC FORUM

Aotearoa New Zealand - Australia - Bahrain - Cambodia - China - Guam - Hawaii
India - Indonesia - Iran - Japan - Kuwait - Malaysia - Maldives - Nepal - NERF - Pakistan
Philippines - Saudi Arabia - Singapore - South Korea - Thailand - Viet Nam



Asia Pacific Forum Newsletter

35th Edition October 2009

APF Statement of Purpose

The Asia Pacific Forum is made up of the NA Communities from the Asia Pacific Zone. These guidelines are devised to facilitate the agreed purposes of this service body. The following is the stated purpose of the Asia Pacific Forum, which these guidelines honor:

- 1) 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.
- 2) This forum is intended to complement the existing service structure of NA. Goals to Encourage develop and support NA in this part of the world:
 - a) To encourage and support translations of NA literature into our languages.
 - b) Encourage and support Outreach, H&I and Public Information efforts within Asia Pacific.
 - c) Encourage, maintain and support communication among NA members, communities and Regions within this part of the world.
 - d) To continue working with NA World Services in our efforts.

APF Vision Statement:

Our Vision is that one day:

- a) Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life;
- b) NA communities worldwide, NA world services and the APF work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery;
- c) Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.

Message from the Editor

Here is another newsletter for you. We have submissions on fellowship development, the World convention in Barcelona, news about our next APF meeting, Tradition 2, submission by our webserver, exciting information regarding an FD trip to Pakistan, a visit to Iran from one of our members, and news and recovery information hopefully helpful to us all.

I need to express my appreciation for our worldwide fellowship and how it has opened my mind and heart to the incredible possibilities that await me; both personally and within the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. When I first came to the rooms, I never imagined how my future would become so entangled and enmeshed with recovery; the steps, the spiritual principles, the experiences I have had, the awakenings I have witnessed, the tears and the laughter (both from myself and others), the friends I have made, all of life on life's terms, and most of all the miracle to be clean through it all.

Thank you for that.

Also a special thanks to the Australian region from all of us in the forum, for their generous continuing donations to the APF. Your region is an example of love, responsibility, and generosity.

Your humble newsletter chair,
Kimmy

Tradition Two

"For our group purpose there is but one authority-a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscious. Our leaders are but trusted servants they do not govern."

Tradition One reads "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon NA unity." Tradition two builds on the unity that is reflected in building on our common welfare. Over the years I have learned that everything we do in service reflects the common welfare of our members and NA as a whole. Common Welfare stresses the importance of our unity and common needs of our worldwide fellowship. We focus on the whole rather than our own will. My best service is expressed in the ability to reach out to all addicts in a respectful and loving manner. There are times when this has been a challenge for me. I often ask myself this question how am I communicating in service? I am passionate in what I believe and have the best intentions in mind however passion can become a hindrance when I become emotionally involved with an idea or concept that I believe to be right. When I respond emotionally to situations it is impossible for me to look at the big picture. As our basic text tells us "today's decisions may affect tomorrow's members".

Unity is a spiritual principle in which we carry our message. Unity has often asked me to remember that my personal desires or the conflict's I may find myself involved in are not that important. Remembering there is a Higher Power leading the way. An example of this Unity would be in how I make decisions. I often ask myself has every member had a voice in the decision making process? Are we making this decision with the spiritual principle of goodwill toward one another? I have often translated this to mean "if I can't help an addict don't hurt an addict." If I offer love then I am exercising that love by offering care in the way I speak and treat our members. We often talk about an atmosphere of recovery? As our Basic Text tells us "the conscience of a group is most clearly expressed when every member is considered equal." I truly believe the love and care I show my

fellow addicts creates the unity and serves our common welfare in carrying the message of Narcotics Anonymous.

The spirit of the second tradition asks me to be of loving service and the direction I seek comes from my higher power. That loving higher power offers guidance in all that I do however I must be willing to listen. My will in the best of times does not serve me well. When I don't practice willingness and trust and forget that my higher power is in charge I lose sight of the bigger picture.

In listening for the direction of a higher power and getting out of the way I am less likely to become involved in what I judge to be right.

"As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well." I am constantly in the process of growth and have come to understand that at times my recovery experiences bumps and curves when I least expect it. These moments become some of the most painful as well as the most growing. I am often reminded that surrendering to my higher power's will places me in the position to operate with trust rather than fear. In operating out of fear I get stuck in believing that there is something I am supposed to do when in reality it has already been done for me if I just get out of the way. Sometimes the best service that I can offer is to do nothing and by that I mean step away, be quiet and invite that loving higher power into my life. "Ask for Help." All of us are capable of serving our fellowship whether it is member to member, group to area, area to region, or region to world, we are all equal in Narcotics Anonymous. It is in the strength of our equality that binds us together.

We often talk about anonymity and integrity in serving our fellowship. Integrity is the ability to serve our members by practicing spiritual principles no matter what the circumstance may be. This is an easy concept to practice in service when there are no conflicts or disagreements. One of my greatest learning curves happens when I don't focus on spiritual principles. I was 2 years clean and didn't understand that the only requirement for membership was a desire to stop using. A member was visiting my home group and he identified himself as an addicted cocaine addict. I made a comment that embarrassed him and made the group laugh. When it came to his turn to share he said, "this is my first NA meeting and my last." The room got quiet as he walked out. I followed him out and it was in that moment that I asked my higher power for help. I explained to this member that I was wrong and not to judge NA by my behavior. I was sick and didn't understand the principle of love and freedom from judgment. Anonymity speaks to the equality of each member.

By placing my personal feelings aside, getting out of my own way the higher power prevails. As I mentioned before I am in a constant process of change. Today when I judge another's behavior I get the ting inside which tells me something is wrong. The difference between my early recovery and now is I have a set of tools called spiritual principles and an understanding higher power in my life which moves me through obstacles rather than around them.

In the beginning of this article I quoted from our Basic Text "today's decisions may affect tomorrow's members". In serving our fellowship I have the opportunity to carry a message of unity. The language of empathy was given freely to me in the beginning of my recovery and so continues today. We have a diverse fellowship and our unity and common welfare depends upon practicing our spiritual principles in all our affairs. Tradition 2 invites a loving higher power into that process and will ensure that we carry a message of freedom from active addiction to our members.

I am proud to be a member of Narcotics Anonymous!

Much Mahalo! An addict from Hawaii

APF Web Servant Position

Kia ora, greetings to everyone in the Asia Pacific Forum communities. My name is Roger, I am an addict, I live in Christchurch, the largest city in the South Island of Aotearoa, New Zealand. I got clean in January 1993, thanks to the program of Narcotics Anonymous. This fellowship has given me a life beyond my wildest dreams. The gifts of recovery were enough a long time ago, yet there continued to be more, and then some more.

Service has been an important part of my recovery. A few years ago when serving on the RSC I was inspired by stories told by our Regional Delegates, speaking of their experiences, and showing photos of their trips to APF meetings. In particular the story of the development of the Nepal fellowship touched me deeply. Within a few short years the reports were of Nepal hosting the APF meeting and holding conventions. This got me looking beyond my own country, and I wondered how I might be able to participate with the APF and somehow make a difference.

I put myself forward for the position of Web Servant at the APF meeting in March 2008. Since then I have had the pleasure of receiving the Nepal meetings schedules to publish on the website, and continue to be amazed by the growth and activity of so many Forum communities. As just one example, it is almost beyond my comprehension that there are so many thousands of meetings in Iran and that they could hold a convention with tens of thousands of addicts attending!

When I read the newspaper, or watch news on TV, I often see stories of suffering or conflict arising from intolerance or selfishness, or different political or religious views, and wonder what the world has become. Then I get an email from a member of Narcotics Anonymous from many thousands of kilometres away, saying "Hi my name is and I'm an addict" and it puts me back in touch once again with what is important in life, with our humanness, and just how much the same we all are. But most importantly, with the fact that we are addicts, that there are many hundreds of thousands of us on this recovery journey all around the world, and that it all starts with an acknowledgement of our powerlessness and unmanageability. I am truly blessed with the benefits of serving with you all.

Unfortunately my 2 year term comes to an end at the approaching APF meeting in Kolkata and the APF will elect a new Web Servant. So I would like to pass on the message to all web servants, web committees, and web designers of our fellowship, or members who may be interested in serving in this role. If you are a Regional Delegate, or in some way involved in service, or just know someone in your local fellowship who may have an interest, could you please help by passing this information on to them? From a slightly technical perspective, the main requirement is an understanding of HTML and CSS to maintain a website. Anyone who is interested can read the relevant appendix from the APF Guidelines, which can be downloaded from the Resources page of the website. Please feel free to email me if you would like to ask any questions - web@apfna.org.

While there is no requirement to attend the APF meetings, of course you may attend if you wish. I can however guarantee you will have contact with many addicts from fellowships spanning half the globe. Serving in this role has been a truly remarkable experience, and I thank the Delegates for their trust in me and giving me the opportunity to serve with you all.

Roger S
Aotearoa New Zealand

"If you could have whatever you needed/wanted as far as Fellowship Development in the APF, what would that be? What would that look like?"

Let me start by defining development. Within a NA context surely this must mean attracting the still using addict. How can the APF best do this with the resources available?

Some research into where the message is not being carried might be a great place to start. This may help create a need. We know where meetings are, so let's concentrate on where they are not. Once this is done then we need to look at how meetings can be started. Then how they can be supplied with literature.

Public relations would be helpful once these shortfalls are identified. Locating addicts through health professionals, detoxification facilities and treatment centres. Or recovering addicts actually going and speaking to people, would be a great way to share the message. Access to websites might be helpful in some areas. Or DVDs with recovering addicts sharing their stories.

Whatever happens we would need a strategic plan with clear goals and objectives. Not only that but looking at what the desired outcomes would be and what steps would be needed to achieve those outcomes. Who does what, by when and how much would it cost. What are the strengths and the struggles?

The most important thing for our APF community is newcomers and groups to support them. Let's get out and start groups to attract the still suffering addicts. We will be supported by an ever-loving Higher Power.

Yours in service
Roy B
Aotearoa New Zealand

My dreams for fellowship development are;

That one day we have a system in place to send those members to counties that need our support. We create a separate fund flow designated for fellowship development and we utilize the well of experience that already exists with our brothers and sisters in the APF. Part of this system would target women which are underrepresented.

Tali from Hawaii

Since that there is no meetings going on - my dream is to have NA meetings available for all drug addicts who are seeking recovery.

In Indonesia - there are many drug addicts, but they don't come to meetings - they would come to our annual event, such as conventions or gatherings

Even, at the previous FD from the WSO, over 100 people turned up at the event.

However, there never been any follow up actions post-event.

No more meetings until the next annual event... at the end, we don't have our annual event anymore - because there are no people to organize.

People are staying clean in "other" ways - not like what I personally have learnt in NA.

For me, personally, I get sick if i don't go to meetings - 1 meeting a week is not enough for me - but that's what I have at the moment.

My hope is to have drug users to experience recovery in NA - just like how NA has saved my life.

I have seen many people dying and died because of this disease - I don't want that to carry on - NA has saved many lives of drug addicts including myself.

Ok, now I have talked too much - I will let you wrap my story then.

From Adit in Indonesia

My hopes for the fellowship development in APF is very simple its one country helping another, just like one addict helping another. Since this involve money and crossing borders, I feel it has to be well budgeted and and planned strategically. I think planning including working a realistic budget, focal contact person from both countries working on the event, they handle money and execute whole plan. APF can set dates and supply materials needed in advance. This way it becomes easy to attend other things available locally such as securing a premises and many likewise from the local fellowship. Since there is APF money involved I suggest APF admin committee or treasurer do the follow up the event.

My experience is very limited here however I can say Maldivians (Addicts and Non) are aware there is a self proving way to stay clean. That way of course is a reliable resource or organization called Narcotics Anonymous. They know how to reach us what we do and don't.

As the result of F.D PR,H&I, workshops for members our message is wide spread and clear, today we have opportunity to access jails, police custody, rehabs, we can also get literature customs duty,visa for foreign members, meeting promises, print media, according to tradition. That makes us a huge resource in the community. Many members now understand we are not professional addressing or criticizing a government policy on drug or any particular drug. We are not money oriented NGO or even funded by a third party, they also know our love and support is unconditional.

My dream is that newly emerging communities or newcomers get equal opportunity to develop their local fellowship and that it becomes part of APF business, thereby serving the primary purpose of NA much effectively and openly. I dream and pray that APF get all the means and ways to reach this.

Thanks you very much for your service and I am honored to serve my community as RD, I can't, WE can. Together it works.

~~In Loving Service~~

M.Soba

RD MACNA

NA Asia Meets NA Europe

Within the Narcotics Anonymous Service structure, the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) is classified as a Zonal Forum.

A few definitions of an NA Zonal Forum can be found at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcotics_Anonymous. There are a few NA Zonal forums around the planet and you can access the Links sub-page of the APF website at <http://www.apfna.org/pages/links.htm> to link to these zonal forum websites. The European equivalent of the APF is known as the EDM, an acronym for the European Delegates Meeting. The EDM is currently serving approximately 30 communities and not all of them are physically located on the European sub-continent. For more information about the EDM, please access their website at <http://www.edmna.org/> 25-28 February 2010

Some of the similarities and distinctions between the APF & EDM are:

- The APF has a 3 person admin committee while the EDM has a 4 person Admin committee which the EDM refers to as the Steering committee.
- The APF meets once a year and the EDM meets twice a year, both meet for 4 days per session.
- The EDM has had a functioning Fellowship Development sub-committee for a number of years, the APF is looking at initiating an FD sub-committee during the current cycle.
- The APF has a list server and a newsletter, the EDM does not.
- Both Forums derive funds primarily through community donations. The EDM also derives a small percentage of funds from the annual ECCNA convention and the APF derives some funds from fundraising activities being run through its merchandising sub-committee.

The EDM decided to host its summer 2009 meeting in conjunction with the World Convention in Barcelona this past August. As a courtesy to other Zonal forums, the EDM gave time on the Agenda during the end of day 1 for all Zonal Forums in attendance to give a report. Kimmy Y our APF Newsletter Chair prepared our report [APF Report To EDM 09 08 11.pdf](#) in advance and presented it on the floor of the EDM. That report can be accessed at <http://www.apfna.org/pages/minutes.htm>. Members from 2 other zonal forums were also present and gave reports. Of particular interest to members of the APF, the EDM agenda designated the entire 3rd day of their forum to work-shopping and brainstorming their Fellowship Development process. The EDM has a well populated FD workgroup that had done quite a bit of preparatory work between EDM meetings via Skype conference call. Members of this workgroup facilitated various FD presentations/discussions during day 3 of the EDM. Consensus saw fit that this work group continue to move forward during the next cycle. When the minutes for this EDM meeting are completed, they will be accessible at <http://www.edmna.org/edm-service.htm>. The next EDM will be meeting in Giza, Egypt February 25-28, 2010.

One of our members had the inspiration that it could be beneficial to have an unofficial joint meeting between APF and EDM trusted servants. Kimmy was “Kimmy on the Spot” and was able to pull it all together to arrange the impromptu meeting during the 3rd day of the World Convention. Most trusted servants from both zonal forums that came to Barcelona were in attendance as well as a member of the World board and we ended up having a spirited get together. The main agenda point discussed was how the APF and the EDM can best work together to mutually support each other, there were some other topics covered as well. The official minutes [APF EDM Joint Meeting 09 08 22.pdf](#) for this unofficial meeting can also be accessed at

<http://www.apfna.org/pages/minutes.htm> Please contact the APF Webservant at web@apfna.org for login details for this password protected section of the APF website.

In Loving Service,
Danny U

Fellowship Development Trip to Pakistan

Members from the Singapore and Malaysian fellowships went over to Pakistan to do a FD trip funded by NAWs in October. Faizal and Aziz wrote a report with insight and heart and although we can't print five pages here, we will try to consolidate and interpret the best we can. They were there for five days, for the purpose of first organizing a workshop, attending meetings, observing how NA is represented or not represented, and going to rehab centers and meeting with administration. They had a meeting with five trusted servants of the six groups that meet. There is no area at the present time. The meeting place for the workshop was arranged, with a few unforeseen problems that eventually were worked out.

Then there are different issues came from different trusted Servants.

- (A) Communication breaks down among the groups.
- (B) Lack of interest for Old timers
- (C) Doing service for Rehab centers and get the place for free for group meetings rather than rent because of less funds, and also the centers were increase the rent if they don't do any service work at the rehab centers.
- (D) Shortage of Urdu literature.
- (E) No A S C but there is an R S C in Na South.
- (F) Personality Clashes
- (G) Old timers not attend the meetings regularly but at the time of APF Conventions they are looking active

From Day 4, these are the workshop groups challenges and solutions, in which some are specific to Pakistan and some we can all relate to.

- Old timers are not attending meetings regularly
- All the trusted servants having problems with each other regarding development of Area.
- First we have to strong the Groups
- We need literature in Urdu, how to get it
- Why don't the Old timers having attraction for the New Comers
- Many families didn't allow the recovering addicts to attend the NA meetings, at the time when they came from treatment to home in early stage because they don't know about NA.
- Many of addicts don't know what is NA, how we bring them in NA.
- Different Rehab Centers running support groups in their Centers they are having different Urdu translations of steps and the addicts take the different meanings of steps.
- What is NA?
- How to strong recovery?
- Old timers having bad behaviors, new comers getting effected because of it
- Why Sponsor is necessary?
- How to control anger?

- How to make better NA?
- Some time we cannot do the deep down sharing in the group.... Why?
- How we attend the NA meetings when we are in treatment?
- If any NA member goes to any centre it's better to keep his behavior good because he is presenting NA.
- All the groups having this responsibility to create Area then we can do for H&I and PI Panels.
- Meetings should be moved from Park to somewhere inside.
- Groups should be inviting the Old timers as Speaker.
- The Trusted Servants Specially in Area or Region must attend the Homed Group regularly.
- Events should be helping us to encourage the new comers.
- We should encourage to new comers by giving them key tags etc.
- Groups must need Area and Region, APF, NAWS.
- One person One responsibility
- Spend time on others and carry the message.
- We must work on Steps, Traditions and Concepts
- No Criticisms but appreciation.

Faizal and Aziz observed that "recovering members don't understand what is the difference between support group and NA.....members are committed and highly motivated but not doing NA way properly.....were really touched the way the fellowship treated us.....we found them very curious about NA and how NA works.....(at a treatment center) We gave them some NA T-shirts of our own and they were so happy.....we did share our strength, hope, and experience in the group and they were happy....."

Thank you to Faizal, Aziz, and NAWS for moving our fellowship development along in Pakistan!

The full report may be posted on the website soon.

Iran Convention

The Area no.3 convention was held despite all the challenges we had. The problems was so much that in the recent days we were doubtful whether we can hold this gathering at all. We did not have any rental contract with the arena until 2 week before the convention and only 3 days to the date the officials told us we have to call it off. Therefore a lot of groups and members were not sure if there will be a convention!! So a lot of them did not show up. The number of the attendees was below 20,000.

We have our own problems here!!!

We received about 200 messages by e-mail from all around the world but mostly USA. We read 7 of them in full and announced the name of the members or groups for the rest. Thank you it was a great energy and support.

We also held 8 workshops in which 1200 members attended. I will try to send you some pictures soon.

Hugs
Mahmoud

From Our APF Treasurer

Dear Delegates and Alternates,

As you know the APF will soon be held in India, and I am glad that we will be getting together one more time. Last year we succeeded to do a good FD activity. Fortunately we have good human resources and ideas in APF, but financially we are not very strong. Today (15/9/2009) we have \$5,720.21 in the Bank. And we will have to give an estimated \$1,500 to FD for their upcoming trip to Bhutan. Last year, we spent \$21,474.44 for APF 2009. We anticipate APF 2010 to be more costly than last year and are way short on the funds required.

We therefore are in need of generous donations from APF members communities. For budgeting purposes, if you anticipate your community will be making a donation to the APF this cycle before February 2010, please inform me directly to my email address, not to the list server. Also, for communities that normally require funding, if your communities can also do fund-raising and partially cover your own costs, this will help us to be able to afford to host APF 2010 in India.

Love In Service,
Mahmud
APF Treasurer

Visit to Iran

Having heard so much about the Iran fellowship over the last few years from attending APF meetings as RD and RDA I knew I had to visit. I put Iran on my itinerary as part of an extended overseas trip. I felt a little nervous to be visiting a closed society but my curiosity about the flourishing NA community outweighed my fears.

When we arrived in Tehran at 2am after a 64 hour train ride it was a great relief to be met by smiling NA members. We were taken home and we slept in great comfort. Since then we were been treated with care and love wherever we went and experienced Iranian NA hospitality and generosity. I met wonderful women who have hugged me with warmth and love.

At an open meeting in a full hall in Esfahan I had an opportunity to share and my host translated. It was overwhelming for me coming from a much smaller NA community to experience members enthusiasm for recovery.

Visiting the Caspian Sea it was also made possible for me to attend an Area meeting workshop presentation session which included a report on the Barcelona Convention.

In Tehran I was one of a number of speakers at Area 3 convention. There was a little under 20,000 NA members present although more had been expected.

It was a great celebratory event with messages of love and support for NA Iran from all over the world being read out and of course the cleantime countdown which is so special for us all at these events.

I was also fortunate to visit the service office in Shiraz and see stacks of their literature and key tags - all in Farsi - it was very special.

At the open meeting and the convention the women were seated together at one side. At the women's meetings I attended in Tehran and Shiraz the rooms were packed to capacity. Wherever I went members were keen to have a member from 'outside' visit and share the message. I was given flowers and mementos and lots of picture-taking! My husband who is a friend of the fellowship was treated equally warmly.

Thanks NA Iran members and Tehran Convention Committee for creating opportunities to meet other members in our fabulous APF community and seeing that we are truly a worldwide fellowship practising the principles of a universal programme of recovery.

A grateful recovering addict in NA

Ursula O
Aotearoa New Zealand

Message from APF Admin

The official APF dates for the upcoming APF in Kolkata, India will be in on February 23 to the 26, 2010. All delegates and participants will be expected to check into the hotel on or before the 22nd of February and can check out on the 27th or later if they prefer.

Your APF Admin committee has been in contact and consultation with NA India & Kolkata, NA World Services, NA Australia, NA Thailand and others to finally decide to set the dates above. Taking all possible NA activities to date in consideration (all communities that responded to our query) to make the date as ideal as possible and avoid conflicting schedules.

We can now make our travel plans to set these dates aside to service to the addicts who still suffer in the Asia Pacific zone of NA.

We have placed a down payment with the [Landmark Hotel](#) as the venue for APF 2010 (Pls. click on the name for more info). The contract has not been signed but is under negotiations with members from NA India and NA Kolkata assisting us .

As additional information to all travelers, NA Kolkata is planning to host an event after the APF, possibly Saturday and Sunday. NA Thailand is also planning a NA convention event the weekend before the APF, on the 19, 20 & 21 of February, in the beach town of Pattaya. NA Thailand and India can give you more info on their respective events. For more information, you can go to their website:

NA Thailand: <http://www.na-thailand.org>

NA Kolkata: <http://www.nakolkata.org>

For all delegates who will need funding, our APF Treasurer has posted a request that all delegates please send in the cost of their travel to Kolkata, India from their respective countries. **Note:** Since the upcoming APF Kolkata is projected to be quite costly, in order to save APF funds to assist developing communities, we request that each NA community try to find ways to raise money to fund their own delegate to the APF.

Please remember for all information on APF including past newsletters, minutes, contacts, history, links to meeting all over Asia, and more.....go to <http://www.apfna.org/>