

What is Recovery Dharma?

Dharma is a Sanskrit word meaning “truth,” “phenomena,” or “the nature of things.” When it’s capitalized, Dharma usually means the teachings of the Buddha and the practices based on those teachings.

The Buddha knew that all human beings, to some extent, struggle with craving — the powerful, sometimes blinding desire to change our thoughts, feelings, or circumstances. Those of us who experience addiction have been driven to use substances and/or harmful behaviors in a habitual pattern to try and create this desired change. Even though the Buddha didn’t talk specifically about addiction, he understood the obsessive nature of the human mind. He understood our attachment to pleasure and aversion to pain. He understood the extreme measures we are willing to take, chasing what we want to feel and running away from feelings we fear. And he found a solution...

Recovery Dharma is a peer-led community that is unified by the potential in each of us to recover and find freedom from the suffering of addiction. We approach recovery from a place of empowerment using trauma-informed practices to support one another as we walk this path together.

Learn more at recoverydharma.org

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what is recovery dharma?



Information for:

- Newcomers
- Health Professionals
- Treatment Centers, Corrections, Hospitals

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So, How Does it Work?

This is a summary of what we call **The Practice**, so you can get a feel for our entire program.

1. **Renunciation:** We commit to the intention of abstinence from alcohol and other addictive substances and behaviors.
2. **Meditation:** We commit to the intention of developing a daily meditation practice.
3. **Meetings:** We attend recovery meetings whenever possible, and commit to becoming an active part of the community, offering our own experiences and service wherever possible.
4. **The Path:** We commit to deepening our understanding of the Four Noble Truths and to practicing the Eightfold Path in our daily lives.
5. **Inquiry & Investigation:** We explore the Four Noble Truths as they relate to our addictive behavior through writing and sharing in-depth, detailed inquiries.
6. **Sangha, Wise Friends, Mentors:** We cultivate relationships within in our recovery community, to both support our own recovery and the recovery of others.
7. **Growth:** We continue our study of Buddhist principles and undertake a lifelong journey of growth and awakening.

Everyone Struggles

Who here has suffered? If anyone knows about suffering, it's people affected by addictive habits. We've tried to quit repeatedly, yet the cycle persists. But there's hope. The Buddha saw a clear way out of the cycle of suffering and developed the Four Noble Truths, which are the foundation of our program. They summarize the causes of suffering but also a way of ending suffering. Yet despite being called "Truths," the Buddha famously told his followers not to blindly believe him! He said test them. Verify them. Only believe them once you directly experience them to be true.

The Four Noble Truths

1st There is suffering

We experience suffering in this life.

2nd There's a cause of suffering

We experience that craving, aversion, and ignorance lead to suffering.

3rd There's a way of ending suffering

We experience that less craving, aversion, and ignorance leads to less suffering.

4th There's a path that leads to ending suffering

We cultivate and experience the path of recovery and awakening.

How did that check out for you? Because we'd love to share our path and practice with you! It's led many of us to freedom from our addictions.

The Eightfold Path

We have found that these practices and principles can help end the suffering of addiction:

- 1 – **Wise Understanding:** We practice understanding that there will be pain in this life, but it does not have to lead to suffering.
- 2 – **Wise Intention:** We explore why we act and use that awareness to cultivate skillful intentions.
- 3 – **Wise Speech:** We practice loving speech and deep listening. We aim to be truthful, timely, and mindful of our tone.
- 4 – **Wise Action:** We use the Five Precepts as guidelines to avoid harm, theft, lust, lies, and toxicity.
- 5 – **Wise Livelihood:** We seek to reduce harm and increase compassion in our work and community.
- 6 – **Wise Effort:** We devote mindful energy towards recovery and finding our own balanced path.
- 7 – **Wise Mindfulness:** We practice being aware of what is happening in the present without judgment.
- 8 – **Wise Concentration:** We train the mind to stay focused and undistracted. We connect with the life of freedom, solidity, and peace.

