

# ACUPUNCTURE AND NADA CAPACITY BUILDING AS HUMANITARIAN AID

*Preparing for a post-capitalist, post-disaster world of community supported healthcare*



## Online series

*Cost: \$25 per module, each 4-hour webinars*

*Module 1: Starting out in humanitarian aid with needles at hand*

*Module 2: Building the team that can sustain acupuncture*

*Module 3: Deep dive into development work and cultural competency*

*Module 4: Extraordinary capacity of ordinary people: Community Acupuncture training in the developing world*

*Module 5: Liberation acupuncture, contemplation and action*

*Module 6: Gentle ear needle technique*

## COURSES FOR

- ADSES, NADA TRAINERS, ACUPUNCTURISTS
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS
- ANYONE WANTING TO IMPLEMENT AN ACUPUNCTURE-BASED HUMANITARIAN AID PROGRAM



## How does acupuncture work in humanitarian aid?

How do community acupuncture and acudetox work as a capacity building intervention and sustainable healthcare model in the context of humanitarian aid, post-disaster and in the developing world? How can you start and sustain a program of this type?

Crossroads Acupuncture has been adapting the NADA model as well as the community acupuncture model over the past decade in the borderlands, in Mexico, Guatemala and Nicaragua, in a variety of settings, for different types of health problems, and among a diverse number of underserved groups. These courses will also include a look at our experience in teaching NADA, community acupuncture and moxa protocols for people with little education or background in healthcare.

## Grassroots approach to community organizing

We will review case studies on other international programs that have been implemented in the past decades in response to humanitarian aid problems. We will also be inviting other experienced NADA trainers and community organizers who have worked in disaster relief and have used NADA as a community organizing tool in different contexts around the world. You will leave with a well-rounded assortment of wisdom that NADA trainers have gained and have to share. Join us in these series of online courses designed to help you get grounded in some starting points, with an opportunity for you and your community to get support and mentorship as you build your program.



**Crossroads interns offers acudetox at schools and community centers in rural Nicaragua**

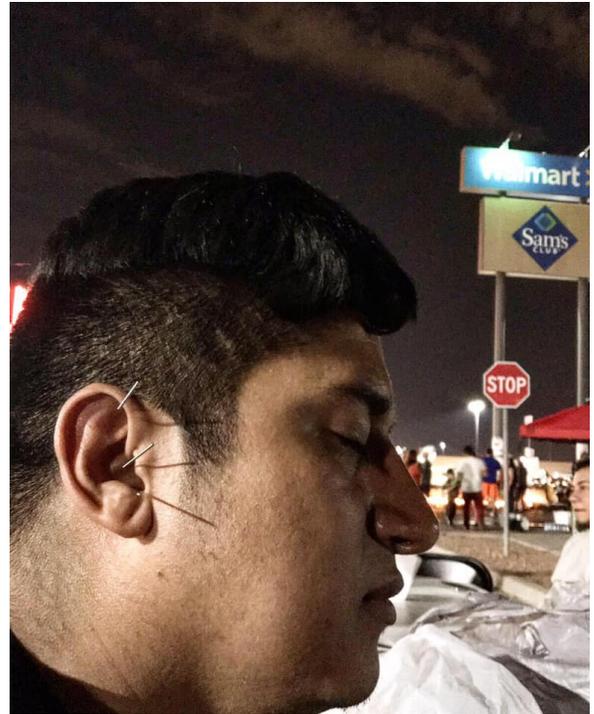


## Module 1: Starting out in humanitarian aid with needles at hand

Bringing acupuncture or any outside aid into a humanitarian aid context comes with the risk of doing more harm than good. The NADA ear acupuncture model offers a starting point for introducing acupuncture into a humanitarian aid program in a culturally competent way. This is an introductory webinar designed for NADA Registered Trainers in the US/Canada, and also for NADA trainers, ADSes, acupuncturists, doctors, and organizations in other international settings wanting to develop a NADA program in the developing world. Ryan will outline some of the basic components of building a successful, and culturally competent NADA acudetox program. We'll open up the can of what can go wrong with and what are the limitations of outside humanitarian aid support, and where that leaves something like NADA. You'll gain an overview of how NADA operates in challenging contexts in response to poverty, violence, and disaster relief, with in depth analysis of successful long-term NADA programs that we have available to learn from in the history of NADA's development.

## Module 2: Building the team that can sustain acupuncture

We each bring to the table a combination or an absence of: needling, theory, teaching, community organizing, fundraising, and a variety of other skills and talents needed to build a sustainable NADA project. You don't need to have all of these skills in your toolbox, but you do need to know what you have to offer, and who else you will need to support. And when working in the developing world, being clear these things can be crucial to the project sustaining itself beyond you. How can we discern this beast? Who among your students can eventually take lead and teach and build its own team? We will review some best practices for needs assessment, intra-group communication, project planning, and how to find the right mentors who can support you to become the NADA trainer/organizer you are capable of growing into. This is designed to empower NADA trainers, ADSes, acupuncturists, doctors, and organizations with skills and knowledge in teambuilding in the humanitarian aid context.



**NADA ear acupuncture groups offered by Crossroads students outside of Wal Mart, El Paso Shooting Site, Aug 2019**



**Starting May 2020 Register online: [crossroadsacupuncture.com](https://crossroadsacupuncture.com)**

## Module 3: Deep dive into development work and cultural competency

Roll up your sleeves! In this course we will dive deep into best practices, from service delivery, to technique, teaching models as well as community organizing. We will also dig into unhealthy practices. We'll explore the middle ground that social entrepreneurs must face in striving towards conscious leadership in these types of challenging, cross-cultural contexts.

## Developing yourself as an organizer

Our instructor Ryan Bemis will share from Crossroads' own successes alongside the failures, mishaps, missteps, and everything in between that he's witnessed and experienced. You'll be asked to dive into your own strengths and weaknesses. Crossroads has learned that healing in humanitarian aid comes not from the perfect people or point locations, but from developing a deep solidarity born out of vulnerability and creating safe space. This entails not just skill and theory about community development or about the developing world, but most importantly: your own personal development. This course offers a starting point for providers and teachers and community organizers seeking mentorship in acupuncture-based grassroots organizing. You'll leave with support in finding the right teacher, mentor or coach who can help you grow into your full potential.



Church and Tribal Leaders learn NADA in the Sierra Tarahumara, Mexico (above), and the Coban, Guatemala (below) , Trilingual Training, 2016 and 2019

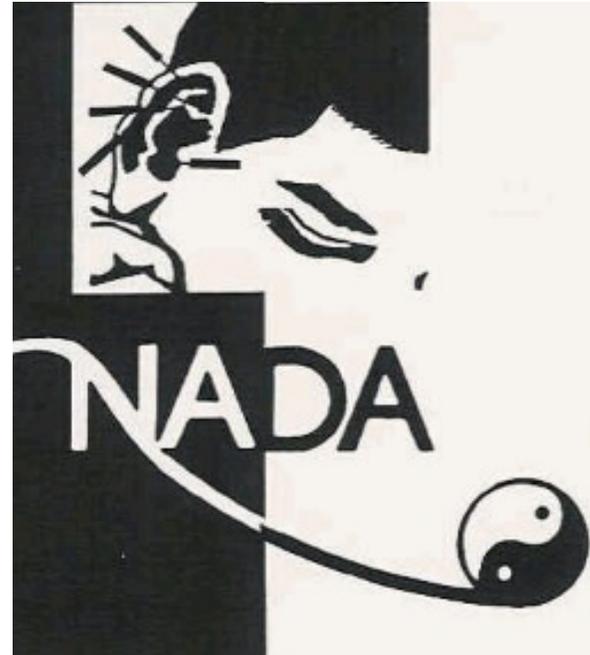


## Module 4: Extraordinary capacity of ordinary people

It's really amazing to see how fast everyday people can, in just a few days, learn how to put a few acupuncture points in the ears and treat a lot of people. You can't send most people to go to Medical School, and Crossroads' experience is that people don't need to go to an expensive school for many years in order to learn how to offer medicine and healing and community support. What is the simplest and most effective approach to acupuncture education? We are going to hit this question head on.

## Community Acupuncture training in the developing world

In this course, we will explore what acupuncture-based programs in the developing world have explored and found to be appropriate and safe to teach to volunteers of all levels of education. The Barefoot Doctor Movement in China taught rural farmers how to do basic acupuncture techniques, and Crossroads has innovated this model in Cd Juarez Mexico, and in Nicaragua, in response to violence, political instability, the migrant caravan and poverty. Drawing on teachers like Master Tung, Miriam Lee, and activists in the community acupuncture movement, our Barefoot Health Promoter community acupuncture school (Promotores Descalzos) has trained dozens of everyday people how to apply basic acupuncture and moxa techniques. We will review what we have learned over the years, and what we have learned from other similar programs.



**Promotores Descalzos,  
Barefoot Health  
Promoters acupuncture  
school, Cd Juarez, MX**



**Starting May 2020 Register online: [crossroadsacupuncture.com](https://crossroadsacupuncture.com)**

## Module 5: Liberation acupuncture, contemplation and action

The dawn of the liberation theology movement in the Americas came around the same time in the 1970's when activists began to integrate acupuncture into US addictions recovery communities. With Covid-19 now challenging the foundations of modern society, how can these two historical social movements inform our work in acupuncture today? We don't know what acupuncture will look like ahead, so what can acupuncture providers learn from the liberation theology's option for the poor, social justice, and base community grassroots organizing?

Base christian communities in Latin America have used acupuncture for decades as an outgrowth the barefoot doctor model developed in China, while Jesuit missionaries in Asia began offering the NADA acupuncture model. In 2011 base communities used these same models in response to violence in Cd Juarez, Mexico. Churches, still today, utilize volunteers within self-help groups to mobilize social projects and create safe space, sanctuary, and silence.

Volunteers offer acupuncture for people sitting in pews after mass and evangelical worship, as nuns go door to door visiting the sick and homebound. Sanctuary churches sheltering migrants offer NADA acupuncture for refugees under siege. Base christian communities offer acupuncture for campesinos in rural Central America, for people who have no access to a doctor. The first ever Catholic-sponsored acupuncture school has taken root in the once murder capital of the world: Barefoot Health Promoters. We'll look at the cultural, systemic and paradigm shifts that have happened along the way in the course of this project's synthesis of action and contemplation.



**Sisters of the Poor offer acudetox for security guards at refugee shelter, Mexico**

This course will explore the basis for acupuncture within any community project working to integrate action and contemplation into social change and personal development work. If action means activism and acupuncture can change the world and healing the sick with needles and creating mega business that feeds off of Capitalism to fight the man, then contemplation is sitting in silence with needlessness, caring for the soul, and sinking into that deeper truth answer to the question: What is the next right thing for me to do in this moment?

We will review key lessons about how liberation acupuncture implicates us as community workers in solidarity with the most vulnerable communities in the world. How can we be agents of liberation and systemic change using tiny needles in any part of the planet, no matter what the economy is like? Join us to explore what radical responsibility and personalist approaches we, if we choose, all might have as acupuncture providers as humanity recovers from itself in the decade ahead.

## Module 6: Gentle ear needle technique

Say what? But my teacher said needles should hurt. That if it hurts it means the needle is working. That the patient has to flinch and jump off the table in order to receive an acupuncture treatment. We're going to turn the tables on the assumptions that exist out there for needling the ear and needling the rest of the body, for needling the rich as well as the poor. The truth is: Patients often do not come back for acupuncture or NADA because it hurt. Don't let your patients refer to your technique as acutorture!

## Up your needling game

And it's not just about practicing over and over and it's not just about your qi alignment or how gentle of a human being you are, either. Learning a gentle, painless technique, and learning how to teach people how to needle this way, is about some basic fundamentals that anyone can learn. We'll review some out of the box and not always taught free-hand and guide tube techniques. Trainers and educators of acupuncture will learn how to integrate these needling styles into their skill-sets. If you want your students to attract patients and keep needling people for years ahead, you owe it to them to know how to needle someone in a gentle way.



**Indigenous health workers at Crossroads' trilingual NADA training in Coban, Guatemala, 2019**



## Apprentice with Crossroads

Volunteering is also a great way to get first-hand experience with doing acupuncture in a humanitarian aid project. Crossroads offers volunteer immersion experiences for students, teachers and providers. These special online courses are a pre-requisite for interested volunteers who want to join Crossroads in offering services or gaining apprenticeship support at a multiple sites in a variety of clinical settings in the El Paso/Cd Juarez, Mexico region, as well as in Latin America. Volunteer programs include trauma, humanitarian aid, refugee care, homeless care, harm reduction, opiate use and pain management, addiction, veteran's care.



## About Crossroads' Training Program

Crossroads Acupuncture, a 501-c-3 organization has trained over a 400 providers in Auditor since 2011 and has helped communities in the border region provide over 90,000 treatments primarily within underserved areas.

### Media on Crossroads

[A million tiny daggers](#), Joshua Wheeler  
[Border News Bureau](#), Angela Kocherga  
[America Magazine](#), Ryan Bemis  
[Qiological Podcast](#), Michael Max  
[Madness Radio](#), Will Hall  
[Latina Lista](#), Molly Molloy

### Are you social?

[YouTube Channel](#)  
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## Solidarity Immersion programs in Nicaragua and Guatemala 2019-2020



**Ryan Bemis**  
Doctor Oriental Medicine  
NADA Registered Trainer  
Director of Crossroads  
and Promotores  
Descalzos

