

# Navigational Aids for the Voyage

Additional planks, programmes, and communities that cultivate wellbeing (and can also support recovery).

A companion resource for the RAFT to Freedom workbook

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While the RAFT workbook explores Gotama's Middle Way programme as our primary operating manual, the principle of the Training stage is universal. The RAFT is built of many materials. Any structured programme that fosters ethical clarity, mental stability, and wisdom can serve as a sturdy plank or a reliable navigational aid. This short companion list gathers widely used wellbeing programmes (secular, clinical, and community-based) that often support recovery too - without making recovery the main emphasis.

## The Primary Operating Manual: The Noble Eightfold Path

The Noble Eightfold Path is a detailed Buddhist map of ethics, mental discipline, and wisdom. This systematic training is experienced as three interdependent functions:

- **Wisdom (panna)**: establishing appropriate perspective and intention - the process of seeing clearly and choosing well.
- **Ethics (sila)**: developing appropriate speech, action, and livelihood - the practice of stopping harm and protecting peace.
- **Focus (samadhi)**: cultivating appropriate application, mindfulness, and collectedness - the stabilisation of attention.

## Additional Planks: Structured Wellbeing Programmes

These secular and clinical frameworks provide additional reinforcement for the vessel's hull, focusing on resilience and flourishing.

### Mindfulness-Based Skills

- **MBEL** (Mindfulness-Based Ethical Living): linking awareness explicitly to care and flourishing.
- **MBSR** (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction): a foundational grounding practice to anchor the mind in the present.
- **MBCT** (Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy): training a non-reactive relationship to thoughts and feelings.

### Heart-Training (Compassion) Models

- **MSC** (Mindful Self-Compassion), **CCT** (Compassion Cultivation Training), and **CBCT** (Cognitively-Based Compassion Training): systematic methods to "bind the raft" with kindness, compassion, and emotional resilience.
- **CFT** (Compassion Focused Therapy): uses the "three systems" model to regulate threat and strengthen wellbeing.

### Values-Based Psychological Training

- **ACT** (Acceptance and Commitment Training / Therapy): developing the psychological flexibility needed to navigate the "storms of habit."
- **DBT** (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy): practical skills for distress tolerance, emotional regulation, and steadier relationships.
- **TIC** (Trauma-Informed Care): a stabilising approach that prioritises safety, choice, and nervous-system regulation - especially useful when habit and hurt are tangled together.

## Positive Psychology and Flourishing

- **PERMA** and **PPT** (Positive Psychotherapy): programmes built on strengths, meaning, gratitude, and connection to move the vessel toward flourishing (eudaimonia).
- **WBT** (Well-Being Therapy): a structured approach aimed specifically at strengthening psychological wellbeing (not only reducing symptoms).
- **PRP** (Penn Resiliency Program): cognitive tools for building endurance, problem-solving skills, and realistic optimism.

## Navigational Aids: Recovery and Wisdom Communities

These groups provide fellowship and shared charts, and some are designed specifically for navigating the whirlpools of craving.

### Mutual Aid Groups

- **12-Step fellowships** (e.g., AA/NA): peer support and accountability through a shared programme.
- **SMART Recovery** and **LifeRing**: mutual aid with a more secular and skills-based emphasis.

### Buddhist Wisdom Communities

- **Refuge Recovery** and **Recovery Dharma**: communities that apply Buddhist practices to the human struggle with craving.

## Other Helpful Bearings

### Philosophical Frameworks

Stoicism or Secular Humanism can provide ethical rudders for navigating difficulty with equanimity and responsibility.

### Physiological and Somatic Practices

Trauma-informed yoga, tai chi, and breathwork can reinforce the raft by acknowledging the "reality of the body" and calming the nervous system.

## The Power of the Crew: Noble Friendship

Finally, it is worth remembering that none of these journeys are intended to be taken in isolation. As we move from the isolation of craving toward the connection of freedom, it becomes clearer that the opposite of addiction is connection. Whether found in a secular classroom, a clinical group, a mutual-aid meeting, or a traditional sangha, the presence of noble friendship (kalyana-mittata) is the wind that fills the sails. These programmes are not just individual survival kits; they are shared charts and a collective effort - a crew sailing toward the same safe shore.