



RECOVERY DHARMA

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The Practice (Long)

Recovery Dharma

Renunciation

We understand addiction to describe the overwhelming craving and compulsive use of substances or behaviors in order to escape present-time reality, either by clinging to pleasure or running from pain. We commit to the intention of abstinence from alcohol and other addictive substances. For those of us recovering from process addictions, particularly those for which complete abstinence is not possible, we also identify and commit to wise boundaries around our harmful behaviors, preferably with the help of a mentor or therapeutic professional.

Meditation

We commit to the intention of developing a daily meditation practice. We use meditation as a tool to investigate our actions, intentions, and reactivity. Meditation is a personal practice, and we commit to finding a balanced effort toward this and other healthy practices that are appropriate to our own journey on the path.

Meetings

We attend recovery meetings whenever possible, in person and/or online. Some may wish to be part of other recovery fellowships and Buddhist communities. In early recovery, it is recommended to attend a recovery meeting as often as possible. For many that may mean every day. We also

commit to becoming an active part of the community, offering our own experiences and service wherever possible.

The Path

We commit to deepening our understanding of the Four Noble Truths and to practicing the Eightfold Path in our daily lives.

Inquiry and Investigation

We explore the Four Noble Truths as they relate to our addictive behavior through writing and sharing in-depth, detailed Inquiries. These can be worked with the guidance of a mentor, in partnership with a trusted friend, or with a group. As we complete our written Inquiries, we undertake to hold ourselves accountable and take direct responsibility for our actions, which includes making amends for the harm we have caused in our past.

Sangha, Wise Friends, Mentors

We cultivate relationships within a recovery community, to both support our own recovery and support the recovery of others. After we have completed significant work on our Inquiries, established a meditation practice, and achieved renunciation from our addictive behaviors, we can then become mentors to help others on their path to liberation from addiction. Anyone with any period of time of renunciation and practice can be of service to others in their sangha. When mentors are not available, a group of wise friends can act as partners in self-inquiry and support each other's practice.

Growth

We continue our study of these Buddhist practices through reading, listening to dharma talks, visiting and becoming members of recovery and spiritual sanghas, and attending meditation or dharma retreats when we believe these practices will contribute to our understanding and wisdom. We undertake a lifelong journey of growth and awakening.

[\(Skip the Practice - Short Version\)](#)



The Practice (Short)

Recovery Dharma

Renunciation: We commit to the intention of abstinence from addictive substances. For process addictions, we also identify and commit to wise boundaries around our harmful behaviors.

Meditation: We commit to the intention of developing a daily meditation practice.

Meetings: In early recovery, we attend a recovery meeting as often as we can. We become an active part of the community, offering our own experiences and service wherever possible.

The Path: We commit to deepening our understanding of the Four Noble Truths and to practicing the Eightfold Path in our daily lives.

Inquiry and Investigation: We explore the Four Noble Truths as they relate to our addictive behavior through writing and sharing in-depth, detailed Inquiries.

Sangha, Wise Friends, Mentors: We cultivate healthy relationships within a recovery community, to both support our own recovery and support the recovery of others.

Growth: We undertake a lifelong journey of growth and awakening.



Four Noble Truths

Recovery Dharma

As people who have struggled with addiction, we are already intimately familiar with the truth of suffering. Even if we have never heard of the Buddha, at some level we already know the foundation of his teachings, which we call the Dharma: that in this life, there is suffering.

The Buddha also taught the way to free ourselves from this suffering. The heart of these teachings is the Four Noble Truths and the corresponding commitments, which are the foundation of our program.

1. There is suffering.

We commit to understanding the truth of suffering.

2. There is a cause of suffering.

We commit to understanding that craving leads to suffering.

3. There is an end to suffering.

We commit to understanding and experiencing that less craving leads to less suffering.

4. There is a path that leads to the end of suffering.

We commit to cultivating the path.



The Eightfold Path

Recovery Dharma

The Buddha taught that by living ethically, practicing meditation, and developing wisdom and compassion, we can end the suffering that is created by resisting, running from, and misunderstanding reality.

We have found that these practices and principles can end the suffering of addiction. The Eightfold Path helps us find our way in recovery and consists of the following:

1. Wise Understanding
2. Wise Intention
3. Wise Speech
4. Wise Action
5. Wise Livelihood
6. Wise Effort
7. Wise Mindfulness
8. Wise Concentration



Dedication of Merit

Recovery Dharma

Refuge does not arise in a particular place, but in the space within the goodness of our hearts.

When this space is imbued with wisdom, respect, and love, we call it sangha.

We hope that the pain of addiction, trauma, and feeling “apart” actually leads us back toward the heart and that we might understand compassion, wisdom, and change ever more deeply.

As we have learned from practice, great pain does not erase goodness, but in fact informs it.

May we make the best use of our practice, and whatever freedom arises from our efforts here today.

May this be a cause and condition for less suffering and more safety in our world.