

Recovery stories

CAR news



... and much +

SERVICE EDITORS



END OF CYCLE

PAULO O. - GRATEFUL ADDICT

Issue number four of Serenidade magazine coincides with the end of the year and also with the end of my term as coordinator of the magazine.

The rules dictate that this is how it must be: despite having only been in the position for a year, having joined halfway through, I am no exception.

I confess that it feels like too little time, and for that reason, and also because sponsoring helps to ensure good service, I will be staying here for a while longer.

It is time to pass the ball/steering wheel/helm (choose the option you like best) to Alexandra, knowing that it is in good hands and that she can count on my help.

All that remains is for me to express my gratitude for the opportunity, which was a real challenge and very fulfilling.

Thank you and happy new year.

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR
YOU**

**AREA
CORRESPONDENTS**

- *Being in recovery*
- *Attending meetings*
- *Ability to listen and plead*
- *Knowledge of what's going on in your area (excluding gossip)*

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The Path of Gratefulness

Hello, my name is Álvaro and I am a recovering addict! I was born in Sé do Porto, I am 51 years old and I grew up and lived with my mother. My parents separated when I was 4 years old and my me

mories of my childhood are of total chaos. At the age of my son (8), I remember nights of fado, smoke, alcohol, and environments full of strange and sick people. In elementary school, I would skip classes for entire days to play, build huts, and imagine I was Tom Sawyer, in a life of often lonely Christmases.

My low self-esteem often led me to make the worst choices; out of fear, I reacted violently to defend myself. At 16, I started drinking heavily on weekends and began using "soft" drugs, although playing sports (rowing) kept me somewhat sane.

At 18, after a motorcycle accident, I stopped playing sports and discovered harder drugs. I left home with a friend, both of us on motorcycles, and we fled to Lisbon. I lost the motorcycle in Lisbon... After a "troubled" night and already in Porto, I wandered between the streets and the homes of fellow users. From then on, my addiction manifested itself with such obsession and compulsiveness that at 21, already on the streets again, my father picked me up from the neighborhood where I was using and had me admitted to a treatment center.

My self-esteem got even worse. I felt that even using wasn't "good," because I was hospitalized at 21, when most addicts in treatment were over 30 or 40 years old.

I often remembered sleeping in an abandoned Citroen 2CV in Velasquez Square, watching people buying newspapers and bread on Sundays and wondering why I couldn't be like that.

After nine months in England, in hospital, I came home to spend a week at Christmas. As soon as I landed, I went to the neighborhood and spent the week using. I couldn't understand why, but without planning it, my compulsiveness returned at the first opportunity to use. I went back into treatment and completed the fourth step dishonestly.

I left after 11 months, got on the plane, ordered a bottle of wine, and landed back in relapse.

I couldn't understand it, but my feelings of helplessness and total failure only increased. The compulsiveness returned with greater intensity and at 25 I went back into treatment. I still remember the image of my father giving me the last dose, with tears in his eyes, so that I could be admitted. I thought that after this, there was no way I could relapse again!

I left treatment after 9 months, managed to stay sober for a year, and then went back to hard drugs again. In December, I was in Espinho in a homeless shelter, listening to a friend read the Bible to me. I left there and went straight to the Santo Ovídeo meeting in Gaia on Sunday, December 19, 1999. I had been clean for 24 hours.

I went in with no expectations, I just wanted to stop using, stop suffering, and stop making everyone around me suffer. Happiness was not on the horizon.

I slept in the homes of other addicts until, while working in a warehouse, I rented a room in Maia, where I lived for over a year. Loading trucks, making deliveries, meetings, and service, life was hard, but I took it one day at a time, and suddenly, I was finally in recovery!

With fears, low self-esteem, and a monkey singing in my ear every day that I was going to fail, but 24 hours at a time, I was clean, just for today!

I went to work in Lisbon, already in a commercial area, and then returned to Porto. Work improved after more than a year of sharing anger and despair. When I realized it, I was happy, one day at a time, my life was good!

Holding on to daily meetings and service, I realized that I no longer used because I couldn't: I didn't use because I didn't want to!

The years passed and gratitude accumulated one day at a time, for each experience, each encounter, in a life surrounded by true friends and a Narcotics Anonymous community that carried me in its arms and taught me to communicate with my higher power. My faith grew after many victories and defeats. Yes, because in recovery, life continues with ups and downs, not always on a high.

The Path of Gratefulness

The truth is that, unexpectedly, after a divorce, I met my wife, with whom I started a family, with two wonderful children, three dogs, and six chickens.

My happiness grew, and when I looked back on each year, I thought that the next year couldn't be better than the previous one, but it was! Year after year, 24 hours after 24 hours, more was revealed, with resilience, patience, and dedication.

In 2024, already with 8 years as a black belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, I returned to fighting as a master. I already had about 15 championships since my white belt, with victories and defeats, but with two participations in the European championship, in the first of which I was European Vice-Champion, among other victories.

I fought in three championships and in Barcelona I was runner-up in the "International Master Europe." At work, it was also my best year, "salesman of the year."

With everything going so well and so much happiness, in July, I interrupted my wife's ballet performance during the intermission, went up on stage in front of a full audience, knelt down, and asked my wife to marry me... A month later, on the eve of going on vacation in a motorhome, the right side of my face became paralyzed, and I was diagnosed with a very aggressive cancer in my salivary glands.

For the first two weeks, I cried and experienced the greatest anguish of my life as I recovered. I thought about my children and the promise I had made to them that I would never let them have a sad and lonely childhood like mine!

The week I was scheduled for surgery, I went to Mass and left feeling prepared and confident. God had given me a second chance at life, and I could never forget everything I had gained and all the love that surrounded me.

I woke up stitched up after a six-hour surgery. They had removed the tumor from my face and 47 metastases along my facial nerves, leaving me with total paralysis of the right side of my face and partial paralysis of my right shoulder. From then on, the torture began: hospitalizations, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, etc.

On January 1, when everything seemed stable, we finally took a trip in our motorhome, and I took that New Year's dip. The year 2024 was coming to an end and the expectation was that better days lay ahead, but on January 9, the pain worsened and my right eye became paralyzed. I lost sight in my right eye, and a series of hospitalizations, agonizing pain, and experimental medications returned for a cancer with little hope of a cure.

Just for today, I am alive, and I am grateful for every day that my recovery has given me and continues to give me, one day at a time.

I will never forget this gratitude and I enjoy every day that I can hug my family and spend time with my friends, with all the love that this program has brought me and taught me to experience so intensely.

With the faith of an addict who has made the pilgrimage twenty-one times, on foot and by bicycle, often alone, from Seville to Santiago de Compostela, from Oviedo, from St. Jean Pied du Port, etc., etc...

Nothing is impossible, more will be revealed, but if I leave, it will be with the dignity that this program has given me and the strength that my children, family, and friends trust I will have, until the last minute of recovery!

The fight goes on! Thank you!



Rita



This is my place

Hello, my name is Rita, and I am a recovering addict.

I remember the day I arrived at NA: I had lost sight of who I was. I was clean, but empty. My world was made up of absences, defeated and without faith to continue this journey. I was afraid of people and the world itself.

I didn't know how to live without drugs. I carried heavy consequences: a suspended sentence that reminded me of my past mistakes and fragile health, marked by a car accident that left permanent scars. I felt invisible. My parents looked at me as if I were "poor thing," and I didn't have the strength to start over.

But when I walked into a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, everything changed. The curtains of light opened through the smiles, hugs, and concern they showed me. I felt love and a sense of belonging, and I thought, "This is where I belong." There, I could be a normal person because there were others like me.

I was seen, recognized, and entered a phase of discovery, like a child taking its first steps or uttering its first words. It was then that I realized that the power of identification worked miracles and gave comfort to the soul, so I continued to go to meetings even without understanding their technical language of the 12-step program. I felt a higher power revealing itself in my life, and faith was fuel to feed the soul.

At each meeting, I noticed a new step, a new tradition, and a new spiritual principle that guided me. So, little by little, I began to trust. I discovered that recovery was possible after all.

I learned to smile and believe that it was still possible to achieve my goals and dreams. Today I know that I belong, that I have a voice, and that I can walk with dignity and respect the person I have become. Because I followed suggestions, shared, found a sponsor, got involved in service, and was never alone.

I still have difficulties, and I know that I often still don't know how to deal with my emotions... but I always have an open door and a chair waiting for me, not to mention the phone... because in so many 24 hours I have learned to ask for help and I am grateful to belong to NA.

If you are reading these words and feel that there is no way out, always remember that recovery always begins with a desire to stop using and the courage to ask for help, with authenticity and humility.

In this place, you will be seen, heard, and recognized. There are hands that reach out and hearts that open.

Recovery becomes possible. Don't forget to BELIEVE, even if you have to fake it at first.

Because life without drugs is simply wonderful.

Another 24 hours.





The last of the family to be caught and to manage to get out alive

Hello, I'm Gonçalo and I'm an addict. It's important to mention that I'm the last one in my family to be caught and to make it out alive, JUST FOR TODAY.

Today, I look at my life from a different perspective; a better perspective, to be more precise. Gone are the days when I was an addict because of others. Today, I accept that I am and will be an addict until I die, because yes; in reality, there is no point in me trying to understand why. Being able to admit, accept, and learn to live with this condition has been a fantastic process.

Of course, some days are good, others not so good, but never bad. Bad were the rainy days when I couldn't fall asleep, if I managed to, of course, because the cards and the smell of the blankets on Sundays are always worse. As a fan of this program, I like to speak from the awareness it has given me, first about myself, and second about life. The truth is that I grew up with a clear understanding of the damage caused by drugs and what addiction was, but even that didn't stop me from choosing that same path.

Life wanted me to witness and experience my parents' drug use, but at the same time it also wanted me to experience their entry into recovery. These were my first examples of how it is possible to recover: a father checking into a treatment center and a mother with two children aged 7 and 12 entering recovery through the rooms we know so well. Critical years followed, very critical years, with consequences in all areas from years of bad choices.

It was with this program, with the meetings, and of course with the people, that everything began to change and improve, and in just a few years, a lot had changed for the better, of course. But while my parents fought for their lives and for the family, my brother had already chosen to destroy his, and I, powerless and completely helpless, had no choice but to watch and suffer with his choice.

My life until I was 12 was one of suffering because of the choices of others and suffering because I saw others destroying their lives.

It got to the point where a lot of things were normal for me and I had to accept that life was like that, from waiting for my mother to finish her meeting at her door

in a car with a friend of hers to my brother forcing me to smoke hashish at the age of 9 so I wouldn't get high alone.

What a contrast: on one side, illness; on the other, recovery. By the time I was 13, I was already suffering from severe depression and was only happy outside the home, but never making good choices, of course. I only felt good and happy when I was making bad choices.

My brother entered treatment and at the same time I consciously decided that I wanted to enter the world of drugs, living that decision as if it were my dream. And so it was. Little did I know what I was getting myself into: playing marbles with the devil.

Years followed in which I was the one causing others to suffer because of my choices. Ironically, for so many years I wondered how others could do what they did and forget about their children, and I forgot about my parents, my brother, and myself.

I learned about the progressive process of the disease that I know today: I saw death ahead of me several times, and today I also know that my higher power did not abandon me in any of them. I traded school for the streets, I traded a home for the neighborhood and street corners, and I traded a family for drugs; I sold my soul, I used my body as currency to obtain drugs and money. Nothing could help me stop using: not geography, not locking myself in the house, not doctors, not psychiatrists, and throughout 15 years of use, it never occurred to me to try Narcotics Anonymous, the 12-step program that saved my father and mother. I wonder how I could have forgotten for years that they had achieved what I was unable to achieve.

The truth is that I tried and went to my first meeting, having used for days, smelling bad, weak and exhausted, but it didn't work. I didn't believe in it, and today I realize that it didn't work because I didn't really want to stop using, even though I was sick and tired of being sick and tired.

I paid years for a normality that made me so sick, and only one person believed in me, of course: my mother, my safe haven who never judged me and who, when I



The last of the family to be caught and to manage to get out alive

was about to let myself die, was precisely when I chose life and asked to be locked up somewhere. I went in at night with a pair of boxers and the clothes on my back. It was the best investment of my life, just for today.

It is with enormous gratitude to a few people that I have been in recovery for 22 months. Sometimes, even I can't believe how my life is today. Regardless of all the difficulties and consequences I have to deal with and will have to deal with. Today I accept the consequences of my choices, some days better, some days worse. Today I try to accept the whole reality of my life. Of course, with the help of my sponsor and trusted friends, I understand what my focus should be.

My focus right now is my family and the people I choose as my family and whom I ask for help. I am concerned with building all my family relationships, trying to learn how to be a son, a brother, an uncle, a grandson, a boyfriend, a "normal" person in society, or at least not someone who ruins it.

The real difficulty for me lies in building these relationships, which I believe are the foundation of life. We are four addicts in three different houses, both in terms of age and housing, each with their own recovery, and if there is one thing I have learned, it is that my main priority must be my own recovery and to let others live theirs, in their own way and as it makes sense to them. After all, recovery is individual, and I am not one to judge anyone else's. But this is me. The only way I can and do help is by setting an example with my behavior, the principles I adhere to, and the seriousness with which I live my life and put the program into practice in all areas of it.

But being in recovery has been fantastic: I've been upset, I've fallen in love, I've ended a relationship, I've almost witnessed my parents' separation and very difficult and complicated moments, I've had to deal with my brother's dual diagnosis crises and various family problems, but, seriously, I am so much happier this way, even in all these moments. With all the debts, problems, and consequences, not once did I consider using. Using is not an option!

The proof that life is worth living is that today my family asks me for help and suggestions and counts on me as part of the solution, that I have people who trust

me, who like me, that I am a good professional, that I have my own home, that I can take care of an animal, and that I still manage to have an incredible loving relationship with a partner who has given me enormous happiness. Accepting and living life as it is.

Today I find myself with a life full of good things, I find myself with all this and still have time to finish high school and get my driver's license.

Incredible! Of course, my priority is my recovery and, as such, all this and still attending meetings, giving NA and receiving from NA, through the service provided, is a blessing for me. It doesn't even seem like there are 24 hours in a day.

It was Narcotics Anonymous, the people, and the program at work that help me live this way today, with this awareness about myself, being able to talk about myself and how I feel, knowing what feelings are, going even when I'm afraid, feeding my faith, talking to my Higher Power, and, above all, enjoying life. I never liked living, and today it makes no sense to me to live without being in recovery, with you in my life, with my meetings, and with this program. I can't imagine my life without any of these things.

Thank you. Even though I'm nervous, scared, sweating a little, and feeling some goosebumps, outside my comfort zone, I am very grateful for the opportunity to share a little bit about myself and, above all, with you. No one understands me like you do. After all, we all know the power of the magic of identification. Just for today, I won't trade my best day of use for my worst day of sobriety!

If I follow this path, I will have nothing to fear! Thank you for being part of my life and my recovery.

From a grateful addict,
Serene +24

*My past will always walk with me,
not as a burden, but as **truth**.*

I am an addict who, when I lived far from God and embraced addiction, turned my own life into a disaster full of wounded people, and I was the one who bled the most.

I was born to African parents, in an environment where alcohol was normalized and celebrated. I grew up believing that drinking was part of life, something natural, almost inevitable. I also grew up silencing my emotions, carrying burdens that were not mine, hiding parts of myself, such as my bisexuality, for fear of not fitting into the spaces where I grew up.

I was taught to be resilient, but not to be vulnerable. I learned to survive, but not to feel. Before the world collapsed around me, I was in a relationship with the love of my life, a woman who had a brain tumor. I was by her side during the days of fear, the silences that screamed, the gestures that were worth more than any words. It was one of my first truths. But time pushed us down different paths, and I followed mine. I got married. I entered into a relationship that, without realizing it, already had roots of violence, manipulation, and control.

And it was already married, already trapped in that violent relationship, that I received the news that devastated me: she was gone.

Illness stole her away. And it took with it parts of me that I thought would never return.

I mourned in secret, in the dark—I no longer had room to break down. Everything I couldn't cry about... I swallowed. I was left living with a hole I couldn't name. It was pain, it was guilt, it was emptiness—it was everything at once.

And in that state, vulnerable and lost, I remained in a relationship that hurt me. Not by choice, but because I was broken. Today I know that this relationship, although violent, opened the hole through which my illness finally revealed itself. It was a harsh but true teacher. And I believe that many of the teachers I encountered were also addicts... but only they can say so.

The first drink came early. In the environment where I grew up, no one told me it could be the beginning of a

downward spiral. Later, I tried what many call “a soft drug” — an expression that I now know to be misleading. For me, it brought paranoia, fear, and a silent certainty: if I took the next step, I might not come back. But that didn't cure me. It was just another warning I ignored.

Today I understand that all these experiences were attempts to fill old holes: the pain I never named, the fear I always hid, the feeling of not being enough, the lack of security, the abandonment.

And without realizing it, I chose a slow suicide—drop by drop—through escapes that promised relief but only increased my pain.

Then came gambling. And when it arrived, it consumed everything. It became my false beacon, guiding me through waves of immediate pleasure while pushing me deeper and deeper into the abyss. Roulette offered moments of dopamine and left me feeling empty. Gambling became my lover, my obsession, my compulsion. I began to disappear.

Then came the lies, the money extorted from family and friends, the cold early mornings depositing the last €10 as if it were my last breath. My pride told me I was in control. The disease showed me I wasn't.

There were so many relapses that I no longer knew where hope ended and giving up began.

I joined online meetings without knowing why. I thought it was just the game. They told me I was addicted, that I had an illness. I thought they were exaggerating, attacking me, trying to control me.

But the truth is that the disease was already in everything: in gambling, in alcohol, in sex, in escape, in silence. Until I hit rock bottom. I picked up the phone and asked for help. On the other end, I heard the phrase that broke me down inside: “It's a disease of feelings and emotions. I have it too.”

That's where my awakening began. I fell even further. I still stumbled over myself. But between falls and escapes, between resistance and shadows, I ended up entering a treatment center. I entered rebelliously, convinced that I was just addicted to gambling. There,

*My past will always walk with me,
not as a burden, but as truth.*

they told me I had an illness. I didn't believe it. I got angry.
But it was true.
Humility was painful.
Acceptance brought light.
Surrender brought peace.

In that green room, a puzzle finally began to come together inside me. I had been to several other fellowships, but it was in NA that I saw my reflection.

The stories were raw, honest, unmasked. They hurt—but they were mine too. I identified with their rock bottom, because it was the same as mine.

And that's where I rediscovered my Higher Power. I found God.
And I understood: I am a miracle.

Because a year, nine months, and a few days ago... I didn't know who I was.

Today I have a program, a sponsor, meetings, vigilance, and faith. I know I have a chronic, progressive, and fatal disease—one that tries every day to convince me that it doesn't exist.

But now I am vigilant. I don't forget what I lost: the moments I didn't live, the goodbyes I didn't say, the love of my life who left, the opportunities I missed, the art I silenced, the self-love I abandoned.

But I also know this: today I am responsible for my recovery.

With the program, I learned to let go, to breathe, to accept that light is born even in the shadows. Every day I discover myself. Every day I rebuild my dignity. Every day I am reborn.

My sponsor taught me that the first three steps are making peace with life; the next three, making peace with myself; and the last, making peace with the world. I am on that path.

It hurts. But it's true.
I am grateful for the new beginning.
I am no longer the woman lost in roulette, or in the last drink, or in violence, or in the silent mourning that devoured me.

Today I know that addiction was not the cause—it was the symptom of everything I experienced, lost, and never knew how to heal.

I am an addict.

But I am also much more than that. I am someone who is alive—truly alive.

And now I have reached the stage that distinguishes children from adults.

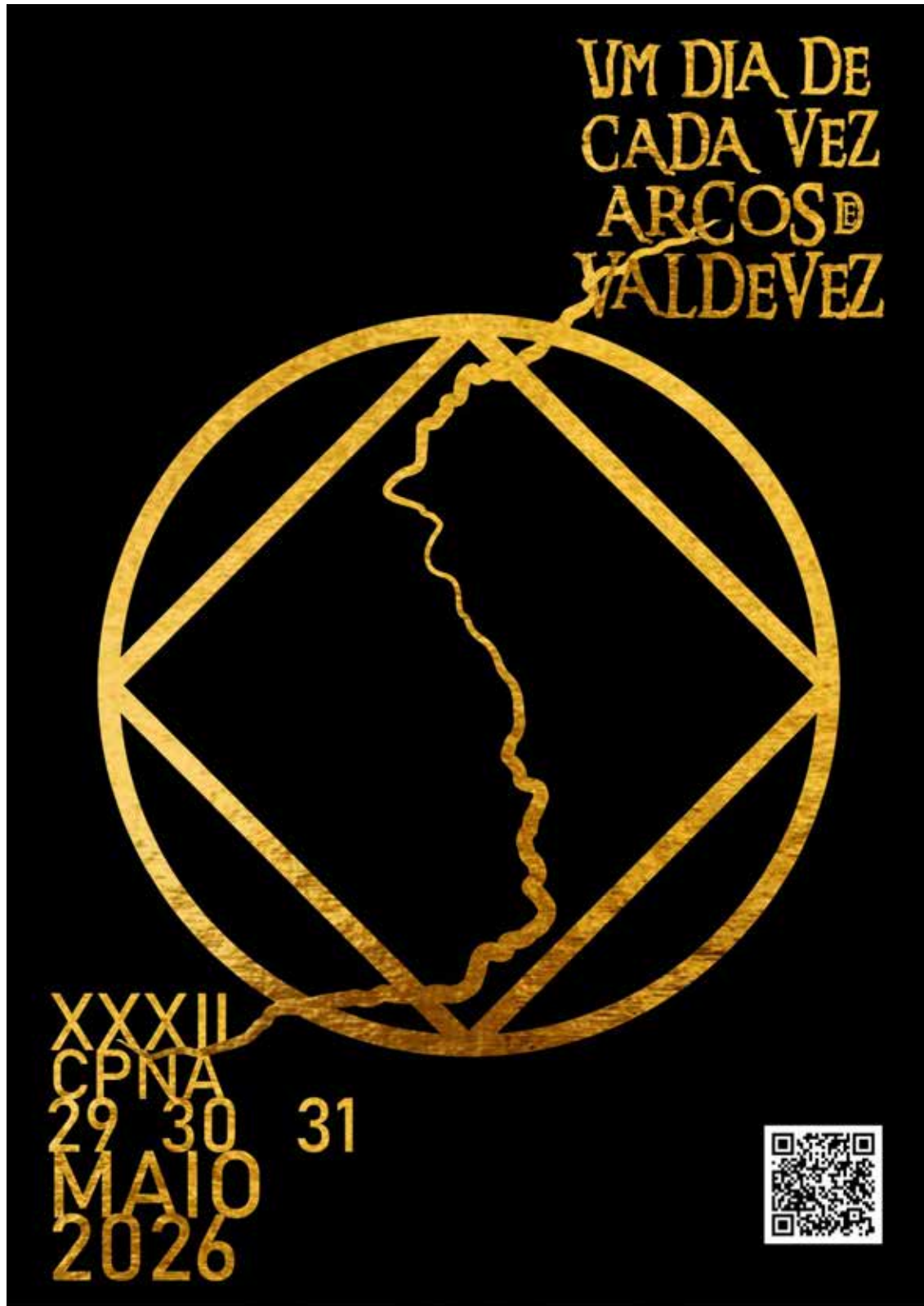
And I am ready to grow up.
And even though there will be change, my past will always walk with me, not as a burden, but as truth.



2026



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Pre-registration open until April 30, 2026
All information available on the convention website.



AROUND HERE

My First Unity Day

Hello, I'm Inês, and I'm an addict. I would like to start by thanking you for this opportunity. It was a good way to get me out of my comfort zone and take a risk.

It was suggested that I write about my first experience on Unity Day, but I couldn't talk about how it was without first talking about where the idea to go came from and the opportunity to do so.

I heard about this day while I was still in treatment, and that's when the dream and perhaps the chance to go began to emerge. Those who told me about this day spoke of it with great lightness and spirituality, saying it was a day of great gratitude and unity. After being closed off for so long, it was everything I wanted and dreamed of, besides having the opportunity to meet more addicts and see some again whom I had met since beginning my journey to recovery.

When I left treatment, I was very lucky to have a companion who took me under her wing and took me to several meetings in the first few weeks, and we even agreed that we would go to Unity Day together.

Until the day arrived and throughout the day, everything was a whirlwind of feelings; it was a new way of life beginning. After being confined to one place for almost seven months, I discovered that I didn't know how to be around people. I had discovered a new side to Inês that I had never seen before, my social phobia, and the anxiety of dealing with contexts full of people, which used to be my stage, now brought me fear, panic, and anxiety, a desire to run away and return to my shell where I felt safe.

The day before, I was already digesting these feelings. The day hadn't even arrived yet, but I was already processing them and, as always, I went to my "favorite escape": cooking, using the excuse that there was going to be a picnic the next day and I was supposed to bring something to eat.

I took out all my fears and anxieties in the kitchen. Of course, by not talking about them, I only gave them more dimension and space to grow in my head. And then, on September 6, I got ready early to leave the house and meet my dear friend to go to the long-awaited day.

On the way, the signs of anxiety and fear began to kick in, a headache and a feeling of unease that didn't seem to be going away.

When I arrived, I immediately encountered many individuals whom I already knew from meetings, which I had been attending since leaving the center, as well as new acquaintances. I was appreciating the opportunity, but at the same time, I consistently felt overwhelmed; I was not yet prepared to process so much information simultaneously, and I felt almost as if I had a hangover.

People approached me and I just didn't know what to say, I laughed and waved, I felt like a moron sometimes, but my brain stopped working several times that day. That's the only way I can explain it, and many times I wished they wouldn't come and talk to me anymore. As the day went on, I felt more and more tired.

When it was time for the serenity prayer, it was the only moment of the day when I was able to really relax my mind and have some inner peace. I was already in treatment and used prayer a lot to calm my mind, but after that moment, the feeling of heaviness and discomfort that had accompanied me so much that day returned. I talked to people I felt comfortable with to see if I could calm down, but the social phobia of dealing with people sober still accompanied me.

I didn't know how to be myself at a public event, I didn't know what to say to people, and I didn't know how to deal with people.

During the meeting, listening to the sharing brought me a message of strength and hope that recovery is possible and that it was magical to have so many addicts gathered there with a single purpose: to be in recovery.

At that moment, I felt calmer, more down to earth, and with a sense of belonging. There, I was part of something meaningful, and it was where I was going to change my life, where I had to stay, and with those people who, until then, had been causing me fear and insecurity.

II ENAS

At snack time, I already felt calmer. I had had the opportunity to share with a colleague who already knew me from the center how I was feeling, which had helped improve my mood.

Part of the magic of the program: sharing.

During snack time, I was starting to feel more and more like myself and talk more and more calmly, and since I had brought food, many people wanted to try what I had brought, and curious about how I had made it and what my profession was, those more casual conversations within my comfort zone ended up making me feel comfortable, allowing me to be myself, to start feeling more and more at ease in that previously strange and unfamiliar space, and to start acting more naturally. I ended up meeting quite a few new people and making new contacts.

However, it was time for music and dancing, and once again, I felt my muscles tense up, not knowing what to do with my body, not knowing what to do with my hands and legs, and feeling embarrassed to move. I didn't know how to be there, I no longer knew how to dance without being nervous, basically how to be normal.

My head kept telling me that something was missing, some associations with my past, since it hasn't been that long since I entered recovery.

I tried to distract myself and focus on the happiness of the people around me, on how comfortable they were, and think, will I ever be able to be like that?

And I focused on the opportunity to be there and be grateful for the whole experience, both the positive and the less positive things, because it was a sign that I was feeling them and that I was alive and present, and that this moment, like many others I will have in recovery, are moments to live with fullness and gratitude.

From a grateful addict,
Inês
+24

ENAS with a Northern accent

The 2nd National Service Meeting (ENAS), held in the Greater Porto Area, began with a challenge that none of us expected. We were surprised by the news that the event could not take place on the scheduled weekend. For a moment, everything seemed to be on hold.

But the committee did not give up. We spoke with those responsible for the facilities, shared the importance of this meeting, the love and purpose behind it, and the impact that a cancellation would have on our fellowship. And through that honest and heartfelt dialogue, a door opened. We found another way to hold the event.

We adapted quickly, with humility and the goodwill that characterizes true service. And what at first seemed like a difficulty turned into a living testimony of unity, resilience, and spirit of service.

We feel deep gratitude to all who were present, representing the Portuguese Region and contributing wholeheartedly to this common purpose. This meeting, guided by the principles of the Second and Eighth Concepts, showed very clearly that there is only one Narcotics Anonymous fellowship, sustained by the will of the groups and the sincere desire to serve.

It was also evident that our fellowship is alive, growing, evolving—and that communication is an area where we can and want to do better, together.

For all these reasons, we consider the event a true success, not only for what happened, but for what we felt and built together.



From Sea to Mountain NA Linha do Amor

Serving on the activities subcommittee has a special meaning. It is not just about preparing programs, setting dates, coordinating and executing tasks, among many other things. It is about creating spaces for connection, growth, and sharing. It is about providing safe, welcoming, and close-knit environments. It is about facilitating moments for building memories that strengthen our recovery and our sense of belonging and community.

And every presence, every smile, every hug, every look of love and gratitude is a silent confirmation that it is worth continuing. The idea of Do Mar à Serra (From Sea to Mountain) was born here, from the desire to bring addicts together in a magical, restorative place, rich in the possibility of celebrating unity and building new stories that will remain alive within each of us, the Serra da Estrela.

Between September 12 and 14, the Vale do Rossim Eco Resort welcomed around 70 addicts from various parts of the country and served as the base for a diverse program rich in the ability to strengthen our bond with the Serra, with ourselves, and with others.

On September 12, the meeting began with a sunset party. This was followed by an outdoor meeting around a bonfire (while it lasted), which brought us together as a family. There, we spoke the same language. This was followed by a midnight swim in the valley lake, where the phrase “together we can achieve what we cannot achieve alone” took on a whole new meaning.

On September 13, early in the morning, some chose motorcycles, cars, or their feet to explore parts of the mountains that had not yet been trodden. There were many adventures, and some even lost the soles of their shoes on a hike! But with the help of an addict to another, everything ended well, with another story to tell. After a picnic in the Zêzere Glacier Valley, complete with refreshing dips in the cold water, at Dome do Vale do Rossim, we recited poetry and sang songs of recovery that connected us to the present, to our bodies, souls, and hearts. The day ended with a convivial dinner, a place for long (and not so long) conversations and, of course, a party - that light, crazy, and healthy party, animated by DJs and the dancers on the dance floor, where we felt truly present, accompanied, and alive.

On Sunday, the morning began with a Chi Kung class, providing a moment of serenity and energy. The closing of the activity was marked by the moment when, by the lake in the valley, all the participants joined hands, symbolizing their unity, their strength of recovery, and together they recited the Serenity Prayer.

It was then that the valley returned to its natural silence and a deep peace settled in. It became clear to everyone involved that they had not only organized an event, but built a space of love, unity, and recovery. We hope it was the first of many. Serving Narcotics Anonymous is, for us, an honor, a commitment, and a way to put gratitude into action.

We are grateful for the opportunity... and more will be revealed.

Activities Subcommittee of the XXVI CANLNA

Some Testimonials

It was a wonderful weekend, where nature embraced us and time seemed to slow down. Among fellow enthusiasts following the same path, we shared love, serenity, and laughter that echoed like free birds. These were days filled with simple, intense, and genuine moments that remain etched in our souls. (Cristina M.)

Unity is strength, and you were an example of that! Coming from the south to hold an event in the mountains. It was very special, spiritual, and rewarding. Everything was thought out in detail! It brought me a lot of peace and lightness, but also new friends. Shall we do another one? (Luísa M.)

A very special weekend, and another spiritual awakening! My heart was full, I made new friends. I was so enthusiastic about the organization that I already signed up for the convention. So, see you soon. We are together! (José G.)

It was a unique experience, full of strong emotions, sharing, friendship, and joy. The organization was simply extraordinary—everything went incredibly well, from the walks to the moments of socializing. I carry in my heart the good energy and unity that was felt. Many thanks to everyone who made this meeting possible (Paulo M.)



It also became clear that our sisterhood is alive, growing, evolving—and that communication is an area where we can and want to do better, together.

For all these reasons, we consider the event a real success, not only for what happened, but for what we felt and built together.



ABOUT THERE

Conference Agenda Report

The time has come for the CAR, which precedes the World Service Conference (WSC) to be held from May 1 to 9, 2026. The theme of the conference will be “Our Common Well-being” and will have a retro 1970s look to mark the 50th anniversary of the conference.



But what is CAR, anyway?

The CAR (Conference Agenda Report) compiles the motions and project plans that will be presented at the World Service Conference.



So, what’s this World Service Conference about?

The World Service Conference—known internationally as the World Service Conference or simply WSC—is the body where all groups worldwide make decisions by delegation through their representatives on matters affecting NA as a whole. These issues include literature, legal matters, events such as the World Convention (WCNA), PR (Public Relations) and HI (Hospitals and Institutions) activities, among others.



Do you remember the Fourth Tradition we hear in the preambles to our meetings?

"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole."

Yes, the WSC is directly linked to this principle, and it is these issues that affect NA as a whole that are decided at the Conference, not just group autonomy—it is the space where we make decisions in collective conscience, always with our common welfare in mind, as is the motto of this Conference. The next WSC will take place May 1-9 in Woodland Hills, Los Angeles, California.



But how does CAR work?

The list of motions included in the CAR is then voted on by the entire worldwide fellowship. All Regional Delegates participate in this decision-making process.

In the current cycle, which began in May 2023 and ends in May 2026, the CAR presents only two motions from the Regions and three motions proposed by the World Board.



And why so few motions?

Because the Regions have been reducing the direct submission of motions because the fellowship has been expressing its contributions through digital surveys.

The Regions, via conference, have delegated to the World Board and its Regional Service Representatives (RSRs) the task of filtering and maturing project plans based on the results of these surveys.

This work has been done throughout the conference cycle (currently 3 years) through CAR research and the aforementioned surveys and workshops contained in the strategic plan for the conference cycle. For the first time, all members—not just service committees or Delegates—were able (and can, until April 1, 2026) to participate and contribute on issues affecting the global fellowship, including our region, such as:

- new literature and revisions,
- hosting the World Convention,
- literature prices,
- conference discussion topics (such as those workshops on disruptive behavior), among others.

The result? A more collaborative, efficient, transparent process that is accessible to all members in a more organized way, prioritizing the needs of the fellowship.



And why does my participation matter?

It is true that some of these issues may seem complex or unappealing. But reading, reflecting, and participating is essential for our common well-being and for the principle of Unity. Only in this way can we prevent unfounded ideas or isolated opinions from overshadowing the collective decision-making process.

At the next Conference, the Portuguese Region will once again be represented, as it has been since we existed as a region, and will have the opportunity to express the direction of its members.

Below you will find the available surveys. You can respond individually, as a group, or as a service body. Your participation is valuable and makes a difference to NA.

A workshop on the CAR will also be presented shortly, to be announced by the CSRP (Portuguese Region Service Committee).

Take note of the available surveys and the deadlines for responding.

CAR survey (deadline: April 1, 2026):
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2026_CAR_Survey
 (currently only available in English)

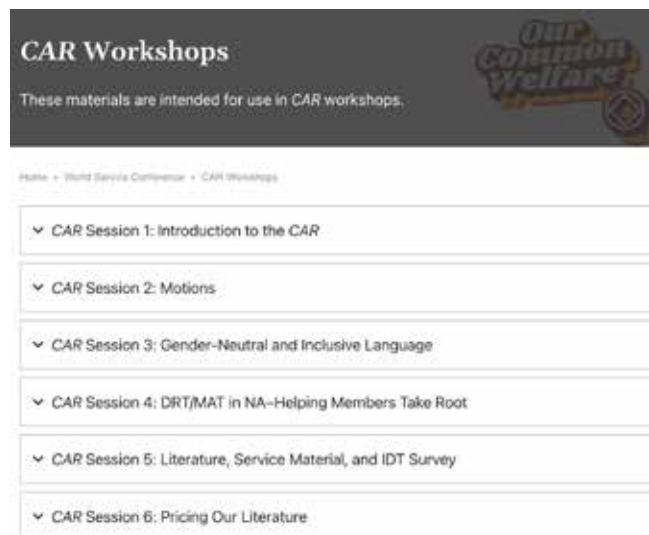
Surveys on Discussion Topics Neutral and Gender-Inclusive Language in NA Literature (deadline: April 1, 2026):
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gender_neutral_idt_input_form

Disruptive and Predatory Behavior
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/disruptive_idt_input_form

Drug Replacement Therapies/Medication-Assisted Treatments (DRT/MAT) in relation to NA
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/drt_mat_idt_input_form

Reimagining and Revitalizing Service Committees
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R_R_input_form_rev

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Service Representatives via email:
rdportugalna@gmail.com
 and
adportugalna@gmail.com.



<https://na.org/conference/car-workshops/>



ABOUT THERE

Nuovi Orizzonti

Yuliya



Just coming back from European convention in Rotterdam, recovering from emotional hangover, I got unexpected trip to Italy. And one of these days was coinciding with my recovery birthday. As I couldn't celebrate it with my home group, I looked for contact of Italian Fellowship on Internet. In a quarter of an hour I had all information, details, and coordinates. They were guiding me till the moment I reached out the door of the meeting. I felt very warm welcome.

On a relatively young meeting, I went to celebrate my clean time, I can relate their experience to my home group. I spoke with the fellow, who opened with another fellow that meeting and their experience is very similar to my home group. It was great to see 22 members on that day. They gave me a flyer of upcoming Italian convention in September, and that flew back with me home not just in my suitcase, also in my mind.

I cultivated that idea, took decision and contacted Italian Fellowship for more information and details. And again, got impressed how generous and responsive they are. I received a help literally with everything, I had only one thing to do: to get my flight. And, finally, flight is booked and here my first convention abroad on my own started...

I lived before all variety of feelings and emotions, I felt excited and anxious, curious and eager to go for a experience.

When I was dropped by the door of the convention from the airport and I saw a crowd of addicts outside, in a fraction of second all my confidence and courage has been vaporized, and even a thought "what am I doing here?" came through my mind. I felt inadequate and insecure. Inside, on that moment, I was wishing to have someone with me or to see someone I know.

And no way to go backwards, just put my eyes down and headed straight to the reception. I had couple of tools with me - "Buongiorno" and "NA". And that was more than enough. Ice melted, I exhaled, I felt a pressure from my neck and shoulders releasing. And higher power moment showed up - I just turned my back after registration and bumped into fellow from States I know! I felt total relief, no more tension, feeling of belonging started to come back.

Language barrier was no longer an obstacle either, Italian fellows are easy connect with gestal and visual contact, and I found many of them speak English. I really liked caring way, when they don't speak English, they always have a look around to put you in a contact with someone who speaks English, by making sure that you are not on your own.

Above all, NA for me is people. I had an opportunity to meet fellows, which helped me remotely (and I managed to bother quite few of them) to come to this convention.

I really enjoyed to sit and just be present among Italians, I felt comfortable just to be around, I found their dramatic and expressive way very attractive. I remember one Italian fellow told me: "if you think that some of them are arguing - don't worry, they're just talking about food". In a meantime, they are quite chilled out and laid back, I was admiring this contrast and balance in it. And I met fellows from Netherlands, Finland, USA, France, Malta, Ireland. I even met fellows, fluently speaking Portuguese. All that helped me to drop my fears and insecurity, get connected with people and feel "I am a part of it, it's NA". I let myself "go with a flow and enjoy the vibe".

At some moments through these celebration life days, I felt many times emotional and fragile by others sharing their journey with me, I've got the boost of inspiration to carry on with my writing by hearing that majority of them working the steps. Italian fellowship made a big effort by providing English translation and English speaking meetings. No one stayed apart, we were all united, everyone was inclusive, only one space I found for myself, where I can feel and say - I am recovering addict and human after all. Last English meeting we did on a beach before countdown felt so simple and unique at the same time. It felt like a family.

Now my first convention abroad on my own is completed.

Now I can say I opened "NUOVI ORIZZONTI".

Grazie Mille NA Italy,
With love and gratitude, Yuliya.

MOCKING THE RECOVERING



JOE FIX



STEPPIN' MARY



INVENTORIES À LA CARTE

SO I HEAR

They say relapse is part of recovery. I prefer to skip that part.

My dealer called to see if I was okay. I said yes, that I now have another supplier— my Higher Power!

Recovery is like going to the gym: if you miss two weeks, it's harder to get back into it.

Now, when I wake up in the morning, I say: "Good morning, Higher Power!" ... instead of: "Fuck, it's

Q: How many addicts does it take to change a light bulb?
A: Change.

Staying clean is like updating software: it takes time, reboots your life, and then works better.

Sobriety is like sex... if you don't like it, you're not doing it right.

Addicts try to find their way around Earth with a detailed map of Mars.

Give us 90 days, and if you don't like what we have, we'll happily refund your unhappiness.

The only good thing about repeating the same mistakes is that you know when to stop.

One day at a time... mainly on Mondays.

DADITO PERDITO



GRUPO MINHOLIMPO

9.1.26 **28** 21h30

ESCOLA SECUNDÁRIA DE PONTE DA BARCA

SINGELOS ACEPIPIES COM SERENIDADE QUANTO BASTE
CALDO VERDE & BOLO DE ANIVERSÁRIO

REUNIÃO ABERTA A FAMÍLIA & AMIGOS  CONTACTO: 967 132 028 | 960 358 302

If you want to see the anniversary of your group, yours, or your friends', send us an email or contact us through our Instagram and Facebook pages.

LAST SHARE



Serenidade 2.0 magazine is published in Portuguese and English and is available in digital format.

Its contents are a way of contributing to the recovery of NA members by publishing information on recovery, activities and services related to recovery.

The magazine also seeks to introduce a component of entertainment and debate on issues relevant to its recipients.

All NA members can and should suggest topics to be covered, simply by contacting us by e-mail.

The magazine is also open to other forms of collaboration from NA members. All contributions are welcome.

The Chairs reserve the right to evaluate the conformity of texts and other contributions with the 12 traditions of NA.

All material must be original and, once published, is the property of the journal, implying permission to publish.

The articles published represent the experience and opinion of individual NA members and do not necessarily express the principles and philosophy of NA as a whole.

YOUR SERENE TEAM

Chair: Paulo O.
Co-Chair: Alexandra
Graphics: José S.

Collaborators for this issue: Álvaro, Américo, Dadito Perdito, Daniela, Gonçalo, Inês, João, Rita, Yulyia, RSR and Anonymous ...and all the fellows that would like to join in!



Facebook

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