

## Alternative statements of the 8-fold path

<http://www.dummies.com/religion/buddhism/the-eightfold-path-of-buddhism/>

Right understanding: Understanding that the Four Noble Truths are noble and true.

Right thought: Determining and resolving to practice Buddhist faith.

Right speech: Avoiding slander, gossip, lying, and all forms of untrue and abusive speech.

Right conduct: Adhering to the idea of nonviolence (ahimsa), as well as refraining from any form of stealing or sexual impropriety.

Right means of making a living: Not slaughtering animals or working at jobs that force you to violate others.

Right mental attitude or effort: Avoiding negative thoughts and emotions, such as anger and jealousy.

Right mindfulness: Having a clear sense of one's mental state and bodily health and feelings.

Right concentration: Using meditation to reach the highest level of enlightenment.

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### The **Four Truths** of *Refuge Recovery*

1. Addiction creates suffering
2. The cause of addiction is repetitive craving.
3. Recovery is possible.
4. The path to recovery is available.

The **Eight-Fold Path** to Recovery: This is an abstinence based path and philosophy. We believe that the recovery process begins when abstinence begins. The Eight factors of the path are to be developed, experienced and sustained. This is not a linear path, it does not have to be taken in order, rather all of the factors will need to be developed and applied simultaneously. This is a guide to having a life that is free from addiction. The eight-fold path of recovery will have to be maintained throughout one's lifetime.

1. **Understanding:** We understand that recovery begins when we renounce and abstain from all substances or addictive behaviors regardless of specific substances we have become addicted to. Forgiveness, non-harming actions, service and generosity are a necessary part of the recovery process. We can't do it alone; community support and wise guidance are an integral part of the path to recovery. We begin to open to and acknowledge the reality of our situation and come to terms with the reality that life is an ongoing process of change and on-going difficulties, and we begin to see this process as something that is not happening to "us". We move from being in a state of reacting to developing an awareness that can respond to the ups and downs of our lives. We begin to take responsibility for the relationship that we have to our own life experience.

**2. Intention:** We begin to move towards a lifestyle that is rooted in non-harming by establishing clear intentions and work to change our relationship towards the mind's unwholesome tendencies and habits. We intend to meet all pain with compassion and all pleasure with non-attached appreciation. The practices of non-harming both internally and externally become a foundational part of daily life.

**3. Communication/Community:** We take refuge in the community as a place to practice wise and skillful communication and to support others on their path. We practice being honest, wise and careful with our communications, asking for help from the community, allowing others to guide us through the process. Practicing openness, honesty and humility about the difficulties and successes we experience.

**4. Action:** We abstain from all substances and behaviors that could lead to suffering. We practice forgiveness toward all people we have harmed or been harmed by, including ourselves, through both meditative training and direct amends. Compassion, non-attached appreciation, generosity, kindness, honesty, integrity and service are our guiding principles.

**5. Livelihood/Service:** We begin to look at our relationship to money. We try to be of service to others whenever possible, being generous with our time, energy, attention and resources to help create positive change. We try to secure a source of income/livelihood that causes no harm.

**6. Effort:** We commit to the daily disciplined practices of meditation, yoga, exercise, wise actions, kindness, forgiveness, generosity, compassion, appreciation and moment-to-moment mindfulness of feelings, emotions, thoughts and sensations. To develop these skills requires time and patience. It is important to begin to understand how to apply the appropriate action or meditation practice in any given situation or circumstance. We will need to develop the willingness and discipline that is required to stay with it, and to keep going when we make mistakes.

**7. Mindfulness/Meditations:** We develop wisdom and understanding through practicing formal mindfulness meditation. This leads to seeing clearly and healing the root causes and conditions that lead to the suffering of addiction. We practice present-time awareness in all aspects of our life. We move towards taking refuge in the present moment; to engage whole-heartedly in our lives as it unfolds in the here and now. We begin to develop a daily sitting practice of mindfulness and heart practices. We make a commitment to sitting at home and with others.

**8. Concentration/Meditations:** We develop the capacity to focus the mind on a single object, such as the breath or a phrase, training the mind through the practices of loving-kindness, compassion and forgiveness to focus on the positive qualities we seek to uncover and we utilize concentration at times of temptation or craving in order to abstain from acting unwisely.