



Hello Friends in the Dharma

This has been an incredibly exciting second year, with growth and possibilities exploding in the Buddhist Recovery Community. Those of us who have sought a way to integrate our Buddhist and recovery paths have discovered a variety of ways to explore this right here in the Seattle area. As of Jan. 1st, we have listed on our website 16 meetings in Seattle, Tacoma, Aberdeen and Bellingham where you can explore the Buddha's teachings as related to recovery from addiction of any kind. Recently we have connected with friends in Vancouver, BC who are doing the same work in Triratna and Shambhala Buddhist Centers, and we look forward to getting to know and supporting our friends in Oregon who are also walking this path. We will truly be the "Northwest" resource for Buddhist recovery.

Sharing mindfulness meditation and Buddhist practices, we have found a way to create nurturing and supportive groups of people who are working with a variety of addictive behaviors. We recognize the difficulties we must endure in this life—so many addictions ranging from food, gambling, sex, internet and intoxicants – anything to help to dull the pain of our individual suffering. We all suffer in this human form. The Buddha himself taught us in the First Noble Truth, that there is suffering in birth, sickness, old age and death. We can do nothing about this it is a fact of life. But the extraneous suffering we bring about by our clinging to positive experiences and pushing away the negative we CAN do something about, and bring about peace and equanimity to our human

experience. This we can do together, regardless of our individual issues, supporting each other as more compassionate, wise and peaceful people. If we can practice cultivating the space between the triggers of our addictive behaviors and our knee jerk reactions, we can learn to be "responsive" rather than "reactive", and be a part of creating a more peaceful and loving world.

We are so happy to offer groups that practice the Buddha's teachings in a variety of ways, to suit anyone on any recovery path. We are all inclusive in that groups offer support to all those who come seeking the Dharma, whether you suffer from substance abuse, mental health struggles or unhealthy relationship choices. Please look at our website for detailed information about our meetings and contact the facilitators to find one that suits you. 2015 is looking better every day, as we find more friends who want to be supported by us, and develop new programs to support your Buddhist Recovery path. Look for more "Meditation for Recovery" workshops, and an expanded Facilitator training program this coming year as well as summer and winter social events for our community. We are also hosting authors, teachers and speakers in the Buddhist recovery community to come to Seattle and share their important work with you.

Thank you for helping to support us in our growth, and we hope you find this path as healing as we have experienced it to be.

Please check out our website for updated meetings, events and articles on Buddhism & Recovery www.nwbuddhistrecovery.org.



BOOK REVIEW – By Rebekah R.

“REFUGE RECOVERY- A Buddhist Path to Recovery from Addiction” by Noah Levine



Noah Levine is a world renowned counterculture author and Buddhist meditation instructor who has taken a different approach to recovery than that of just the 12 Steps, combining it with that of Buddhism and its Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path. That is what “Refuge Recovery” is all

about. It is a way of life that relinquishes the suffering we inflict on ourselves as addicts and alcoholics. He begins the book by asking the reader to do an in depth inventory, itemizing all the ways they have caused themselves and others suffering over the course of their addiction. “Refuge Recovery”, the community Noah hopes to create with his book, follows the traditional Buddhist system of the Four Noble Truths with a small twist. They are:

1. We take stock of all of the suffering we have experienced and caused as addicts.
2. We investigate the causes and conditions that lead to addiction and begin the process of letting go.
3. We come to understand that recovery is possible and take refuge in the path that leads to the end of addiction.
4. We engage in the process of the Eightfold Path that leads to recovery, namely, understanding, intention, communication/ community, action/engagement, livelihood/ service, effort/energy, mindfulness/ meditations, and concentration/meditations.

Next, he states how recovery is possible by taking refuge in your awakening/recovery (Buddha), the Four Truths (Dharma), and the Refuge Recovery community (Sangha).

Noah goes into vast detail as to each of these Truths and the Eightfold Path and explains how we can use these as our tools for awakening. {Refuge Recovery} “is a practice, a process, a set of tools, a treatment, and a path to healing addiction and the suffering caused by addiction.”

Noah speaks in a kind, compassionate way, as someone who has experienced these dramatic changes himself. He tells us how to not only break the addiction to the substance, but to the mind. The book is laid out in a similar format to that of the “AA Big Book”, as Noah mentioned at his recent book signing, with the second section being testimonials from members of the “Refuge Recovery” community who have experienced the profound effects the Dharma and Noah's community have had on their lives. At the end of the book are guided meditations and a meeting format for a Refuge Recovery group, should you decide to have one in your own community. Noah has done a dear service to the world with his introduction of this book by bringing Buddhist recovery to forefront of the Buddhist community. Sincere followers of “Refuge Recovery” are rewarded with a “lifelong sense of well-being and happiness.” This book and program are true gems for anyone truly interested in recovery and mindfulness.

Please contact Rebekah at refugerecoveryofseattle@gmail.com if you are interested in joining a Refuge Recovery group where you can study more deeply this important book with a Sangha of your peers. Go to **Refuge Recovery of Seattle** on Facebook for information about this and other “Refuge Recovery” groups in the Northwest.



MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Woodinville - Sit Happens

When: Mondays 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Where: Woodinville Universalist Unitarian Church,
19020 NE Woodinville Duvall Rd, Woodinville, WA ([map](#))

Venue: Portable B www.wuuc.org

Contact: Mark at mark@thehopkins.us

When I first heard about Buddhist Recovery, it was just after a visit to Seattle by Kevin Griffin, promoting his new book “A Burning Desire”. There were several people at his talk that wanted to start support groups for people integrating their Buddhist paths with their recovery programs.

Through these meetings, I became aware of the Buddhist Recovery Network, a website with listings of Buddhist Recovery meetings around the world. On that website, I found (as far as I knew) the first Buddhist Recovery meeting in Seattle – located in a gorgeous wooded setting in Woodinville, WA. I also at this time was introduced to Rev. Alex Holt, who was working on an article of suggested revisions for “How It Works” from the AA big book, as a means to create more inclusive and gender neutral language. I invited Rev. Holt to come and speak to our Buddhist Recovery group, “Buddhadharma Meditation & Recovery” in the summer of 2011 and began to attend his Woodinville meeting, which by that time was being facilitated by Mark H., as Rev. Holt moved on to continue his ministerial education, maintaining his role as advisor to the Buddhist Recovery Network.

The meeting is based on 12 step work, and generally supports Step 11 with meditation practice and Buddhist versions of both the “promises” and “serenity prayer”.

While this group has re-translated AA doctrine to

be more accessible to the Buddhist practitioner, the language is such that it supports all of the work done by the AA group, maintaining the integrity of the original program while supporting those incorporating their Buddhist practice into their 12 step recovery program.

For an extended version of this article, with an interview with the founder and current facilitator, go to

<http://nw buddhist recovery.org/nwbr/category/articles/meeting-highlights/>



EVENTS

APRIL

Introduction to Vipassana Meditation

Workshop with Ven. Santidhammo
April 5th, SASG Community Center

This half day workshop is a favorite in our recovery community, and once again, Ven. Santidhammo brought his wisdom, humor and deep under-standing of the Dharma and meditation practice to our group. He



instructed us on meditation practices that can be used in Buddhist Recovery meetings, as well as brought a deeper understanding of the practice of breath meditation and attention to the body.

MAY

NWBR On-Line Fundraising Event



New books by Buddhist authors, as well as Buddhist prayer Malas were on sale through our on-line store to raise money for NWBR events and organization costs. While the event was not as much of a financial success as we hoped, we plan on adding new items to our store for the holiday

season, and hope you will consider making a purchase to help support NWBR.

Events cont...

JUNE

How Meditation Can Support Recovery - Women's' Meditation Workshop with Tuere Sala



This 3 hour workshop was an afternoon of practice in meditation and Non-Violent Communication (NVC) skills to help us uncover the difficulties that keep us from moving forward in our meditation practice.

Participants delved deeply into their own personal stories and uncovered their personal "hindrances" within the safety of a sangha of women practitioners. Tuere was funny and personable, and brought many years of experience and wisdom to our group.

JULY

NWBR Peer Facilitator Training Workshop

Sat. July 12, 2014 SASG Community Center

In our second NWBR facilitator training workshop, 8 practitioners who were interested in starting a Buddhist Recovery meeting came together to learn "What is Buddhist Recovery?" and "What makes a Buddhist Recovery meeting special?" Using a workbook developed by NWBR in 2013, the group went through different types of Buddhist Recovery meetings, expectations of facilitators, how to deal with situations that might arise in the group, and the logistics of starting and maintaining a peer led support group. Several of the group members came together to form teams of facilitators and co-facilitators, and three new meetings arose from the workshop. We look forward to developing this training program to help support all Buddhist Recovery meetings by creating consistent guidelines for our meeting facilitators worldwide and regular training opportunities.

A copy of the training manual used for this workshop can be found on our website at

<http://www.nwbuddhistrecovery.org/nwbr/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/NWBR-Facilitator-workbook-FINAL.pdf>

JULY

NWBR 1ST Annual Potluck Picnic Social

Sat. July 26th at Magnuson Park

We had a beautiful, sunny Seattle day to come together and share food and experiences with meeting facilitators and group members from all around Seattle. We were joined by Buddhist author Vimalasara, who enjoyed meeting our group and sharing about her new book "Eight Step Recovery – Using the Buddha's teachings to overcome addiction." There was an abundance of food and sun, and we all enjoyed getting to know each other in a social setting. The day ended with a drum circle, which was joined by surrounding picnickers, families, and even a couple of kayakers!



Evening drum circle



NWBR Board of Directors & facilitators



Sporting Malas for NWBR fundraiser



Vimalasara and Aviccala from the Seattle Buddhist Center

AUGUST

Meet The Author

Dr. Valerie (Vimalasara) Mason-John
Aug. 14th East West Bookshop

We had a wonderful crowd at the East West Bookshop in Seattle for a talk about her new book "Eight Step Recovery-Using the Buddha's teachings to Overcome Addiction".



Vimalasara shared openly about her own struggle with bulimia and substance abuse, and her road to recovery using meditation and Buddhist Dharma. Many lined up to have her sign their books, and we had people sign up for an "Eight Step Recovery" book study group starting in October at the Seattle Buddhist Center.

Weekend Dharma Talk & Daylong Retreat with Vimalasara

Aug. 15th & Aug 16th at Wat Atammayatarama Buddhist Monastery

Using techniques from her "Eight Step Recovery" program and Mindfulness Based Addiction Prevention (MBAP), Vimalasara guided us through exercises and meditations to help us understand more deeply how to use these practices to over-come our addictive tendencies. It was a beautiful day, and the temple created a safe and healing environment for us to practice these teachings. We shared the noon meal with the monks and were invited to check out their extensive collection of Dharma books in the temple library.



Group in meditation hall



Vimalasara & NWBR founders

To learn more about Eight Step Recovery, go to www.eightsteprecovery.org or go to www.thebuddhistcentre.com/eightsteps

OCTOBER

Meditation for Recovery Workshop

with Debra Greenfield

October 25, 2014 at Seattle Area Support Group Community Center

This 3 hour workshop took participants through several meditations designed to teach us how to deal with triggers to impulsive behavior. We studied how to cultivate a "gap" between a trigger and our initial reaction response, so we can learn to respond wisely and calmly. This workshop will be offered periodically over next year to help give our Buddhist Recovery group members some simple meditations they can practice at their Buddhist Recovery meetings.

For information about upcoming events, visit us at www.nwbuddhistrecovery.org

*"Better to avoid doing evil, and not to suffer
the torment that follows,
Better to do what is right, and not to suffer
the regret.*

*Just as a border town is protected within and without,
so let one guard oneself,
and not let the opportunity to pass.
To neglect that opportunity is to invite suffering."*

Dhammapada 20: 9&10



The Buddha meets Angulimala on the road to Savatthi.

BUSINESS NEWS *updated 1/11/15

2014 has been an amazing year for the Buddhist Recovery movement in the Northwest! There is a new board of directors of the Buddhist Recovery Network coming together to create a vision of regional Buddhist Recovery Network chapters, the creation of 5 new meetings in Seattle since August, and the new connection with Friends on the Path in Vancouver, BC who are doing recovery work through the Triratna and Shambhala Buddhist Centers. The opportunities for support in integrating your Buddhist practice with your recovery path are continuing to grow and expand as more people realize the healing taking place in our Buddhist Recovery community.

The most exciting news this year is that **as of Dec. 31st we have received our 501c3 non-profit status!** This will enable us to apply for grants to continue our work in facilitator training workshops for Buddhist Recovery meeting facilitators as well as funding monthly events for our community and supporting the administrative costs of running the organization. While we occasionally have to pay for certain website design, publishing and promotion expenses, the board of Directors of NWBR remain volunteers and are not financially reimbursed for their time or efforts.

Your current 2015 board of directors are:
Calico Cook - President, Website Administrator
Debra Greenfield - Secretary, Treasurer
Rebekah Reineke – Membership and
Community Outreach Coordinator

We also have several people “behind the scenes”, who mostly volunteer their services to execute and plan events, maintain the website and reach out to the community, as well as advisors from the Buddhist Academic and Monastic communities.

We are currently seeking a Treasurer to track all donations and expenses, implement an online

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bookkeeping system and file appropriate forms with the IRS.

Contact us nwbuddhistrecovery@gmail.com if you would like to join our volunteer team.

ABOUT US

We are supported by the Buddhist Recovery Network as the Northwest Regional Chapter of BRN, and are working closely with BRN as the pilot “regional chapter” to develop a format for other regional groups to develop worldwide.

If you would like to help us continue to grow and offer these resources to the recovery community, please consider a donation to our organization. As a 501c3 Public Charity, your donation is tax deductible. Please go to www.nwbuddhistrecovery.org to donate online through our PayPal donation link.

We are grateful for your continuing support as we grow into 2015.

“May all beings be free from the suffering of addiction”

Contact Northwest Buddhist Recovery:
nwbuddhistrecovery@gmail.com

Visit our website: <http://nwbuddhistrecovery.org>

Follow us on Twitter:
<https://twitter.com/SoberDharma>

NWBR is a local chapter of The Buddhist Recovery Network



www.buddhistrecovery.org

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