



PRESS RELEASE

Paris, 1st March 2022

SOCIALYSE PARIS, PART OF THE HAVAS GROUP, LAUNCHES THE FIRST NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS SUPPORT GROUP MEETING IN THE METAVERSE: NAverse

NAverse, the first Narcotics Anonymous support group meeting in the metaverse, took place on Thursday, February 17, with support from Socialyse Paris and its technical partner VR Academy. Eight Narcotics Anonymous members came to discuss their addictions and their progress towards a drug-free life in an immersive experience.

Narcotics Anonymous, a global network of support groups, sprang from the model of Alcoholics Anonymous and has been setting up meetings dedicated to helping drug-addicted individuals wishing to get rid of their addiction for almost 50 years, focusing on speech, presence, support and a sense of belonging to a unified community.

For the past two years, addiction to drugs, alcohol or medication grew as quickly as new sanitary measures permeated our daily lives.

Once wide open, the doors to the Narcotics Anonymous meetings closed one by one, in accordance with sanitary necessities. While the members used to participating in these meetings managed to transition to virtual support groups, it became harder for new or potential members to take the first step and truly realize the efficiency of a solution that relies on the physical and moral presence of a community.

To tackle this exceptional situation, Socialyse Paris, a Havas Group agency, advised and accompanied Narcotics Anonymous in the setting up of an immersive experience in the metaverse to better recreate the feeling of presence, support and guidance that physical meetings can provide.

Émilie Cabanié, Head of Influence, and Emmanuel Quéré, Senior Strategic Planner at Socialyse Paris commented: *"It is no longer a secret that the metaverse is a revolution and, whatever we might say, it's a true step forward. While it's understandable that some people may feel concerned by it, we chose to use it in a virtuous way and integrate it into an issue of public interest. We said to ourselves, what if immersive technology allowed for a better treatment of mental illnesses, and specifically of addictions? It is our role, as professionals in the fields of communications and advertising, to use these technologies in a meaningful way and offer practical solutions to some key challenges of our time. We hope that this first experience will inspire similar initiatives elsewhere."*

Among those who took part in this first Narcotics Anonymous metaverse experience, regular members as well as newcomers shared their own experience. A few selected journalists were also invited to share the initiative and bring the conversation surrounding addiction to the mainstream, as well as to specifically concerned social groups (drug addicts, their families and friends, public authorities and members of the medical field).

The results: Narcotics Anonymous members became fully converted to the metaverse experience, representing a true solution to digitalize meetings, allow them to speak freely with a complete sense of anonymity. A world first, which might inspire and expand to other psychological support groups.

“It has been an emotionally resonant experience, and I am glad to have been a part of it. I felt like I was in a “true” meeting, as if it were physical, while the Zoom-based meetings we had during lockdown periods felt less personal, colder,” Caroline, Narcotics Anonymous member.

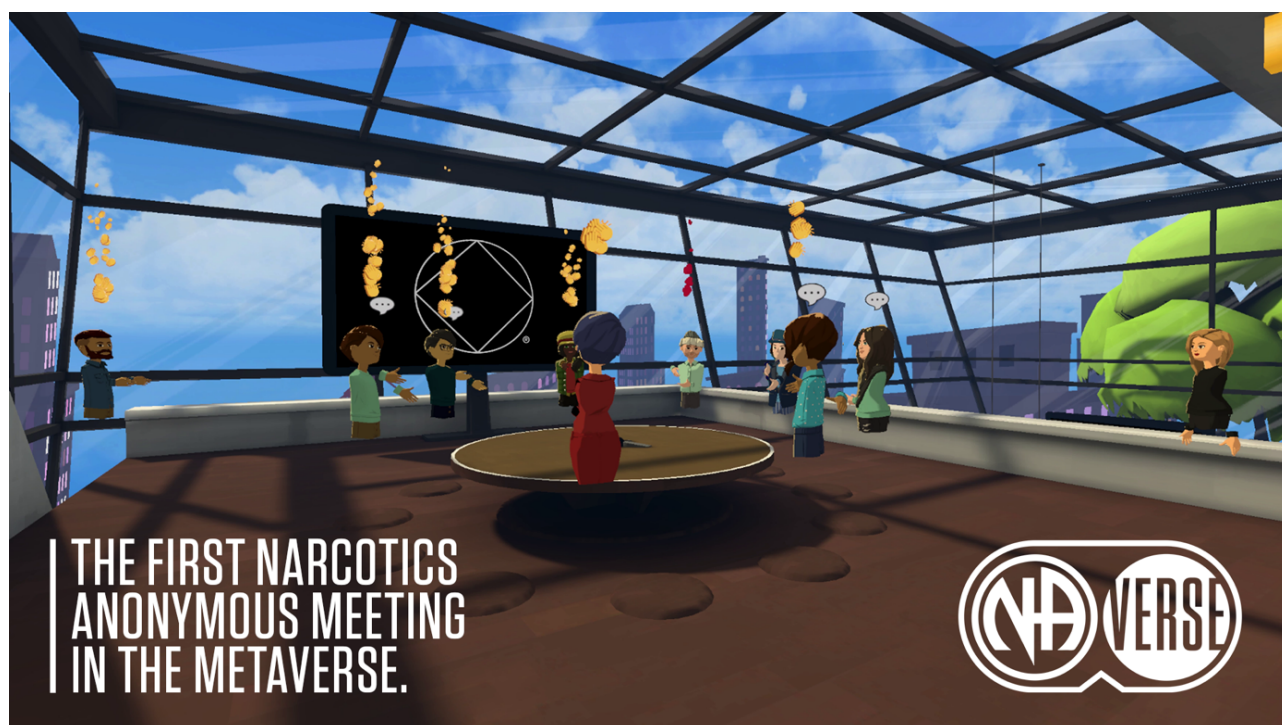
“Immersive, emotional, impressively realistic,” Fraid, Narcotics Anonymous member.

“The meeting felt emotionally impactful, since having our goggles on made us feel more involved, it felt more effective. I think the whole process opens unlimited potential to help many people,” Elise, Narcotics Anonymous member.

Havas Group is committed to accompanying brands in the metaverse. A testimony to this was when Havas became the first communications Group to own land in The Sandbox video game where it plans to inaugurate its first virtual Village (the 69th Havas Village).

And in 2021, the Group developed “Metaverse by Havas”, a consulting, creative, media and commerce solution dedicated to brands wishing to explore the metaverse as a new space to address their branding, storytelling, brand experiences, targeting and revenue generation goals.

[Click here to discover the NAverse meeting](#)





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About Havas Group

Havas is one of the world's largest global communications groups. Founded in 1835 in Paris, the Group employs 20,000 people in more than 100 countries and operates through its three business units covering all communication activities. Havas Group's mission is to make a meaningful difference to brands, businesses and people. To better anticipate client needs, Havas has adopted a fully integrated model through its 60+ Havas Villages around the world. In these Villages, creative, media and healthcare & wellness teams work together, ensuring agility and a seamless experience for clients. We are committed to building a diverse culture where everybody feels they belong, can be themselves, thrive and grow. Havas Group integrated into Vivendi in December 2017. Further information about Havas Group is available on the company's website: havasgroup.com
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About Narcotics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) support meetings offer help to anyone dealing with drug addictions and wishing to get rid of it. Based on the Alcoholics Anonymous model, NA is a worldwide network of support groups. The first meetings took place in the USA in 1953, before the community experience a global upswing in the 1980's. NA views addiction, beyond the variety of legal and illegal products that provoke it, as a physical, mental and spiritual illness whose effects can be stopped. It offers a solution to anyone hoping to move towards a drug-free lifestyle. Nowadays, about 70 000 NA meetings are held weekly in 144 countries, 170 of those taking place in France. Anyone suffering from drug addiction issue, or worrying they might be addicted, whichever substance they may take, can become a NA member. Membership is free, personal, and based on voluntary commitment.

Meetings offer support to the addicts through mutual help. Attendants are exclusively former drug addicts, or people trying to move towards a drug-free life. NA doesn't employ professional speakers. Its approach is founded on the collective experience of those who learned to live a drug-free life. In NA's view, an addict is the best person to understand and help another.

Learn more : <https://www.narcotiquesanonymes.org>

About Socialyse Paris

SOCIALYSE PARIS is the social media agency of the Media department of Havas Group. The agency conceives, locally and internationally, brand experiences designed to be meaningful to their audiences, along each step of their content journey, by integrating both its clients' branding and business goals. SOCIALYSE PARIS focuses on two key concepts: paid social media, benefiting from targeting and amplification opportunities offered by the key social platforms, and influence marketing, which uses content to delineates digital media around engaged communities. A team of 60 professionals, where transverse competences coalesce: strategic planning, data & intelligence, a dedicated creative team, and production management.

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