

THE PRACTICE

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, drugs and other addictive substances. For those of us recovering from process addictions, 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 developing a daily meditation practice. We use meditation as a tool to investigate our actions, intentions and reactivity.

Meetings: We attend recovery meetings whenever possible, in person and/or online. 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 practice the Eightfold Path in our daily lives.

Inquiry & Investigation: We explore the suffering that resulted from 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 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 support both our own recovery and the recovery of others. After we have completed significant work on our Inquiries, established a meditation practice, and achieved renunciation for our addictive behaviors, we can then become mentors to help others on their recovery path. 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 inquiry and support each other's practice.

Growth: We continue our study of these Buddhist practices through reading, listening to dharma talks 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.