



# **Buddhist Recovery Network**

## **FAQ**

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## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### ***What does the Buddhist Recovery Network actually do?***

The Buddhist Recovery Network supports the use of Buddhist teachings, traditions and practices to help people recover from the suffering caused by addictive behaviors.

Open to people of all backgrounds, and respectful of all recovery paths, the organisation promotes mindfulness and meditation, and is grounded in Buddhist principles of non-harming, compassion and interdependence.

It seeks to serve an international audience through teaching, training, treatment, research, publication, advocacy and community-building initiatives.

### ***How can Buddhism benefit those in recovery?***

There are many ways Buddhist practices can strengthen and deepen sobriety and prevent relapse. Buddhist meditative practices can help us become more aware of, and let go of, habitual patterns of behavior. It is no coincidence that meditation is specifically referenced in the eleventh of AA's Twelve Steps. Vipassana meditation has been used successfully for the treatment of addictive behavior among prison populations in a number of countries. Buddhist practice can also help us become more aware of the impact of our actions on others, and help cultivate a stronger ethical foundation. The Buddhist influenced school of Naikan in Japan for example has been successful in helping those in recovery through a structured approach to self-reflection. Buddhism can help to provide a social support network for those in recovery through involvement with community Buddhist Centers. Buddhist artwork and writings can also heighten appreciation of values such as tranquillity, clarity, purity and simplicity. The Buddha pointed to clinging (the foundation of addiction) as the cause of suffering. His Eightfold Path is designed to free us from clinging, so it is a perfect vehicle for addicts to recover.

### ***Do I need to be a 'Buddhist' to become involved in the Buddhist Recovery Network?***

The Buddhist Recovery Network is open to people of all backgrounds. You do not need to identify as a 'Buddhist' to become involved. Some of the Network's organisers and Advisory Council members do not consider themselves to be Buddhists, but all possess an altruistic motivation to help people recovering from the suffering caused by addictive behaviors and a belief in the efficacy of certain Buddhist practices to assist in this process.

### ***Which Buddhist school or tradition are you associated with?***

The Buddhist Recovery Network respects and celebrates all of the Buddhist traditions.

### ***Are you presenting a different recovery path from AA or NA?***

The Buddhist Recovery Network does not present itself as a separate recovery path in competition with other recovery paths. It seeks to explore and celebrate the vast ocean of inspiration that the Buddhist traditions can offer those in recovery. Buddhist practices may be pursued as an adjunct to other support people may be receiving.

### ***Who are you ultimately trying to reach?***

We are trying to reach an international audience of those who are in recovery, those seeking help in overcoming addictive behaviors, and those who are trying to help those in recovery. We have academics and researchers among our founding members as well as practitioners and Dharma teachers.

We seek to respond to a natural curiosity from those in recovery who intuitively see potential for Buddhism to enhance their recovery. We are not missionaries seeking to promote Buddhism as a religion.

In addition to this we hope to help those in the West understand the value of Buddhism in the recovery process and to help Asian Buddhists understand how to apply Buddhist teachings and practices to the treatment of addiction.

### ***How can I get involved?***

There are many ways such as:

#### *(i) Volunteer:*

- We are looking for people who possess general administrative skills;
- The Network will be organising a conference in the USA in the Fall of 2009. We are interested in volunteers, particularly if you have experience organising large meetings and conventions.

*(ii) Organise a Meeting* – set up a meeting for those in recovery in your local area and let us know about it. We will list these meetings on [www.buddhistrecovery.org](http://www.buddhistrecovery.org). Prior to listing we will seek certain reassurances to ensure we are comfortable with the format and approach. Meetings held in association with established teachers and Centers should experience no difficulty being listed.

*(iii) Make a Donation* – We are deeply appreciative of donations and bequests provided to the Network to support our work.

*(iv) Publicise our website* [www.buddhistrecovery.org](http://www.buddhistrecovery.org)

Please contact [paul@buddhistrecovery.org](mailto:paul@buddhistrecovery.org) if you are interested in any of these opportunities.

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