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WACAT –

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NEWSLETTER
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World Association of Clubs on
Alcohol Treatment working
according to the Hudolin

WACAT OFFICERS FOR THE PERIOD 2017 TO 2019

President: Helge Kolstad
Norway

Vice President: Zoran Zoricic
Croatia

Board members:

Irena Chubukova – Russia

Lasse Rossen - Denmark

Nicoletta Regonati – Italy

Aniello Basilice – Italy

Pubudu Sumanasekera - Sri
Lanka,

Francesco Piani - Italy

Substitute member:

Soontaree Srikosai - Thailand

Nomination Committee for the next WACAT Congress

Marco Orsega - Italy

Birgit Juul Nielsen - Denmark

Anto Orešković - Bosnia-
Herzegovina

International secretaries

Francesca Francalacci and
Federica Petrini - Italy

The Common Legacy after Hudolin

Representatives of club achievements in most of the Post-Yugoslav countries met with the WACAT board in Zagreb in February.

This is the first time since the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the wars of almost 20 years, that the remains of the once so powerful Hudolin club movement, now in several independent states, meet with the more recent club movement. Five of the Post-Yugoslav countries were represented, and they could report of different numbers of clubs. In Croatia and Serbia there are hundreds, in some other countries only a few. Some of them have survived since before the disintegration. Many others are new. Together they maintain a methodology of regular club work and continued education, of self-help under proper supervision for the whole family, and of healthy development.

The club movements in these countries attribute their working methods to Vladimir Hudolin. As we know, he developed his methodology throughout his life. His latest improvements took place in Italy, during the most turbulent times in Yugoslavia. Therefore, the older parts of the Hudolin movement missed out on some of this. Today, however, it seems like the differences may be explained chiefly by outer factors, and that the normalisation of living conditions in many countries also leads to greater similarities in the club methods.

The most important difference may be the recruitment of the trained supervisors of the clubs, in most countries known as the **servant-teachers**. In the original clubs, starting from 1966, these were professionals from the health service which got an additional training in community therapy. In the former Yugoslavia, clubs were closely related to the Health Service. In Italy, where clubs were introduced from 1979, it also started in close collaboration with health services and particularly with health professionals. However, the need for clubs was so big, and their number increased so fast, that enough trained

professionals could not be found. Very soon gifted people with very different skills were trained for the essential role as servant-teacher. Regional associations were formed to organise this recruiting and training, and to maintain the quality of the work. When club work has been introduced in new countries, the instrument has been the setting up of associations, and training of volunteers. The establishment of WACAT, our international umbrella organisation, was done by such associations.

A main policy of WACAT is to unite all the club movements which work according to the Hudolin methodology. Contacts to Croatia have been maintained throughout, and the club activists there have kept contacts to the other Post-Yugoslav countries. They have even organised seminars and summer schools with participants from several countries. These people were the core of the delegations which met with WACAT in February. Reports showed optimism about a possible growth of the activity. They now face the same challenge as we saw in Italy in the beginning: to find enough volunteers with appropriate professional training. So, development of training programmes for voluntary servant-teachers seems to be a big issue everywhere. That is exactly what WACAT is about. By pursuing this task, we believe that past differences in the relations to professional services, may soon be replaced by a common strive towards finding the right people to do the important work.



The WACAT Board and representatives of club movements in Post-Yugoslav countries.

WACAT Board Meeting 23rd to 25th February 2018

The newly elected WACAT Board had its second meeting during these days. The meeting with club representatives from former Post-Yugoslav countries were the main focus. We had interesting reports from many other countries. The board worked through the entire Plan of Action for the current period. It was decided to have the next congress session in Slovenia in the fall of 2019, and we made several decisions on travels, seminars and other trainings.

Slovenia – the melting pot for a unified Hudolin club movement.

Two club associations of Slovenia will collaborate on organising the next congress gathering of WACAT in late 2019. This will be done in connection with other conferences and training sessions. WACAT will also organise a session for experienced leaders of training in our associations. The collaboration of the two Slovenian associations is itself a remarkable development. One association is simply the continuation of the Yugoslav movement which work closely with the health service. The other is a more recent setup, inspired from Italy, and working more with volunteers. Both groups new seem to be mostly occupied with how to expand the work and help more people. They may assist each other in achieving this and may even find a common structure.



The tree Slovenian Representatives in Cordial Harmony. From left Iris Ohojak and Miro Lapanya, representing the newer club association, and Dr Natasha Sorko, representing the more traditional clubs. Here with Dr Francesco Piani from neighbouring Udine in Italy.

Promising development in Macedonia



Remains of the older clubs are also alive in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, here represented by health workers Djejljan Ajdar and Seyime Sallahi Pasholli



The main architect of the relations between WACAT and club movements in former Yugoslav countries: Professor Zoran Zoricic, acting president of the Croatian Club Association and Vice President of WACAT.



Professor Petar Nastasic of Belgrade, chairman of the Serbian Club Association



Dr Dragan Cabarkapa is director of a large hospital in Montenegro, and determined in starting club work over again in his country.



Acting Secretary Francesca Francalacci and WACAT President Helge Kolstad



Dr Irena Chubukova, representing the Russian Clubs in the WACAT Board

Russian clubs are spreading beyond Moscow

There are now established clubs well beyond Moscow. During 2017 six new clubs were established. Beyond Moscow and the Moscow region there are small clusters of clubs in Bashikiria, Nizny Novgorod and Vladimir. Keen interest from many other places will be met by an offer of distance education for new servant teachers. A programme for this is being developed.

The Russian clubs have a comprehensive programme, with the following highlights:

- Leisure time activities, aimed for the whole family, and integration in larger society, a.o.
 - o Active participation in the Russian Orthodox Church
 - o Tours and pilgrimage with strong emphasis on socialization.
 - o Regular sport and cultural events
 - o A choreographic studio
 - o A chorus studio
 - o Cycle Club
- Regular courses for servant-teachers and members in a school centre in Moscow
- Scientific Conferences, sometimes as chief organiser, and sometimes as co-organiser with others, most significant: the conference on the jubilee celebration of the Russian Club movement, with broad participation nationally and internationally.
- Publishing of scientific and popular papers on alcohol and drugs, as well as photo and video products. Close collaboration with existing papers and other media. Over 50 articles. Club members have appeared in numerous TV and radio programmes.
- Social media: five websites established and maintained, daily updating of Facebook and V-kontakte among others. 150 people active in this effort
- Members are urged to participate in social and charity activities, regularly working as volunteers in church.
- Vow of sobriety. This is a Russian Tradition which is taken up again by the Club Movement.

A special video film was created based on the 25th anniversary of the Russian Club Movement in 2017.

Meetings for trainers of trainers

Training of club workers and overseeing of proper education of the club members are major tasks for our club associations. In practise there are some especially qualified members who are in charge of this work. WACAT has made it a priority in its work to support this training, and make sure that there is contact between the people in charge in different associations.

A first meeting of officers who have leading roles in the education of servant-teachers was held in Sestola during the WACAT Congress in 2017. Further meetings have been scheduled for the Italian Congress in October 2018, and the next WACAT Congress gathering in Slovenia in 2019. The inquiry on the recruitment and training practices of the WACAT Member Associations will provide material for these meetings. We believe that regular contacts between and continuous education of trainers of trainers will gradually lead to a common understanding of the needs required, and improvement of quantity and quality.

Inquiry about qualification of servant/teachers

WACAT member associations have several ways of recruiting and training the club workers. Therefore, WACAT now asks our members to give some details about how they recruit and train these key persons, and help establishing a more complete picture of the recruiting and qualification issues.

The Hudolin methodology requires that there is a competent assistant in every club. The latest explanation from Vladimir Hudolin himself was that this should be a person with abilities to guide the club, so that its therapeutic potential could be achieved, and to teach about some of the basics of the social-ecological approach to alcohol and other dependence problems. He underlined that this person should be considered a **servant** to the club, but also be prepared to play the role as **teacher**, particularly at the educational sessions all members should be offered, but also in the current club work. Therefore, the double name **servant/teacher** has been used for this officer of every club. In earlier version of the methodology this officer may be called **operator**, or even **club assistant**.

Our international umbrella organisation, WACAT, has made it a central policy to recruit more servant/teachers, and see to it that they have sufficient qualification to play the role well. This is a matter of basic education, followed up by continuous supervision as long as she or he serves in this role.

A survey form is about being sent out to WACAT members. The answers may help setting up a more complete description of the practises. This will further be followed up in the regular meetings of those who are in charge of the training, which will be set up at all major WACAT gatherings.

Communication in the Club Movement

Communication between members, clubs, associations and the public is a fundamental issue in our movement. We have little money, and are mostly dependent on electronic messages. Language differences and poor address maintenance are major difficulties for this. An improvement of our communication and information abilities, therefore, was a major issue at the recent WACAT Board Meeting. Based on a PM from our secretary Dr Federica Petrini, a number of recommendations were made.

- The newsletter shall be improved and issued regularly and sent to all contacts.
- A registry of official addresses of associations and collaborators, as well as interested members shall be established and maintained regularly.
- An official WACAT webpage shall be established. This should contain current news, as well as important documents and archive. This should also be the address from which other WACAT material is sent out.
- A internal channel for communications within the board and other designated officers may be added to this.
- A mailing list of servant teachers will be created and be used to send news about training opportunities.
- A Facebook page for WACAT is to be established. The ambition is to publish at least 2 contents a day (such as photos, videos, articles, parts of the newsletter, etc.) so as to make it sufficiently active.

It was decided to hold a meeting between the President and the secretariat with Federica Petrini and Francesca Francalacci in Norway in the middle of June.

Romanian Clubs Met with Professionals

The Romanian club movement were important co-organisers of a national conference on substance abuse prevention which took part in Iasi 19th to 22nd April. The conference attracted almost 200 psychiatrists and other health and social professionals dealing with alcohol and drug problems from all over the country. Club workers and club members were doing most of the servicing and hosting of the programme, and they also had important entries in the programme.



Organisers, lecturers and club activists having a nice meal after the programme.

Hudolin concept

A main topic of the conference was how to bridge the gap between eastern and western psychiatry. It was explained that Hudolin had lived in the middle of this. His concepts seemed relevant in both worlds. The need for greater understanding of the social determinants of alcohol and drug-related problems was underlined, together with the many findings of individual and biological causes. The Hudolin concept was broadly presented by the host of the conference, Prof Ovidiu Alexinschi, who is the scientific advisor to the Romanian clubs, as well as by dr. Francesco Piani, the director of the European School for Alcoholofy and Ecological Psychiatry, and Helge Kolstad, President of WACAT.

The Human Library

Stories about the life of alcohol-affected families, of coping strategies and club work were told in several versions, all of them called “The Human Library”, where emotions, relationships, victories and failures were acted and told. The strength of the therapeutic community among clubs and club members were demonstrated.



The Human Library – Club members demonstrating a club gathering

Important Club events in 2018

Scandinavia:

Summer School in Denmark, Southern Jutland 15th to 21st July

Italy:

26th National Congress on Anthropological Spirituality, Assisi 11th to 13th May 2018

AICAT National Congress, Matera 5th to 7th October 2018

WACAT Board Meeting, Matera, Italy 4th October