



This document is an extract from the full chapter which is available for download in the table via this [link](#) and is intended for use by participants of meetings.

Chapter 19 – The Resolve to Maintain

Holding the helm – keeping our raft on course

Anchoring our progress – embodying our new resolves

“They do not lament over the past, they yearn not for what is to come, they maintain themselves in the present, thus their complexion is serene.”
~ Gotama (the Buddha)

“Success is the product of daily habits – not once-in-a-lifetime transformations.” ~ James Clear

This final resolve is essential for ensuring that the gains we have made remain strong and resilient against our old destructive patterns. This isn't about us anxiously clinging to our progress so far, but it's about us wisely understanding that our gains need reinforcement. It addresses our crucial need to sustain, nurture, protect, consolidate, and deepen the positive qualities, healthy habits, and insights we have already developed.

This deeply connects to the Recognise stage of our journey – it involves an ongoing recognition of the new wholesome mental and behavioural practices we have cultivated, alongside an honest acknowledgment of the continuous effort we require to keep these stable and flourishing on our journey. Maintaining means recognising the subtle ways old habits or complacency can

creep back in if our vigilance wanes..

Maintaining positive changes is not simply about staying still – it's about actively deepening and consolidating our healthy habits. Maintaining is not merely about holding steady; it is about actively *developing* and *perfecting* our skilful qualities, ensuring we continue to move towards deeper peace and insight, rather than settling into a plateau.

Self-reflections

Gently reflect on your experiences of maintaining positive states:

- ★ What helpful habits or skills have you successfully cultivated and maintained in your journey so far?
 - ★ What helps you stay consistent with positive changes? What makes maintaining them challenging?
 - ★ How do you typically respond internally when you experience a setback or lapse of a healthy habit? How important is community or social support in helping you maintain your journey?
 - ★ Do you feel your motivation for moving from suffering to freedom is steady, or does it fluctuate? What influences it?
 - ★ Reflecting on the charioteer simile, where do you feel your 'guidance system' (mindfulness, confidence, wisdom) is strong, and where might it need strengthening to maintain course?
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Journaling prompts

Explore and reinforce the resolve to maintain through writing:

- ★ **Maintenance plan:** Choose one important positive habit or quality you've cultivated. Write down three specific actions you can take this week to actively maintain and strengthen it.
- ★ **Handling setbacks:** Imagine a potential future setback (for example, missing

- ★ meditation for a few days, feeling a strong urge). Write a compassionate, mindful plan for how you would respond, applying the resolve to maintain, with commitment, and self-kindness rather than giving up.
 - ★ **The charioteer within:** Reflect on the Charioteer simile. Which 'horse' – Confidence (Faith) or Discernment (Wisdom) – feels stronger for you right now? How can you bring them into better balance? What helps your 'Mindful Charioteer' stay alert?
 - ★ **Reasons for maintaining:** Revisit your core motivations for seeking freedom. List the top 3-5 reasons why maintaining your progress is important to you today. Keep this list somewhere visible.
 - ★ **Connection & maintenance:** Reflect on Johann Hari's quote about connection. How does connection (or lack thereof) impact your ability to maintain your progress? What's one step you could take to strengthen healthy connections this week?
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Remember to remember

Maintaining helpful states is an ongoing practice, not a destination easily reached and then forgotten. Regular mindful effort preserves our gains, deepens our positive qualities, and keeps our raft seaworthy, and skilfully navigated towards lasting freedom. By embracing daily habits, nurturing supportive connections, practicing self-compassion during challenges, and continually reconnecting with our purpose, we consolidate our journey and build a foundation for lasting well-being. Recognising the need for this ongoing maintenance is a key insight within the first stage of the RAFT to Freedom journey. It prepares us for the long haul, fostering realistic expectations alongside enduring hope.

As we continue our journey, let us remember that **Preventing**, **Abandoning**, **Cultivating**, and **Maintaining** helpful states are not isolated steps, but interwoven threads of skilful effort that guide our entire path toward liberation and lasting well-being. By consciously maintaining these practices, we nurture a life of freedom, resilience, and profound well-being, steadily steering our raft towards the safe shore.

“Enthusiasm is common. Endurance is rare.” ~ Angela Duckworth

“Do not expect full realization; simply practice every day of your life.” ~
Milarāpa (attributed)

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