

**'Trans-cultural Dialogues about Mental health, Extreme states
and Alternatives for recovery'**

INTAR, November 2016, in Pune, India

We're writing with exciting news!

Alternative approaches and visionary innovations in mental health care got a strong push forward in the last decade through the stellar efforts of The International Network Toward Alternatives for Recovery (INTAR) . And now, we're looking for your support to keep the momentum going internationally, and especially in Asia Pacific region, to bring important possibilities into reality in the mental health sector.

INTAR has been working to develop and promote genuine options for people who are experiencing distressing /altered / extreme mental states. For much too long people have had only one option - a medical model. Research has shown us that people do recover from medical diagnoses once considered life-long deteriorating conditions. Data gathered and published about the long term outcomes on quality of life of early generations of psycho-pharmaceutical prescription drug users show that such drugs can cause serious and debilitating disability, chronicity and fatality. In the Asian region, the honour and respect accorded to doctors as figures of authority has misled many people and families, into accepting treatments that may not be life affirming, such as the routine application of restraints, seclusion, shock treatments, narcotherapies, ECT without anesthesia and a variety of 'injections' and sedatives, as a normal part of the course of treatment. The presence of colonial clouds in the Asian region is evidenced in the archaic asylum type penal institutions, nestling alongside prisons and 'beggars' homes' in many parts of Asia.

We know by now that around the world, dozens of alternative service models have been developed that show truly promising results. Yet such viable models have been under-utilized, under-funded and continue to operate in relative obscurity, until INTAR came along. INTAR has consistently provided a global platform over the decade, to show case these models, some of them decades old.

The INTAR group has been loosely held together by a small group of dedicated psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, family members and survivor activists who met monthly in Massachusetts, US, to look at 'Alternative models for recovery' from mental health problems. We were guided by two important principles: *full recovery is possible* and that *the dignity and autonomy of the individual is paramount*. Our mission: To document the effectiveness of Alternatives; to refine and expand their use and to make them more accessible to people that need them.

After many energizing international meetings (Massachusetts, Ireland, British Columbia; Toronto, Canada; New York, USA; Liverpool, UK), a critical mass started to form to bring INTAR to the rest of the world. We are planning to hold INTAR 2016 in the Asian region, and in Pune, India, in November 2016, to showcase some of the top projects of the world.

Tentative themes for the Conference are:

1. Cultural Experiencing and Diversity of experiencing emotional distress & extreme states
2. Transcultural Dialogues and Trialogues on Mental health, and alternatives
3. Crisis, extreme states and enabling support systems
4. Critique of Global Mental Health
5. Peer and grassroots support systems

Methodology will be a mix of plenaries, seminars and workshops.

We're inspired to let you know that the critical mass is here. Bapu Trust for Research on Mind & Discourse, a survivor led organization working in India and Asia, is the enabler of INTAR 2016 (Visit www.baputrust.org). INTAR and the Bapu Trust solicit partnerships and collaborations from the region and elsewhere to make this Conference a huge success. This is a critical moment for Asia, a haven of eastern healing techniques, to upload its potential on recovery methods to the world and to learn from methods and approaches from other cultures and contexts.

Await further news from INTAR! If interested in sponsorships, collaborations, or supporting INTAR in any way, email us at:

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