

HARVEST USA

A NEWSLETTER OF WORD INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES USA



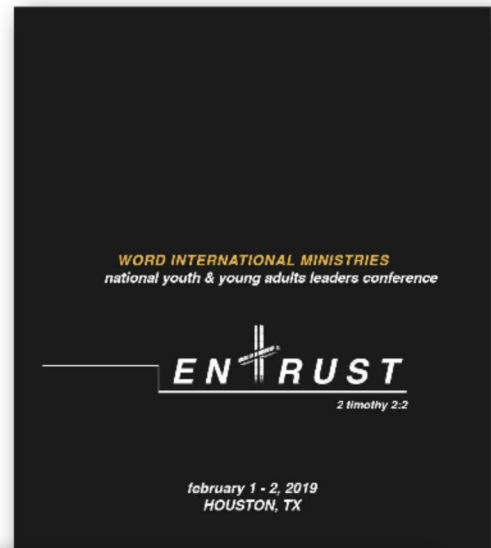
*Pastor Mark Briones
National Youth & Young Adults Coordinator, USA*

Entrust 2019

National Youth and Young Adults Leaders Conference

After a two year hiatus due to the National Convergence preparations, over 40 youth and young adult leaders from the different WIN churches in the US gathered once again for our National Youth and Young Adults Leaders Conference in Houston, Texas last January 31- February 3, 2019. Hosting this year's conference was our WIN Houston Northeast church pastored by Pastor Butch and Ching Mapeso. Due to the success of the National Convergence last July, we had the biggest number of out of town delegates in attendance, 24 all in all coming from our churches in Seattle, Silicon Valley, San Francisco, New Jersey, Los Angeles, Chino, San Diego and Dallas. Both our Houston area churches had their youth and young adults leaders in attendance too. Bro. Ron Apura from WIN Houston Northeast and his team together with Pastor Rocky Apura Youth/YA District Coordinator for Texas did an excellent job in mobilizing their leaders and members from the pick ups at the airports, transportation and housing the delegates from out of town.

The theme of the conference was ENTRUST taken from 2 Timothy 2:2, reminding our young leaders of our core values (WORD) of Word International and to be intentional in entrusting the Gospel to their generation and to the next generation. We had different leaders from our churches speak into the lives of the delegates. On the first day, Chris Mapeso talked about worship titled "Worth the Hype" and Ron Apura touched on "Surviving the Ministry." During the second day of the conference, we had the entire day of sessions and breakouts. Jonathan Aldaba spoke on the relationship aspect titled "Reconnecting with a Disconnected World" and Pastor Randy Castro challenged everyone during his



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Entrust 2019

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session titled "The Outreach Factor." Rhona Pinsoy gave a very relevant teaching on "Missions" and the leaders had a great time presenting their skits after her session. Leaders from different churches were also given some time to report on their respective ministries and it was very encouraging to hear what they are currently doing and their goals and visions for this year. I had the privilege to end the conference with the topic on Discipleship and zeroing in on the theme ENTRUST. At the end of the session, we had a wonderful and refreshing time praying for one another.

It was 3 days of great learning, fellowship and encouraging one another. Thank you pastors for sending your leaders to the conference, thank you Pastors Butch and Ching Mapeso, Pastor Gordon Apura our Texas District overseer and to all our WIN Houston Northeast and Southeast members for housing and feeding the out of town delegates. Thank you Bro. Ron Apura and Pastor Rocky Apura for a job well done. Last but not the least, Thank you Lord for a very successful conference. All glory goes to you!

WIN Seattle/Tacoma

Though our time in Houston was short, I am grateful that the impact of the Entrust leaders conference will last. I was inspired by the speakers and most of all my fellow leaders' zeal for serving our youth groups. Learning about how to apply God's word to our leadership style has motivated our youth core at WIN Seattle to seek a deeper relationship with God and members of our youth. We are excited to see how we will be used in our ministry, as well as the other leaders across the nation. Lastly I'd like to thank our church members and parents for constantly pouring into us and believing in our ability to enact change. ~ Sana Dawa



The WORD on the STREET



A Second Look At Suffering

Sufferings contribute towards our Character Formation and/or Behavior Modification.

Most of us believe that adversity is a tool that God sometimes employs for our good and our growth. Most of us don't have a problem accepting suffering as an important instrument God uses to forge Christlike character in us or even correct erring behavior in His children. We seek comfort in verses like [Romans 8:28](#) that generally states "all things being used by Him for our good" or [Hebrews 12:6](#) that expresses His "loving discipline for His children" (*both verses paraphrased*). With that stated, I think sufferings deserve a second look...

Our Sufferings toward Others' Blessings

What we may struggle with is the thought that, *sometimes, our sufferings serve no other purpose than to bless others!* This might come as a shock to some (*or even disturbing to others!*) but God might allow adversity into our lives so that others (beside yourself) will be blessed. That God would make you go through a difficulty or a negative experience only because He wants to bless others THROUGH you, is a radically new thought for some! After all... *it's not about you!* As we strive to find the purpose for our sufferings, we should consider a couple of things: that we do not live in a vacuum and we are not the center of the universe. While there is a God who ultimately works out things for our good – it is not always for our comfort nor our benefit. **Consider, too, that maybe our sufferings serve to bless others.**

Consider the Life of Joseph

From start to finish, Joseph's story is one of the most colorful in the Bible! His conflict with his brothers and how they got rid of him by selling him to slavery - his story involves trips to the dungeon and the throne room! He had experiences that were both tragic and difficult... *experiences that only make full sense when you think of them as instruments that God was using to bless others!* He says in [Gen.50:20](#) "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." Joseph lived with that mindset... even naming his second son "Ephraim" (meaning 'fruitful') as in [Gen.41:52](#) "The second son he named Ephraim and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering." *Joseph's life shows tragedy as a tool used by God to bless others!*

Consider the Life of Paul

"Because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear." ([Phil.1:14](#)). This was Paul (the same Paul with the "thorn in the flesh") saying that his personal troubles have actually emboldened the brethren to proclaim the gospel fearlessly – again, *trials that are tools for blessing others!*

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Pastor Vino B. Atienza,
Senior Pastor, WIN Seattle/Tacoma, WA



Higher Learning

Dr. Ferdie Melendres
US Education Coordinator



Before ascending to heaven, Jesus Christ gave His disciples specific directions to follow after they have affirmed their faith. He calls all His followers from all generations to act and share the Gospel throughout the world. Many of them heard this calling and traveled in various places as they spread the word of Christ. They made incredible sacrifices, traveling even to remote regions of the world beyond the civilized cities into jungles and deserts. However, mission fields can also be very close to home. It could be a neighbor who has not heard about Jesus, or a poverty stricken area just down the road where people cannot afford Bibles. In modern times, the internet has become a mission field where people can reach out and share the love of Christ. The places and people who need to hear the Gospel are everywhere. In fact, some of our members are products of social networking like Facebook and Twitter.

On His last reminder, Christ did not only command His disciples to go and make disciple, He also told them the process of how to make disciples. *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen (Matthew 28:19-20)* The main verb in this passage is “make disciples,” and it is important to examine the two other related commands, “baptize” and “teach.” These two verbs are participles of means; the means by which the disciples were to make disciples, to baptize and then to teach them all that Jesus has commanded. It gives us an idea that the two participles provide us the manner of how to grow and mature the newly converted believers. This shows that the way the church makes disciples involves incorporating them into the church as part of the body of Christ and into a local church. They are to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and be taught in all aspects of Christian teachings and practices.

In the New Testament, baptism is mentioned in several passages: (Acts 2:38; 8:12, 16, 36, 38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 19:5; 22:16). In these passages, baptism is

closely associated with the proclamation of God’s word and immediately after conversion to Christ. It is a public means or activity that identified the new disciples with Jesus Christ and His body, the Church. Baptism in water is the sign of entrance into the body of Christ, the Church, a demonstration of the believer’s faith in Christ. Then and now, baptism is a serious business in the church, because it could mean rejection by the family, colleagues, and even resulting in the loss of life in a country where Christianity is not allowed. The gospel of Mark 16:16 says, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” It means that the commission of Christ contains not only truth, encouragement and precepts, but also warnings. Therefore, baptism is closely associated with discipleship training because it identifies the newly converted not only to the church but also to Jesus Christ. It is our assumption that each individual who receives the Gospel is able to clearly understand the Gospel of Jesus and the spiritual significance of water baptism.

When Christ told His disciples to “teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you,” this is not only for the new believers but also to all disciples and members of all churches, regardless of rank and position. Everyone needs to be taught in order to grow in the knowledge of Christ. The process keeps going back to the disciplined believers. Luke also addressed the importance of teaching: (Acts 2:42; 5:25, 28; 15:35; 18:11, 28:31). The object of the teaching is not simply for the sake of knowledge or to satisfy curiosity. Effective teaching results in a transformed life of a maturing disciple believer. Potential workers and leaders must be taught effectively and consistently to live the teachings of Jesus Christ. This may cause them to grow themselves and become spiritual fathers or mentors to new disciples.

From the beginning of Bible history, the words like *writing, knowledge, scrolls, books, pen, understanding,* and other things related to “teaching” played an important role for the people of God. Christianity is a teaching religion, and it is rooted in God’s revelation

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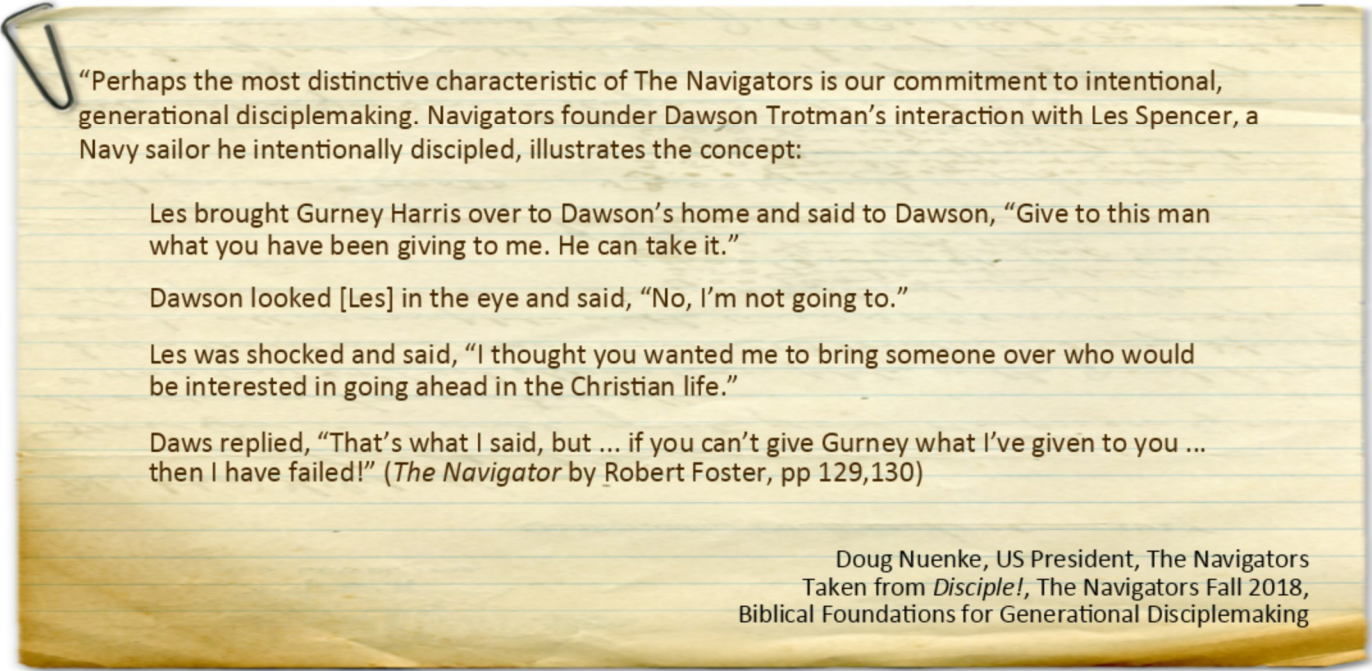
Teaching and Baptism . . .

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that could know Him and find His perfect will. Christian faith, in some sense is foreshadowed by Judaism which was the first religion in western civilization being guided by the books and scrolls. In fact, one of the things that made Judaism and Christianity unique among the religions of the Roman world was that their faith and practices were based on teachings and instructions from their sacred documents, while all others were based on superstitions and worship of images. During the time of the early church, they emphasized the unique role of the teaching ministry to support the main command “make disciples.” It means that through teaching, we make disciples. It is true that men are not saved by the teaching process, nevertheless, the teaching ministry prepares men and women for a deeper relationship with God and His people.

Jesus was a master teacher. He educated those He mentored, and it took time, energy and great patience when He did that. He taught them about prayer (Matthew 26:36-46), heaven (John 14:2-4), hell (Luke 16:20-31), the kingdom of God (Matthew 13), the future events (Matt, 24), and about His purpose, plan, kingdom living, and relationships. He taught in the temple, synagogues, seashores, mountains, hills, plains, roads, and in the villages. Teaching should be the forefront of the mission of all churches worldwide, including WIN-USA, today and always. The focus of our teaching in the cell group, Bible study, evangelism, discipleship training, and the pulpit must be on Jesus Christ who saves us, and on the life-changing encounters with Him. His teachings from the sacred books must be the center of our attention because it will bring us to our allegiance to Christ and Him alone.

In conclusion, to teach is to contribute to the total formation of Christian lifestyle, in words and deeds. Its goal is to provide an authentic knowledge of Christ that the worship of God may continue to impact the whole church where God might use more trained and sincere believers to expand His kingdom. Teaching should be a part of every activity and will be effective if it conveys the way of Christian living.



“Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of The Navigators is our commitment to intentional, generational discipling. Navigators founder Dawson Trotman’s interaction with Les Spencer, a Navy sailor he intentionally discipled, illustrates the concept:

Les brought Gurney Harris over to Dawson’s home and said to Dawson, “Give to this man what you have been giving to me. He can take it.”

Dawson looked [Les] in the eye and said, “No, I’m not going to.”

Les was shocked and said, “I thought you wanted me to bring someone over who would be interested in going ahead in the Christian life.”

Daws replied, “That’s what I said, but ... if you can’t give Gurney what I’ve given to you ... then I have failed!” (*The Navigator* by Robert Foster, pp 129,130)

Doug Nuenke, US President, The Navigators
Taken from *Disciple!*, The Navigators Fall 2018,
Biblical Foundations for Generational Discipling

A Second Look At Suffering

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What do we say then? Do we now ask for sufferings so that blessings may flow towards others? No! Life, as we know it, is already filled with those hardships – *whether we ask for it or not!* However, before you ask God to remove those sufferings... before you pray for God to delete those adversities... before you ask God for deliverance from current crisis – give it a *second look* – **maybe God is using your suffering to bless others?**



WIN-LA Hosts Party for Foster Kids: Christmas is About Sharing God's Love

by Tess Cordero



EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE CHURCH FROM THE OUTSIDE. THE CHURCH IS A BEAUTIFUL BLDG. WITH A LARGE STAIRCASE AND A CHURCH SIGN. THE CHURCH IS A BEAUTIFUL BLDG. WITH A LARGE STAIRCASE AND A CHURCH SIGN.



Last December, WIN-LA hosted a Christmas party for foster kids as part of our community outreach to the underprivileged. We partnered with FosterAll, a non-profit that works with faith communities to touch the lives of young people in foster care. Foster kids are placed in group homes as a temporary safety net due to neglect and abuse at home or because the kids' parents are in jail. Some of them are separated from their siblings because they are classified by age and by gender. Sadly, 50% of all young adults who age out of foster care end up homeless or incarcerated.

We hosted 14 boys, ages 12 to 16, for brunch at the church. They were accompanied by their group home counselors and staff members. Each kid received at least two presents, based on their wish list. The counselors and staff members were also given gift cards.

Spearheaded by Bro. Peng Goh, the event was a collaboration of the Men, Ladies and Youth ministries. We raised funds from church members and solicited gift donations from companies. The men coordinated the breakfast, the ladies shopped and wrapped the presents, and our youth reached out to the kids. They interacted and played games with them. A team decorated the sanctuary and the dining hall. The Pyros team led praise and worship.

Christmas is a very lonely and painful time for these kids. We tried to bring to them the Christmas Spirit and the love of Jesus. My heart was burdened when I met them. Most of them would not look at us in the eye, almost saying, "Leave me alone. Don't ask about my family." One of the boys shared that he has been in foster care for the past ten years and he has been moving from one foster home to another. In November, a few of our men participated in one of the athletic events of FosterAll. They were there to be father figures to these fatherless boys.

None of us are in a position to adopt a kid or to be a foster parent, but in our small way we touched these kids one life at a time.

(We were not allowed to take photos of the kids.)



WIN New York Ladies Brunch

by Jal Raval

Modern culture constantly bombards us with images of an 'ideal female' being seductive, proud, materialistic and loves to hang around the isles of Macys. On the weekend of January 26, some 30 women defied this norm by gathering together at the church center for fellowship and teachings. It was the first WIN NY Ladies' Ministry fellowship gathering for 2019. Teachings were given on Nehemiah's servant leadership - fitting one's personality and gifts within the body of Christ, practicing practical applications of Scripture by managing time between church and family and the importance of faithfulness in God's work. There is a need for activities that strengthen and encourage Christian women to counter the influences of social media defining femininity as being fragile and passive at best and at worst lazy, neglectful, selfish and irresponsible.

The day began with praise and worship led by Sis Marie and an ice breaker activity that instantly became nostalgic as Sis Romina used a popular child rhyme. Brunch was an array of scrumptious Filipino comfort food lovingly prepared by some of the ladies. Through sharing a meal, we were able to catch up with each other. Participants had the time and space to express their feelings which would not have been met if the ladies gathered after the church service. Most of the time activities after church service were mostly concentrated to iCare groups. It was encouraging to meet and fellowship with other women of the church while recounting past experiences to inspire the new believers who were not there the year before. It was a blessing that each of the women of the church although having their own personal concerns could be a resource to edify someone else (Proverbs 27:17).

After the festivities, we were divided into two groups. The first group of ladies decorated a cake using different techniques with Sis Jal. The second group visualized a Bible verse through illustrations using different color media during the Bible journaling session with Sis Sarah. After about an hour, the groups switched sessions so that all the ladies have had an opportunity to engage in each activity. The lessons were designed to bring out the creativity of each participant and to engage in discourse with sisters in Christ while working with our hands. The aim of both the cake decoration and Bible journaling was to build relationships through heartfelt conversations. Through these low stakes exercises, the ladies felt safe and were able to communicate their desires and gain fresh perspective by consulting with mature Christians.

Issues such as dealing with unbelieving spouses or children, prioritizing prayer and devotion, identifying God's gift for use

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WIN New York Men's Boot Camp

by Mike Raval



Brave men of God braved New York City's frigid temperatures Saturday of January 26th for the first Men's Breakfast Fellowship of the year where an abundance of food was evident. It was the first for Word International Ministries-NY (WIN-NY) to hold an in-house event exclusively for male members of the church all across ages. The sanctuary hall was miraculously transformed into a pseudo fine dining restaurant where tables were dressed with linens and lit candles. Attendees were pampered with a variety of traditional hot Filipino cuisine along with continental breakfast as well as cold and hot beverages, respectively. While the feast was no match to king Solomon's dedication of the renowned first temple in Jerusalem with twenty-two thousand heads of cattle and a hundred twenty thousand heads of sheep and goats served as an offering (2 Chronicles 7:5) yet the joy of the Lord made the event as equally lavish as that of Solomon's.

WIN-NY brothers watched the movie "Left Behind," a Bible inspired story of the end time events where God's elect were raptured, while enjoying their meal with lights off and candles lit up. Thereafter, we shared thoughts on the possibilities of being caught up in the air with Jesus at the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:52) and the striking reality of being held over due to unfaithfulness. Men's fellowship was surely for the gents only, building each other up through a fun, engaging game, which became an after-church activity even among the "Iolas" of Christ. Good job guys! The fellowship was a testament of what can be accomplished when all members of the body of Christ are united and faithfully do their part in the ministry of God. The Great I Am requires nothing from His elect but their hearts (Proverbs 23:26). And so was its goal, to build the men of Christ right at the center of the world (1 John 2:15).

But who would have thought of a sweaty day when the outside temperature was way below freezing point? None but a professional gym trainer. The gents were taken by surprise! It was not just an ordinary wellness coaching but it was more of a stored "fat" exercise that fell on deep slumber for a long period of time because every perspiration was an inspiration for a job well done. What more can men say of New York Sports Club, Gold's Gym, Blink Fitness, and even Planet Fitness? Nothing. Because the men of God endured a 45-minute nonstop workout session with no regard to age since the only option to cease the moment was to use every fruit of the Holy Spirit in order to survive - Long suffering. Glory to God indeed since everyone agreed to have another round of men's fellowship for the edification of all.



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WIN New York Ladies Brunch

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in the ministry and frustrations of a single mom were just some of the difficulties that were brought out during the discussions. The discussion addressed problems that lie at the very doors of our homes and churches. Our mission field is wherever God has called us now -- as students in schools, as employees in workplace, as members of church communities, as wives to our husbands, as mothers to our children, sisters to our siblings and as residents in the communities we live in. We asked ourselves the questions on what it means for us to be the woman that God wants us to be in our homes and churches, and what it means for us to be the woman that God redeemed us to be.

The overwhelming positive feedback reinforced the need to fellowship and empower the women of WIN NY to rise up and awaken the lioness within ourselves and use it in the ministry that God has blessed us with. Optimistically in the future, we may open this fellowship to more women who may not be a part of the church and provide a more personal welcome to the new members.

Lastly, rather than conforming to corrupted models of what a real woman should be, a time for individual reflection can realign our character with the God's original design and be transformed by the Bible heroines with a Christian mandate. We are, first and foremost, spiritual creatures made in God's image and are servants made to obey our Maker. Our identity cannot be found in materialistic pursuits which serve to satisfy our physical bodies, but found in living for the glory of God our creator which satisfies the soul. Breaking free of the stronghold of feminine stereotypes, we

realize that -- the student studying hard in school, the worker toiling faithfully on the job, the church member serving the Lord's people, the wife supporting her husband, the mother seeking to bring up her children in the discipline and



WIN New York Men's Boot Camp

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Surely, the need for a daily encouragement is an urgent matter that needs to be addressed because the second coming of the Lord Jesus is imminent and the fellowship among male members of Christ will ensure that every worker of God are trained and fully equipped for the ministry and the many challenges that are ahead of them.

WIN-LA Hosts Party for Foster Kids:

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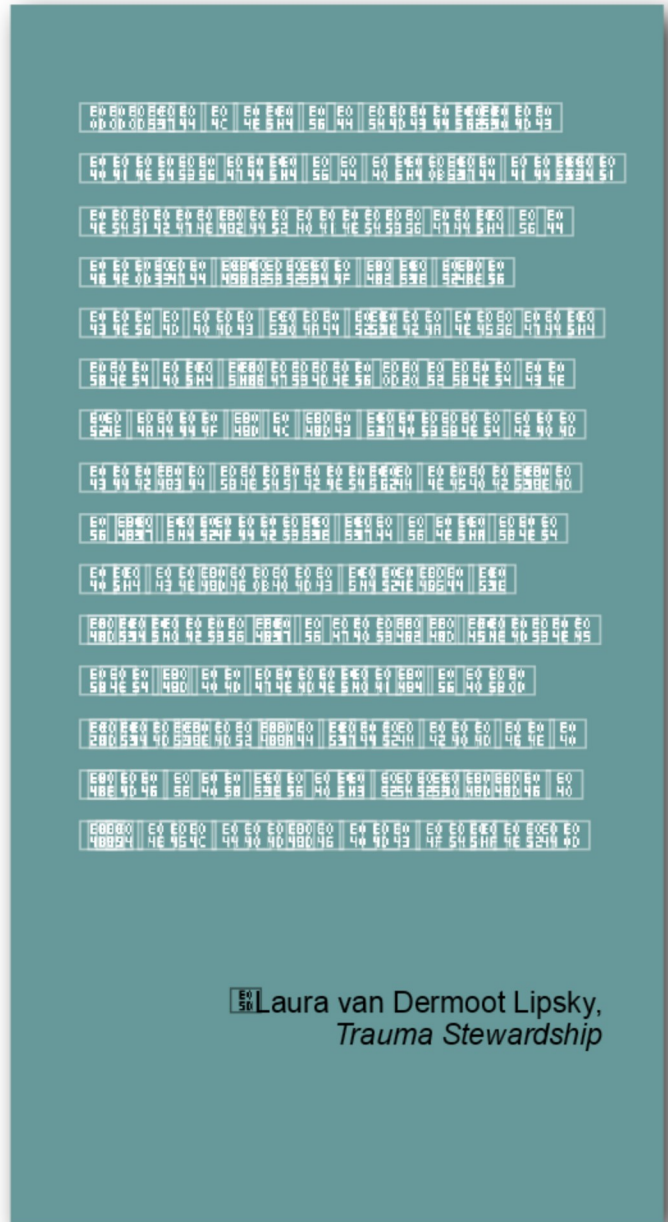


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Laura van Dermoot Lipsky,
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