

RECOVERY DHARMA

HOW TO START AN INTER-SANGHA GROUP

The following document has been used in two similar forms to guide the sanghas in both Chicago and New York City in forming their local Inter-sangha groups. Their experience is offered to the community as a guide to help you form new local area leadership. You will undoubtedly need to adjust and make changes to the needs of your location, and you can download a copy of this and edit it yourself. We have found it helpful in successfully forming our local leadership!

Recovery Dharma supports the principle that each group operates independently, except in matters affecting other groups or Recovery Dharma as a whole. This is where the Intersangha comes in.

What we are implementing is loosely structured, with new roles to be filled and guidelines for our infrastructure. As we fill positions and move through this process we will have a lot of learning to do, adjustments in those roles and structure, and, probably some failures too! So, for as many ideas that will be presented in this packet, there will be just as many questions; let's try to find comfort in the not-knowing.

WHAT IS AN INTER-SANGHA GROUP?

An Inter-sangha is an area service committee that exists to serve the common needs of all Recovery Dharma groups in a defined geographical area.

Why have a Local Intersangha?

- Foster greater community and connection among the growing number of local Recovery Dharma meetings
- Create clarity and transparency for sangha members regarding the workings of local leadership and how decisions are made
- Increase awareness of the Recovery Dharma model for addiction and support those who want to start new meetings locally
- To avoid duplication of services
- To represent our local area at the regional and national levels

What are some of the things we will do?

The Inter-sangha will exist to serve the following functions, including but not limited to:

- Generate meeting lists for all of our local area
- Produce and maintain literature such as newsletters or pamphlets
- Operate the local website and social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram
- Help groups with questions and problems relating to our shared purpose
- Idea-sharing and problem-solving among the area meetings
- Support members who incur costs while representing us at voted-upon functions (this may include: international conference, speaking at recovery conferences, etc.)
- Provide groups with resources such as books, pamphlets and newsletters
- Bring meetings or provide information to the addict who still suffers through public information, hospitals and institutions
- Foster greater community and connection through activities and events
- Pool resources to pay for rent and supplies for local events
- Maintain a treasury comprised of funds raised at local events and from dana donated by local meetings

What does the Intersangha *not* do?

The local Inter-sangha does not make decisions for individual meetings or set policy. We may offer guidance; however each meeting is autonomous and will continue to operate independently.

What will happen at the Inter-sangha Monthly Meeting?

- Secretary will review meeting notes from the prior month
- Treasurer will report on our finances
- Members will hear old business
- Committee chairs will give their reports
- Group will discuss new business

Who can attend an Inter-sangha Meeting?

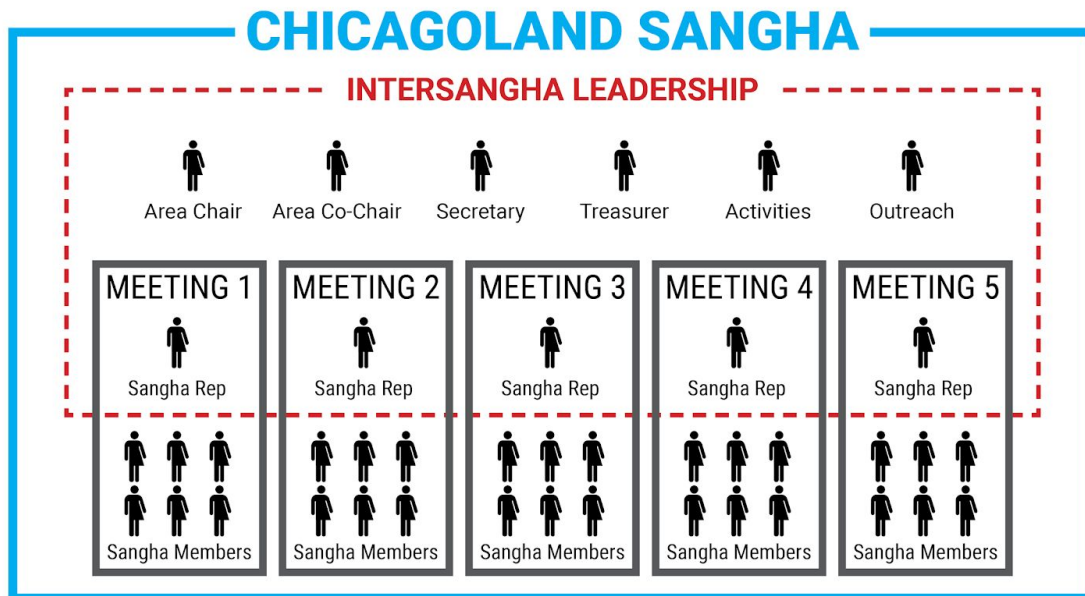
All members of Recovery Dharma are welcome at Inter-sangha meetings and are welcome to participate in discussion. Only officers and Sangha Representatives may vote on business matters.

ELECTED POSITIONS AND ROLES

We will organize our Inter-sangha around the following core roles to help facilitate local matters and to strengthen our unity as a group. Roles will become more well defined after people are elected to positions and Inter-sangha begins meeting consistently.

- **Sangha Representative** - Each local meeting will have a Sangha Representative that will act as a liaison between an individual meeting and Inter-sangha and will vote on business matters.
- **Inter-sangha Chair** - Organizes and facilitates Inter-sangha business meetings. This role is non-authoritative, only votes in the event of a tie, and does not hold power to veto or make decisions on the group's behalf.
- **Inter-sangha Co-Chair** - Assists the chair in facilitating business meetings and organization.
- **Inter-sangha Secretary** - Takes detailed notes from Inter-sangha meetings and sends out communication as needed.
- **Inter-sangha Treasurer** - Maintains Inter-sangha treasury, creates reports for every Inter-sangha meeting, disburses approved funds
- **Activities Committee Chair** - Lead the area in creating activities such as organizing quarterly day-long retreats, group outings to events, potluck meals, etc.
- **Outreach Committee Chair** - Lead the area and spearhead community outreach, interface with local rehab centers, maintain social media accounts, website events calendar, etc.

STRUCTURE OF ROLES



This image is intended to illustrate how our local structure will work, with the included meetings to provide example only (there will be more than 5 total meetings represented at Inter-sangha).

- Meetings - includes all members that attend that individual meeting
- Inter-sangha Leadership (red) - includes all Sangha Reps and Elected Intersangha Roles
- Inter-Sangha (blue) - includes everyone that attends local Recovery Dharma meetings

Not included in the illustration, but some good information to know:

- [Link to “regional” group that would include Ill., if applicable](#)
- International Recovery Dharma Sangha - everyone that is part of Recovery Dharma

TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

Phase 1 - Elect Sangha Representatives

Completion Deadline:

- Each meeting will choose a Sangha Representative to represent the meeting at Inter-sangha meetings.
- It is up to the individual meeting how they choose a Sangha Representative.

Phase 2 - Elect Inter-sangha Positions

Completion Deadline:

- ***Nominations will begin on*** ***and close on*** and be done through a Google Form to be announced on Facebook group and via email. You may nominate yourself or someone else, and each nominee will be contacted to confirm or decline the nomination before being put in the running.
- Once nominations are compiled, they will be put to a vote at the next Inter-sangha meeting which ***will take place on a date to be posted on Facebook***. In order to vote you must attend this Inter-sangha meeting which will be open to all.
- **Results will be announced immediately following the -Meeting** and the new Inter-sangha Leadership will then convene, with the new Inter-sangha Chair leading the formation for the first meeting

Phase 3 - First Formal Inter-sangha Meeting

Completion Deadline:

- Sangha Representatives and newly elected Inter-sangha will meet for the first time to create structure, term limits, working rules, determine consistent monthly meeting dates, future elections, and continue to define roles as a group.