

NADA *International Newsletter*

March 2025

In October of 2024, NADA GB held its second NADA conference in London. Many of the attendees who were there in 2022 came for a return visit, and we welcomed some new people as well. Seen here with NADA GB co-founder, Rachel Peckham, are Chuck and Nobi Pyle who traveled from Arizona to attend.



Chuck and Nobi had attended their first NADA/US conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 2016. Nobi, an acupuncturist, went to that conference to be trained as an acudetox specialist, and Chuck, a retired federal judge, went to observe.

While still an active judge, Chuck had started a nonprofit, Second Chance Tucson, to assist people released from prison to get help with jobs and benefits to make their transition back into the community easier.

Driving back home to Arizona, Chuck and Nobi started thinking of applications for the NADA protocol. At that time, its use in Arizona was limited to state and federally licensed chemical dependency treatment facilities. In April 2021, the auricular acupuncture law was changed to include trauma in the scope of practice, removing any site limitation and allowing anyone to be trained.

After the success in Arizona, they continued to work on advocacy to enact or change laws in other states to help make NADA more accessible. Since then, Chuck and Nobi have been focused on training people in the NADA protocol, as well as setting up drop-in community clinics inspired by the NADA café model in Denmark [see article on page 11].

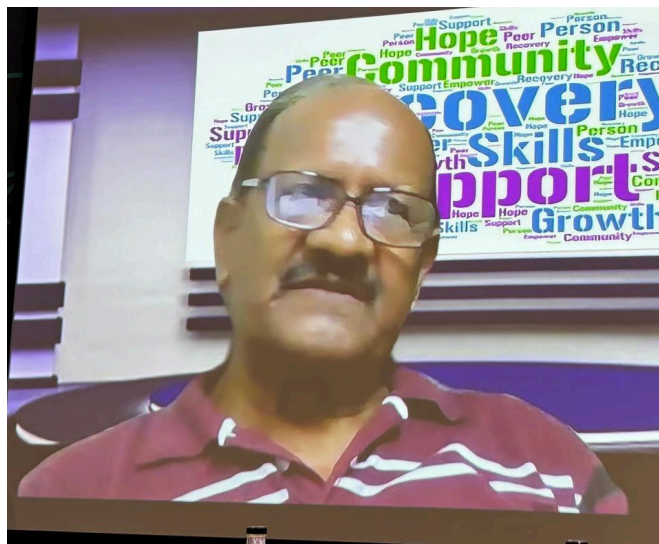
For about three years, Chuck and Nobi volunteered at the Dismas Charities corrections halfway house. Over time, they decided to focus on establishing clinics in a community setting, for example, at a YWCA facility and at a Goodwill Youth Re-engagement Center.

With this background, they were very interested in attending the NADA conference last October 2024 in London. So eight years after their first conference in Albuquerque, they headed overseas to attend the NADA/GB conference at Friends House in London. As they tell it:

We had never been to the British Isles – and we knew the conference would be great – so we combined some tourist ventures in England and Scotland with attending the meeting. While there, we ran into two

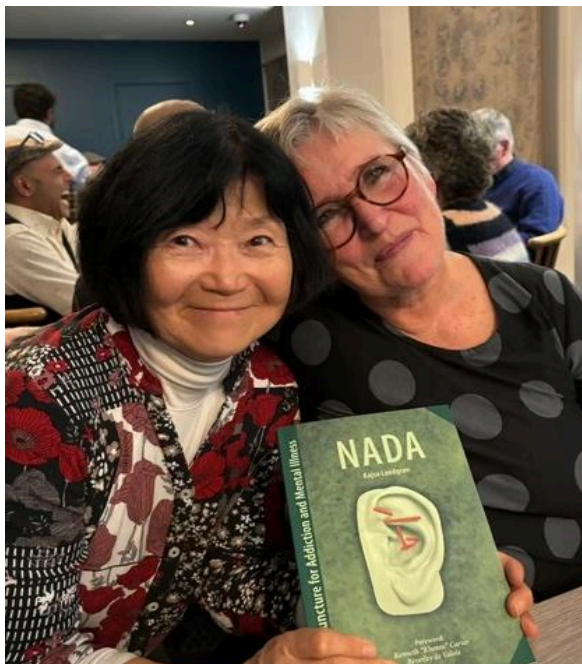
other Americans, our friends Jo Ann Lenney and Sara Bursac. And we were able to meet and talk with many other NADA people in person.

The theme of the conference was *Unimagined Bridges* – a dozen speakers shared the many ways the NADA protocol can help people get past obstacles they face in life. [For more information on this, see issue #5 of the newsletter and visit the NADA/GB website.] We also had an unexpected presenter:



Ramnarace Dwarika has been using NADA in Trinidad and Tobago for the past 34 years. He first learned about the protocol from NADA/GB's co-founder, John Tindall, and then came to Lincoln Recovery Center in the Bronx to learn more. He met with Dr. Michael Smith who told him he was asking so many questions that he was afraid that Ramnarace might be a cop instead of a social worker. Mike advised him to go down to the treatment room and to talk to the clients there.

Which Ramnarace did and came back home to Trinidad all gung-ho – but he was met with a brick wall. He noted that such a simple thing is just too hard for professionals to accept. But Ramnarace continues to use NADA to help people facing trauma, saying: "I have never given up, and I will never give up."



After hearing all the ways that NADA is used, Kajsa Landgren from Sweden echoed all our thoughts when she said, "The problem is not that NADA doesn't work. The problem is we haven't figured out well enough how to get it into the system."

NADA/GB conference organizers did a great job and those in attendance benefitted from exciting presentations and great opportunities to network. This is an exceptional experience, so if you find yourself in London in October 2026, we encourage you to attend the NADA/GB conference. As it happens, we have never visited Ireland, so we plan to be there.

Chuck and Nobi

Nobi and Kajsa – Nobi is holding her new copy of Kajsa's book, NADA-Ear Acupuncture for Addiction and Mental Illness

“Love and Blessings to the NADA Protocol”

by Sarah Clifford

Sarah Clifford is a NADA GB Trainer and has been a NADA practitioner for 25 years. And, she was one of the organizers of this year's NADA GB conference. During those 25 years, she has witnessed surprising results. She wrote recently telling us about these results – and about so much more.

I used to look in wonder, and be amazed, at how these little needles could achieve such a shift in the nervous system with no side effects. For a number of years, I worked in the out-patient unit at a hospice and, while there, I realized that the staff needed treatment as much as their patients. I started giving them NADA acupuncture and watched as they visibly relaxed – their treatments became weekly.

I also worked on the Grenfell Project and at the Jesuit Refugee Centre. It used to fascinate me observing the clients. As NADA is a non-verbal therapy, I would wait for them to communicate if they wished, and it was astounding to see the magic happen.



But it's one thing to watch a person with PTSD, but another to be that person. Last year, I was diagnosed with stage-3 ovarian cancer. I had a radical hysterectomy which was followed by six rounds on chemotherapy. And I became that person with PTSD.

I started the chemo six weeks post-op, but I hadn't integrated the situation – I was numb. Truth began to unfold, and my mind and body seemed to be drifting away as I lost control. I had terrible bladder issues every visit to oncology (humiliating), and my blood pressure was sometimes too high to receive the chemo which resulted in endless ECG's. The oncologist offered me therapy, but I really didn't want to talk about it – I had nothing to say.

But then, realizing what was going on, out came those little orange needles. I would needle my ears every day and sit with myself and lean into my feelings whatever they might be. I felt my nervous system

slowly shift, and the moments of peace got longer – resulting in me coping with the visits better. Slowly but steadily, I began to feel calmer. Chemotherapy was easier – if that’s possible.

I had become so dissociated from myself, but the NADA treatments brought me home. I am not saying it was easy, but it became easier as I slowly returned. In the past, I have watched this unbelievable protocol work. Then I became the work!!!!



In addition to NADA treatments, Sarah received foot massages from her one-year-old grandbaby, Orla. Sarah tells us that now: “My heart is so full.”

Four New NADA Trainers to *Train the Community to Treat the Community* by Farrah Idris

Farrah Idris has been working in NHS hospitals since 2012, delivering complementary therapies to patients and carers. She also is a teacher of wellbeing courses at City Lit, an adult education college. Her work across North East London focuses on supporting people to improve their health, gain a sense of vitality and engage in physical activity.

Last October 2024, Farrah spoke at the NADA GB conference in London. Her presentation was about Training the Community to Treat the Community, a pilot program developed by World Medicine (WM) to provide fully supported training in the NADA protocol to Refugee Friends and key workers at the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Wapping. The aim of the pilot was to create a sustainable volunteer base to help maintain the clinic – and also to support the Refugee Friends who use the service by training them in a



practical skills-based program. This will enable them to contribute to the WM program and to the healing within their own community. Shortly after the conference, Farrah became a NADA trainer and shared some of that experience with us.

Becoming a NADA trainer was not at the forefront of my mind until the opportunity arose to assist Judith Blair at the training of Refugee Friends at JRS. Working alongside Judith's warm and uplifting teaching sparked my desire to make some tentative enquiries as to my suitability to become a trainer.

Farrah Idris and Judith Blair at the 2024 NADA GB conference

I have trained in complementary therapies working in hospitals and hospices in London. My current role in primary care involves facilitating well-being interventions to staff and the wider community. My voluntary work with delivering NADA to burned-out staff and residents reinforced my determination to integrate the protocol in the primary-care system.

In the UK healthcare ecosystem, primary care (general practitioners, dentists, pharmacists) is the first port of call for many – it is also among the least funded and is inadequately supported. This is where I feel my NADA training will be most effective and needed. Training the community to treat the community is not a unique concept, however the more individuals that are trained, the shift in reducing health inequalities can happen.

In May, I will be training eight individuals recruited from the GP Care Group and Tower Hamlets voluntary sector. The placements are a blend of funded and self-funded for fairness and accessibility. The Health and Wellbeing department in City Lit will offer the training to its diverse range of students in June. I am excited to be facilitating both projects and to be promoting NADA in a varied range of health and well-being settings.

The NADA Trainer course occurred over three days. It was a group of four learners and two trainers. The trainers, NADA GB directors Rachel Peckham and John Tindall, facilitated well-paced, structured sessions. Each day engaged the learners, and we were encouraged to share our experiences, to reflect and draw confidence from this unique collaborative style of learning.

The sessions were a mixture of theory and practical delivery. Rachel and John shared their approaches and encouraged us to embrace our individual styles. The key themes of health and safety, professionalism and integrity are foundational to the training. NADA GB is clear that consistency in training, delivery and treatment provide quality assurance where all can thrive safely.

Day three involved a micro-teach on an element of NADA. Presenting to your peers is never easy, however the feedback is invaluable – and the group confidence swelled. The new trainers are encouraged to keep in touch, and there is an annual supervision gathering to share and reflect.

Thank you, NADA GB, for the opportunity. To those of you thinking about becoming a trainer – DO IT!

This was NADA GB's sixth Training Trainers course. It was a small group of four NADA practitioners with a large variety of background work between them.



Farrah Idris, Clare Gates Sjoblom, Neil Jennings and Raj Nayee

Rachel Peckham, one of the trainers in what Farrah described as a heart-centered training, told us about some of the other students in the course:

As noted above, *Farrah Idris* works in primary care and spoke at the last NADA conference about her work with World Medicine helping refugees in London.

Clare Gates-Sjoblom is an acupuncturist and yoga teacher, and her background is in Occupational Psychology. Clare works as a well-being consultant for various companies in Central Edinburgh where she lives, and she runs weekly NADA clinics for six local companies.

Neil Jennings works for the NHS as a dual-diagnosis mental health practitioner. Along with his colleagues, he is currently awaiting approval and funding for a pilot project using NADA to help healthcare providers to reduce stress.



Raj Nahee is based in Brighton and works for Pathways to Health, a registered Charity that provides low-cost NADA sessions in the community. A large part of their work is helping people in recovery.

Rachel Peckham and John Tindall, two of NADA GB founders and the trainers on this course, are seen here. NADA GB now has 40 trainers and nearly 4,000 practitioners.

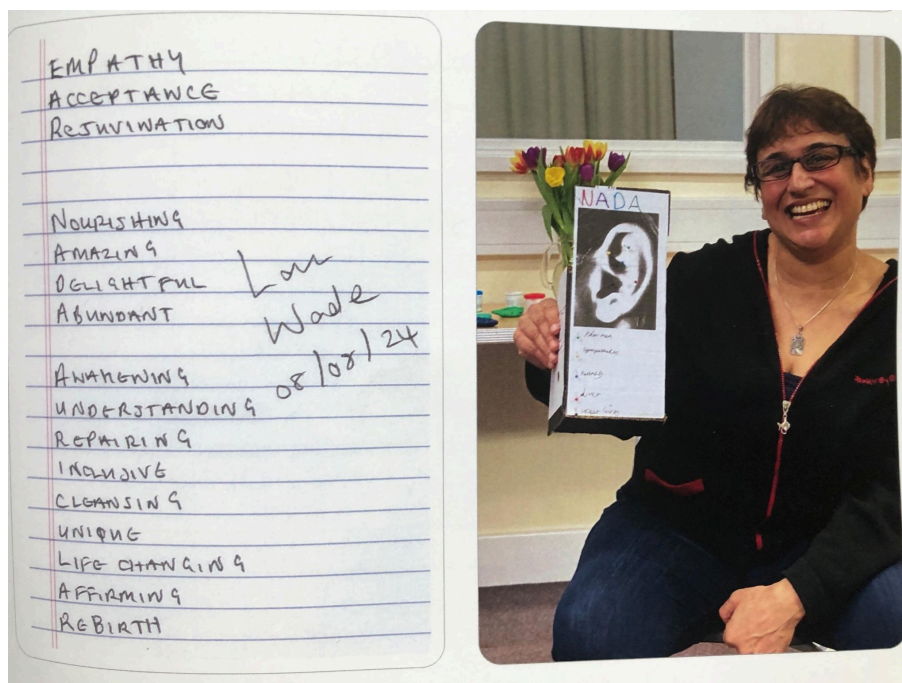
And NADA GB will soon be venturing out into the world of podcasts, hosted by Rachel, so that we can all stay even more connected.

“NADA is work from the heart.” – Mike



Lars and Mette Wiinblad are seen here with Vanessa Top and Gill Croft, London 2024. At the NADA GB meeting, Gill showed us a booklet that she had put together – a collection of artistic and creative pieces that her students had done during NADA trainings over the years. Attendees purchased the booklet, and Gill donated the proceeds to NADA projects in the Balkans.

Here is one of these creative pieces:



AcuRecovery Wyoming: Ten years later and we're still here –

and with a new name

by Sara Bursać



This wall hanging was created
by members of NADA Tunisia in 2017

In the fall of 2018, a group of Wyoming NADA practitioners decided to create a state-based nonprofit to support the existence of free NADA clinics. The clinics started in 2014 and have since spread to other cities: Casper, Pinedale and, most recently, Sheridan.

AcuRecovery was a term recently introduced by the nonprofit in its proposal to the state acupuncture board in an effort to teach NADA acupuncture as a Wyoming-based curriculum. And an AcuRecovery technician was introduced as the title of the provider.

The board approved the proposal in April 2023, and, the following year, Wyoming Free Stress Relief Clinics changed its name to AcuRecovery Wyoming. The first training was in June 2024 in Casper, followed by one in November 2024 in Laramie. Once a person completes the training, they can apply to the board for their state auricular acupuncture license, a sublicense of the full-body acupuncture license.

AcuRecovery Wyoming is starting to develop a community where providers and the public can come together to learn about AcuRecovery. This will support AcuRecovery by furthering its utilization, both in community spaces and in more structured systems, such as treatment programs and drug courts.

The approach that guided the development of the AcuRecovery curriculum came from NADA's founder, Michael Smith. He said:

"We pretend that you can only teach if you are 'registered,' but we know that there are many dimensions of skill and access to the learning process. We obsess over membership in the 'teacher caste.' Diversity can sink into a system of rigid separation as it leads toward social death, or it can rise toward tolerance and multi-potential learning that is part of real growth. MIKE"

Following Mike's advice, AcuRecovery Wyoming intends to mentor training coordinators through a community-supervision approach that includes shadowing, observing, discussion-based learning and co-facilitation with existing training coordinators.

Celebrating 10 years of clinics



Sara with Dawn Lund at the celebration

In late November 2024, AcuRecovery practitioners and community members gathered to celebrate 10 years of free ear acupuncture clinics in Laramie – the city where these free clinics originated. The evening brought together current and past providers, as well as clinic regulars, some who have been with us from the beginning.

Kathie Beasley, a long-time clinic provider, shared about her first NADA treatment: “It was one of the best days of my life. ... It was inspiring enough for me to get the training.” For many who became providers in Wyoming, the clinics are where their journey started.

The first Laramie-based NADA training was held in 2014. Mike was in attendance providing support and encouragement, both to me as a new trainer and to our community. More than 30 people showed up to the clinics that weekend, and Mike encouraged me to keep them going beyond the training.

Ten years later, Mike, we are still here! Thank you for your encouragement, and your gentle push. I can still see you sitting in the back of the room, looking at all of the people after the clinic ended, your hands resting in your lap, palms up. You told me to just go up there and let people know we are collecting names and numbers so we can tell them where and when the next clinic will be. I did so, timidly, and have over time learned that you have to take the next step. Sometimes the next step is not so obvious, and so a hint from a friend or mentor is invaluable. Your presence, Mike, gave me confidence and I am grateful to you for that. Our communities in Wyoming are grateful to you for that.



Michael Smith and Sara Bursac at his office in 2011

Ruth Ackerman joined us by Zoom and talked about the all-too-frequent institutional amnesia that can happen related to the success of this treatment: “The treatment is so subtle, it doesn’t push itself to the fore. That’s been the demise of many programs that have started out in a robust way.”

Ruth described her process of starting Project Recovery in Santa Barbara, CA, in 1988 which thrived for 20 years – “We were in the jails, we were in the veterans’ housing, we were in the aftercare programs at the hospital. We were in many, many places in our community.”

Every October, Ruth and Mike went to Sacramento to visit the state legislature attempting to expand the practice of acupuncture to include NADA practitioners. “We had Mike’s good guidance and really remarkable leadership all the way along the line, because Mike just wasn’t fazed by people shaking their fist at him. He was on a mission that was very simple and that had to do with healing.”

Jo Ann Lenney told us that she came late to the NADA team, but “once I joined, I never left. Dr. Smith had been encouraging me to take the training, but I kept coming up with one reason after another why I couldn’t – work, family, time, etc. Finally, he looked at me and said, ‘Just make one phone call, Jo Ann.’ Which I then did. What else could I do?”

“And that one phone call led me to training with Carlos and to working with Nancy in the women’s program. Eventually I became a trainer, and Mike asked me to go to Ireland, to train trainers there. Jim Byrne, who had only recently started NADA Eireann, died, leaving no one to carry on the work. I was very apprehensive about doing this, but Mike said, ‘You’re just giving them permission to do what they already know how to do.’ Mike is famous for saying some variation of, ‘Just do it.’”

Nancy Smalls, founder of the award-winning Maternal Substance Abuse Services program, talked to us about its start at Lincoln Recovery Center in the late ‘80s. She described being called up to Mike’s office one afternoon and thinking to herself, “I’m in trouble now, what happened?”

She then told us that Mike said, “You know we got a lot of women coming through here? We need to do something to help them. Crack is out there, and they have no place to go. We need to develop something that they can handle.”

Nancy said she told him to give her the book showing how to start this, and he said there is no book, “You can just wing it.” She said, “Wing it, with what? Suppose it doesn’t work?” He said, “Well nobody will know it doesn’t work except you and me.” That’s how in 1987 they started Maternal Substance Abuse Services, the very first totally women’s-oriented drug program ever tried in the country.

Lars and Mette Wiinblad of NADA Denmark also joined us online. They shared with us the work they had started with their community clinics which came to be known as NADA cafés. While Mike was an inspiration to many, he never tried to manage the process of developing NADA from a distance. As he said, “We meet to have sympathetic goals but not rules.” Lars and Mette told us that Mike “didn’t really tell us what to do.” They were motivated by what was going on all over the world, and they started to create their own ideas. And then, “We had a trainee say, I think we should call it a NADA café. And suddenly, everyone started to talk about NADA cafés.”

Learning of Denmark’s NADA cafés impressed Kathie Beasley, and she asked, “Would you care if I used that [term]? It would work where I’m at. I’d like to try it.” Lars and Mette immediately responded, “Yes, of course you can use it!” Even in this anniversary celebration, the spirit of *Just Do It* was present.

Celebrating 30 years of NADA Germany



Ralph is seen here at the 2022 NADA conference passing on the torch to Evmorfia Fromme.

Ralph Raben is an acupuncturist and ob/gyn. Two years after NADA Germany was founded in 1993 by Wolfgang Weidig, Carsten Strauß and Walter Geiger, Ralph was elected as the new president of the NADA board. He came with the aim to train non-doctors and also non-medical staff with the NADA protocol. According to Walter, "An extremely productive and creative new beginning began with the new board."

After 30 years, Ralph has retired as president but will still be working with and for NADA Germany. He is in contact with Gabriel Stux, and, in March and April of this year, he will be doing NADA training for all departments in the Hufeland Klinik – an integrative and holistic facility.

"We work with the intelligence of the body – The universality of the NADA protocol"

by Ralph Raben

I had been training in acupuncture for many years, but I wasn't successful with traditional acupuncture for drug-addict patients. Then the 10th anniversary congress of NADA US in 1995 took us to New York, and we spent four days learning acupuncture in the detox clinic at Lincoln Recovery Center, a city hospital in the South Bronx – ***it was another type of acupuncture.***

The result: We were amazed at how successfully this simple ear acupuncture was integrated, in a non-confrontational treatment style, into an out-patient alcohol- and drug-withdrawal program and into the treatment of mentally-ill people. This took place in large open groups, 200 patients daily, and, thanks to Nancy Smalls' Maternal Substance Abuse Services program, for pregnant women.

We were thrilled by the new treatment style and with the social dimension. From 1985 on, the NADA protocol was offered by New York on a low-threshold basis to anyone who needed it: accessible, inexpensive and effective. That became our role model, and we wanted to do that and to pass it on.

What is the NADA protocol?

Q: "Can you tell me exactly how acupuncture works?"

A: "We don't know how it works, but we know that it works. If the patient leaves the clinic with a smile and asks, 'Can I come back tomorrow?' then that is a statement, there is hope for healing." (Carlos Alvarez 1997 in the Spiegel TV report)

Yes, it works, every day, worldwide, and this is described at all specialist conferences, not just in the United States and Europe. More than 10,000 people are treated with it every day in order to become healthy or to endure life better.

Acupuncture is a source of inspiration.

NADA creates a good atmosphere because it works through the special relationship we create. It is a brief simple therapeutic relationship, in a good style, and reinforced by the group which somehow protects and does not annoy.

Why are the needles so well accepted without us hearing about any complications or significant adverse effects? Why do patients come back? And how does NADA work?

We constantly adapt to new situations with body and soul, with our muscle and fascia tension, with our movements, and with our feelings of joy, fear, anger and sadness. And our basic functions that keep us alive are constantly regulated without us doing anything. A wound almost always heals on its own, and a cold is gone after one week. Anger toward someone subsides. The joy of something also passes. Our inner self regulates disorders, emotions and injuries in many areas.

Our exterior with skin and senses is constantly exposed to stimuli and is thus, first and foremost, enlivened. Without stimuli, body and soul would atrophy. Everything living responds to stimuli and thereby strengthens its own liveliness. This is the intelligence of all living things. This is also the intelligence of our body.

Is there internal self-regulation when the body becomes ill?

Fifty years ago, that sounded esoteric, but many have had the experience that good movements and training help; that rest and sleep are good for many illnesses; that good touch or words can be good; and finally that acupuncture can relieve suffering.

Since the 1990s, modern scientific medicine has been focusing on our ability to self-regulate and on researching the internal consequences of acupuncture. This is done, for example, by measuring heart-rate variation after acupuncture. Also the protective function of the parasympathetic nervous system for the heart after acupuncture treatments has been described. Our self-regulation is in constant training through external stimuli, and it keeps us alive and healthy.

The most important part of our self-regulation is our vegetative nervous system. It connects everything to everything else in the body. This is a prerequisite for comprehensive regulation. The sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are opponents and work together to regulate all of our basic functions. This is how we live and ensure our survival.

When our vegetative nervous system is working well, the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are adapted to work and rest. They can then balance the regulation of functions of body and soul, so that they do what is necessary at the right time. This is also about survival – when they do their job well, we feel good, physically and mentally. And we have a better chance of staying healthy and coping with stress, infections and strain.

We now know more about this autonomous self-regulation than we did 40 years ago. It regulates constantly, and just as good stimuli from outside can activate health, acupuncture points on areas of skin that are currently open can have a healing effect.

But it is not the simple, clever stimulus from outside that strengthens our liveliness. It is the relationship between a living being and its counterpart. Liveliness creates relationships. When the disturbances in body and soul are severe and the suffering is great, the regulations are more pronounced and the liveliness increases – the patient feels the effect more strongly.

*Precisely because it has no direct specific effects,
the NADA protocol has a universal effect. This is the
inner intelligence we work with in the NADA protocol.*

What have we learned from our work?

The NADA protocol is simple and can be applied anywhere: for healthy people; for the mentally ill; for police and fire departments; for refugees; for the miserable; for people with dementia; for lonely people. And for everyone in the neighborhood in advice centers or as community acupuncture.

NADA does not calm specific centers in the brain – it offers a universal key to improving health. Good touch from outside strengthens a person inside. It does not work like a drug. We don't slow down any symptoms with the needles. We only give impulses internally and trust in the effect. We say, "NADA can make you stronger. Maybe you can take more."

"NADA is like a school" – this sentence I learned from Michael Smith. NADA is a training for the ability of body and soul to better internal self-regulation. The sicker or more disturbed a person is, the more pronounced the effect of the NADA protocol. The participants in a NADA group always have different effects. They notice that something is changing within them, and this inner experience strengthens them.

NADA is also a school (a daily training) for us as doctors, therapists or counterparts to learn about how a simple relationship supports a person. We observe instead of asking. So we remain curious and learn what our counterpart is and can do. Acupuncturists learn to observe instead of controlling. And we learn that NADA is certain: there are no adverse effects and no contraindications. Over time we learn to trust our therapy. And the patients learn to trust us and themselves. The patients have previously had a conversation or read an information sheet.

"Are you ready?" If we do acupuncture in a relaxed manner without small talk and asking for symptoms, the participants stay more within themselves. When we pass on NADA in courses, we practice an inner attitude – observing what happens instead of checking whether something happens. Then we remain curious and so does the patient. That keeps us young.

Our goal is to strengthen the social dimension, to make NADA accessible to everyone, to move out of the clinic and increase our impact on the outside world.

Our goal is to free NADA from legal obstacles, from requirements that hinder access or prohibit trained NADA acupuncturists from using the protocol.

And, finally, our goal is to give impulses through relationships without causing harm.

That's the dream.



Ralph and his wife, Tine,
enjoying their semi-retirement having a picnic in Ligurien, Italy

Kindness in words creates confidence.

Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.

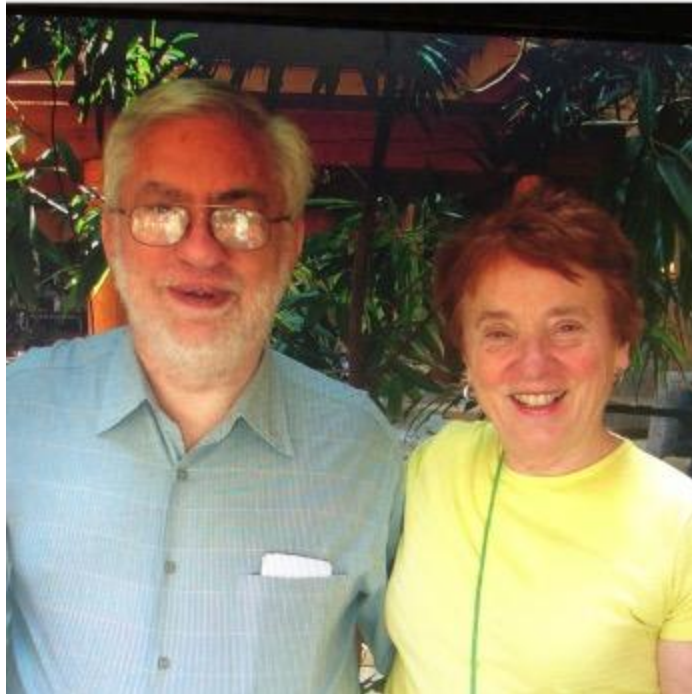
Kindness in giving creates love. --- Lao Tzu

Sheila Moira Murphy – August 18, 1937 to February 4, 2025



When Michael Smith died – or as Sheila Murphy would say *was promoted* – she said, “So the question now is, What do we do without him?” We are now asking that question about Sheila – *What do we do without her?* Well we listen to her words:

“The question has already been answered. We know the answer. We keep doing the same thing but with greater gentleness and softness and care. Some of us stood at fire stations on 9/11, or in the Philippines for a tsunami, or in Nepal for an earthquake, or in a prison in Ireland doing acupuncture.”



What do we do without her? “Each of us needs to stop the hopelessness and bring the change we dream of. Take your choice – write a book, make a documentary, do a blog, talk to the mayor, the governor, the prime minister, get the laws changed – but do something. And stop leaving home without the beads.”

Michael told us that we keep Sheila to slay dragons. Now we must be the dragon slayers -- *so how do we do that?* Again she tells us, “It is pretty simple. We pick up our feet and leave the chains to never again capture anyone. We must bring a new day to this earth.”

*“A light appeared and the place brightened / the way the sky
does when heaven’s candle / is shining clearly.”* -- Beowulf

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“Be teachable – not certain, not judgmental.” – Sheila Murphy

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