



This is the document to read out during a RAFT to Recovery meeting. The full document is available for download in the table available via this [link](#).

A section from this week's practice.

The Third Resolve – Cultivating Helpful States

*"Little by little, drop by drop, a water pot is filled. Likewise, the wise man, gathering it little by little, fills himself with good." ~
Dhammapada 122*

"Resolve is not about forcing yourself to act, but creating conditions that naturally lead to action. Reorganise your inner and outer life so that your mind and circumstances support what you aspire to achieve." ~ Stephen Batchelor

Gathering skillful materials and strengthening our raft

Actively nurturing the good

The third resolve – Cultivating

This vital aspect of our journey to liberation moves beyond simply managing the negative. This is where we actively begin to gather the materials and build the core structures of our raft, moving beyond simply avoiding shipwrecks. It involves consciously and deliberately making an effort to arouse, develop, and nurture positive, skillful qualities and states of mind that are not yet present or not yet fully established. This is where we actively start to build a fulfilling life – a flourishing life, a life reclaimed from cravings, aversions and confusion.

This resolve is about committing to adopting helpful, healthier and creative ways to live, recognising that in many ways, these healthy habits will replace our old unhealthy habits. Gotama (the Buddha) describes this 'third effort' as

an active development:

"... a practitioner generates desire for the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen; they make an effort, arouse energy, apply the mind, and strive."

Self-reflections

Consider your current efforts in cultivating the positive:

- ★ What skillful qualities (for example, patience, kindness and calm) do you feel are currently developing in your life?
 - ★ What conditions (inner and outer) currently support your positive growth? What conditions hinder it?
 - ★ When you think about building a fulfilling and flourishing life, what key qualities or activities come to mind?
 - ★ Reflecting honestly: What positive qualities would I like to strengthen (for example, patience, kindness and self-compassion)?
 - ★ How would cultivating patience improve my relationships?
 - ★ How would developing calm help me handle cravings?
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Remember to Remember

The third resolve – cultivating helpful states – involves nurturing rather than suppressing. It infuses our journey with hope, purpose, and creativity. It shifts our focus from solely managing difficulties – constantly bailing out water from our raft – to actively building strengths and a life worth living. By consciously nurturing wholesome qualities, we not only displace unskillful patterns but also create genuine sources of happiness and resilience. This active building and gathering is essential for constructing a robust and well-equipped raft.

We can tailor practices to meet our specific needs, including seeking professional guidance if appropriate and necessary. Through our consistent

effort, mindfulness, and self-compassion, it is possible to transform our destructive patterns into a life of freedom and well-being.

Having explored **Preventing**, **Abandoning**, and now **Cultivating**, we turn next to the final resolve: the crucial effort needed in **Maintaining** the progress we have made.

"Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny." ~ Modern Proverb

"Build your skills, not your resume." ~ Sheryl Sandberg

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