

NADA for troubled teens

While working near Tororo, Uganda, we met a group of Franciscan nuns running a secondary school for troubled youth. The teenagers were from difficult backgrounds: AIDS orphans, sold into slavery, ex-child soldiers, and similar. The school offered classes and religious training, but otherwise had little programming directed at relieving the anxiety, depression, aggression, insomnia and other symptoms many of the children displayed.

We offered training to the school staff and administration, while providing treatment to the students. Many of the students were very nervous about being needles, so we always started with a demonstration on one of the training team, and never forced anyone to receive treatment. Adolescents are naturally curious, and after the first day of treatment, most students came regularly to the NADA sessions. In addition to the NADA treatments, we also offered yoga classes and art therapy sessions.

Student responses were often dramatic. One girl said that for years she had been having dreams of lying at the bottom of a grave watching dirt being shoveled on top of her. After treatments, she said she slept like she had when she was a little girl. Another student said that she felt happy like when her parents were still alive. Some of the aggressive behaviors in the boys reduced after treatments began.



Students in Tororo



the Sisters receiving their first NADA treatment



Student treatment session





Art therapy – many of the students had never used colored markers or paints before



yoga

NADA through Community Volunteers

In 2011 we traveled to a remote island to work with a community youth group who had expressed interest in training. The group had received previous training in disaster response, first aid, and community organizing, and wanted to expand their skills in providing services to their community. In addition to providing NADA treatments in case of natural disaster (the village had been consumed by fire twice in recent memory, and had been affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami), the trainees would provide treatments for the community for everyday conditions such as addictions, stress, and other mental and behavioral health issues.

The trainees spent the first part of the training developing needling skills, practicing point location, and learning safety protocols. Supervised treatments were then provided to the community. Announcements about treatment availability were made over the local mosque's loudspeaker, and a surprisingly large number of children requested treatments.

The youth group trainees continue to provide treatments to this remote community.



Arriving on Pate Island



first day of training



After years of trainings on the coast, we found that mangrove seeds are ideal for needling practice.



trainees practice needling each other



children receiving NADA treatments



last day of training