

RECOVERY DHARMA MEETING SCRIPT

ONLINE FORMAT, JER'S PERSONAL VERSION

Meeting Logistics

- [Meditations - Google Drive](#)
- [RD Book 2.0 - Google Docs](#) (PDF)

Before the meeting, the chairperson requests volunteers:

"If you'd like to volunteer to do a reading, please unmute and say your name!"

- To lead the Meditation
- Timekeeper
- To read the Practice
- To read the Four Noble Truths
- To read the Eightfold path
- To read the Book Passage (Book study meetings)

As we get started, I'll just go over some technicalities:

- To keep the line clear, it's best if we use our mute and unmute buttons to silence our mics whenever we're not talking.
- As the facilitator I might mute you if your line is making noise when you're not talking, but feel free to unmute when it's time for you to say something!
- For your own sake, please remember to put your devices into Do Not Disturb mode so you can focus on the meeting.
- *Paste in the chat:*

 Get the RD book for free in various digital formats including audiobook: <https://recoverydharma.org/book>

OPENING

To begin the meeting, Chairperson rings bell once and reads:

Welcome to this meeting of _____.

We are gathered to explore a Buddhist-inspired approach to recovery from addiction of all kinds. We are peer-led and do not follow any one leader or teacher, instead putting our trust in the three jewels of Buddhism:

- We take refuge in the Buddha - The potential for our own awakening
- We take refuge in the Dharma - The path to freedom, as shared in the teachings
- We take refuge in the Sangha - The community of wise friends on this path

This is a program of **empowerment** and doesn't ask us to believe in anything other than our own potential to change and heal.

We have found a guide for our recovery in the Buddhist teachings of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, and we invite you to investigate these practices and principles as tools for your own path of liberation from the suffering of addiction.

We understand that this is not the only path to recovery and many may choose to combine these practices with other recovery programs.

We are committed to providing an environment of safety, respect, and inclusion – representing and appreciating diversity at the broadest level. Our group doesn't just accept our differences; we celebrate and thrive as a result of them. We recognize the individual experience in each person's journey towards an authentic life and we embrace you just as you are. All are welcome here.

My name is _____ and I am the facilitator of this meeting. I am not a Buddhist teacher, nor do I have a particular authority here. I am a member of this community and have volunteered to help guide our discussion today.

INTRODUCTIONS

LARGE MEETING: If there are many (14+) people only new people introduce themselves:

In an effort to build community and to get to know each other, we can start with some introductions.

If you are new to Recovery Dharma or this meeting and you are comfortable introducing yourself, please feel free to unmute and share your name, where you are calling from, and because pronouns are important, please also tell us your gender pronouns, such as she/her, he/him, or they/them.

For example, my name is ____, I'm calling from ____ and my pronouns are ____.

So new people please take turns unmuting yourself and saying hi!

SMALL MEETING: If there's a small number of people, everyone introduces themselves:

In an effort to build community and to get to know each other, we can start by introducing ourselves.

If you are comfortable, please feel free to unmute and share your name, where you are calling from, and because pronouns are important, please also tell us your gender pronouns, such as she/her, he/him, or they/them.

For example, my name is ____, I'm calling from ____ and my pronouns are ____.

Please take turns unmuting yourself and saying hi!

OPENING READINGS

Thank you!

LARGE MEETING (15+) And to everyone else, please remember to let us know where you're calling from and your gender pronouns the first time you speak!

We'll now move on to a few readings about the program.

_____ *has offered to read The Practice*

(Choose Short Version or Part 1 or 2)

The Practice (Short Version)

Renunciation: We commit to the intention of abstinence from alcohol and other addictive substances and behaviors. 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.

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

Meetings: We attend recovery meetings and 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.

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

Growth: We continue our study of these Buddhist principles and undertake a lifelong journey of growth and awakening.

The Practice Part 1

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.

The Practice Part 2

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.

The Practice Part 3

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.

Four Noble Truths

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: in this life, there is suffering.

The Buddha also taught the way to free ourselves from this suffering. The heart of these teachings are 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

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 can be broken down into three groups:

The Wisdom factors of Wise **Understanding** and **Intention**;

The Ethics factors of Wise **Speech**, **Action**, and **Livelihood**;

The Concentration factors of Wise **Effort**, **Mindfulness**, and **Concentration**.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTIONS

We will now do a guided meditation on _____.

Meditation reminders

During meditation your eyes may be closed or gently open. Meditation is a personal practice, and we encourage you to explore with a spirit of openness and curiosity.

Part of what we are doing in this practice is learning to sit with discomfort, but meditation can bring up powerful emotions, so it can be very helpful to “tap the brakes” if things get too intense. Here are some ways you can do so: You can open your eyes; you can take a few deep slow breaths; you can place a hand over your heart or belly; you can focus the attention on a soothing object, place, or memory.

And because this meditation gives instructions about observing the breath, I’ll remind everyone that if your breathing is ever inherently uncomfortable or distracting, instructions to watch the breath can always be replaced with observation of something else that isn’t upsetting, such as the feeling in your hands, or ambient sounds as they change over time.

Remember to be kind and gentle with yourself. It’s always okay to take care of yourself during meditation.

___ will start the meditation with one ring of the bell and close with one ring of the bell.

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Chairperson reads:

Thank you all for your practice.

We will now be reading from the Recovery Dharma book.

[Copy and paste the reading into the chat]

GROUP SHARING

Chairperson reads:

We will now move on to the sharing part of the meeting.

Please limit your share to 2-3 minutes to ensure that everyone who wants to has a chance to speak.

TIMER APP: The timekeeper, _____, will use the Timer app, which you should see counting down from 3 minutes in the corner of their video, as well as in the top corner of the Zoom window. When it reaches around the 1 minute mark, please say "1 minute" so we know you have an eye on it, otherwise the timekeeper will make the "1 minute hand signal" or unmute and say "1 minute", at which point you can say "thank you" to acknowledge the message. We thank you in advance for sticking to the time allotted.

NO TIMER APP: The timekeeper will let you know when you've got one minute left, at which point you can say thank you, to acknowledge you heard them, then you have one minute left to finish up your share. The timekeeper will say "time" when you have reached the end of 3 minutes. Please stick to the time allotted so we can all share.

We commit to making this space as safe and welcoming as possible for all members of our community. To help ensure this, we ask that there is no cross-talk, meaning we do not comment on other people's shares or offer opinions or advice they didn't ask for. This includes avoiding any use of the chat feature that might be distracting to the person sharing, or those listening.

Please be wise in your speech by trying to use "I" statements that focus your share on your own experience of addiction, recovery, Buddhist principles and practice, as well as today's meditation on

_____ and topic, _____.

If you are on a Zoom app, you can click the **Raise Hand** button to mark yourself as wanting to speak. It can be found by opening the **React** menu, whose button you can find in the dark bar at the top or bottom of the Zoom app, then clicking the **Raise Hand** button inside. On mobile apps, you can find the reactions in the “...” (three dots) menu.

If you are a dial-in caller, you can use *9 to raise your hand and then *6 to unmute yourself when I call on you.

Please remember to let us know where you’re calling from and your gender pronouns at the start of your share, and if you had your video turned off for the meditation, now is the perfect time to turn it back on, if you’re comfortable doing so.

CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

That is all the time we have for sharing. Thank you so much to everyone who has shared, and especially to everyone who has listened.

Virtual Parking Lot

If you didn’t get a chance to share and would like to, please stay after the close of the meeting, where we can continue sharing after the announcements, as well as discussing any questions or comments people have.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

In order to respect each others’ privacy and to create a safe environment for all who attend, please keep everything that was said in this meeting and who was here confidential.

Continuing Practice

We encourage you to continue your daily meditation practice, your study of Buddhist principles, and to reach out to others in order to

build community.

If you would like to put your contact information in the chat to encourage others to reach out, such as to find new wise friends or mentors, now is a good time!

RDO

This meeting is part of recoverydharma.online, a.k.a. RDO, a specific network of meetings that share resources. You can find all our meetings and learn more on our website



<https://recoverydharma.online>

We encourage you to attend our other meetings and become a regular member of our little community, in addition to participating in the hundreds of online meetings held by other sanghas.

Safety

To keep this space as safe and welcoming as possible, the RDO sangha maintains a Safety Guidelines document that describes unwise behaviors we consider inappropriate in our community.



<https://recoverydharma.online/safety-guidelines/>

We encourage all members to read and engage with this document as a practice of wise speech.

Volunteering

Also, everyone in the meeting is encouraged to volunteer! This may include volunteering to read, facilitate a meeting, do the meditation, or taking on a committed position.

If you are interested in getting more involved and trying a new role, please talk to me after the meeting, or come 15 minutes early to a future meeting and tell the facilitator what you'd like to try!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

 All online meetings: <https://recoverydharma.org/meetings/>

 RD Newsletter <https://recoverydharma.org/newsletter-signup>

 RD on YouTube: <https://youtube.com/recoverydharma>

 RD on Insight Timer: <https://insighttimer.com/recoverydharma>

- [Mention any upcoming Recovery Dharma related events]
- **Are there any other Recovery Dharma related announcements?**
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 - ***Only read the week before third-Saturday of the month in January, April, July, and October:***
Quarterly RDO Intersangha business meeting Saturday Oct 17:
<https://recoverydharma.online/intersangha/>
 - RDO Intersangha Info and news: <https://bit.ly/RDO-News-Resources>
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 - RDO Google Calendar Instructions and full DST info:
<https://recoverydharma.online/timezones-dst/>

LGBTQIA+

 Queer meeting list: <https://bit.ly/rd-queer-meetings>

 FB group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/560233384425702/>

 Discord (Chat group) <https://discord.gg/uvr5JZ6s>

DEDICATION OF MERIT

We close each meeting with a “dedication of merit”, where we gather up all the good karma we’ve accumulated through our mutual support, and send it out to all those suffering in the world.

Classic DoM

We dedicate the merits of this Recovery Dharma Meeting to all those suffering from addiction.

May all who cling with fear accept the freedom of letting go.

May all minds & hearts awaken to the possibility of recovery, compassion and peace.

May we learn to embrace change and uncertainty as part of life's fullness.

May we give freely and wisely all that we have been given.

May our recovery be an offering to all beings everywhere.

Ring closing bell.

Recovery of Dharma DoM

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.

Ring closing bell.