WIN

Wisdom Improvement Network

Habit Improvement Wednesday

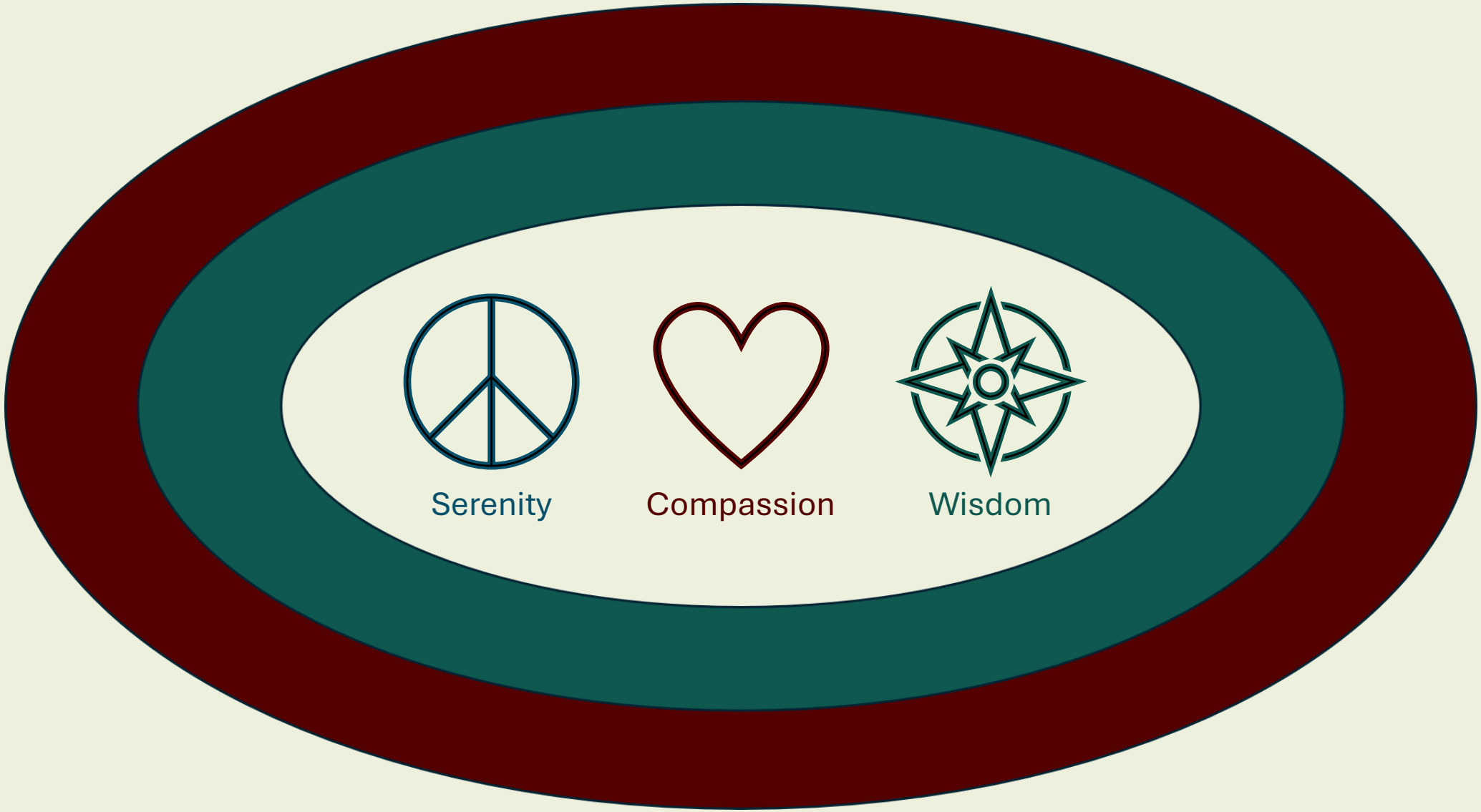
Higher Power

with

Serenity ❖ Compassion ❖ Wisdom

Wednesday Meetings

8:30 PM ET on Zoom


Serenity
Compassion
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Item	Contents	Page
1	The Three-Layer Model	4
2	Why You Need W. I. N.	5
3	The 10-Step Pattern for Unhealthy Habits	6
4	The 10-Step Pattern for Healing, Recovery & Wellbeing	7
5	W. I. N. is Growth-Oriented	8
6	The W. I. N. Facilitator	9
7	The W. I. N. Meeting	10

The Three-Layer Model



Understanding the three parts of yourself and how they can compete.

Why You Need W. I. N.



Most habit changes fail, and how we can improve the system.

1. **Habits:** 80% of people worldwide have one to three unhealthy, unhelpful habits.
2. **Change:** 95% of people try and fail to change habits in the first month of each year.
3. **Unhealthy Rooms:** Many recovery rooms can be filled with triggering addiction war stories, magical thinking, and even predators.
4. **Benefits:** WIN provides serenity, compassion, tools, skills, wisdom, and encouragement.
5. **Support Group:** WIN provides the accountability, support, and wisdom you need to improve your habit pattern.
6. **Affordable:** WIN has a sliding scale fee of $50, $75, and $100 based on assets and income for 50 Wednesday sessions each year.

The 10-Step Pattern for Unhealthy Habits



All unhealthy habits — involving substances like food, alcohol, and nicotine, or behaviors like gambling, gaming, shopping, and speeding — share core psychological, neurological, and behavioral characteristics.

Here is the progression of 10 shared traits, ordered chronologically from the underlying vulnerability to the long-term reality of managing the condition.

1. **Co-occurring mental health challenges.** Underlying vulnerabilities — such as anxiety, ADHD, or past trauma — often exist first, creating a predisposition to seek relief.
2. **Emotional or stress coping.** The individual starts turning to the substance or behavior as a temporary "band-aid" or escape mechanism to numb difficult feelings or stress.
3. **Brain reward system hijacking.** Each time the habit provides relief, it overstimulates the brain's dopamine pathways, reinforcing the behavior with a powerful surge of pleasure or comfort.
4. **Gradual progression.** What starts as a voluntary choice, social activity, or occasional stress reliever slowly increases in frequency and importance over time.
5. **Tolerance buildup.** As the brain and body adapt to the repeated stimulation, the person needs larger amounts or higher intensity to achieve the same initial effect.
6. **Cravings and urges.** Once the brain becomes dependent on that reward loop, intense psychological or physical desires surface whenever the person pauses or tries to abstain.
7. **Compulsive behavior.** The habit shifts from a conscious choice to an automatic, uncontrollable urge that dictates daily routines.
8. **Loss of control.** The individual finds they can no longer reliably stop, cut back, or limit the behavior, even when they genuinely want to.
9. **Continuation despite harmful consequences.** At this stage, the addiction persists even as it actively damages the person's physical health, relationships, career, or finances.
10. **Chronic risk of relapse.** Because the brain's reward pathways have been fundamentally altered, addiction remains a chronic condition that requires support to prevent relapse and to reset the brain’s pathways.

The 10-Step Pattern for Healing, Recovery & Wellbeing



Recovery and lasting wellbeing follow a progressive 10-step pattern that directly reverses the cycle of unhealthy habits.

Just as harmful behaviors build up over time, healing unfolds chronologically from initial awareness to long-term resilience.

1. **Self-awareness and honesty.** Recognizing the harmful pattern and acknowledging its true impact on daily life creates the essential starting point for change.
2. **Addressing underlying vulnerabilities.** Seeking therapy, medical care, or targeted support helps heal root causes like anxiety, ADHD, or past trauma.
3. **Building healthy coping tools.** Practicing mindfulness, exercise, or creative outlets replaces temporary escape mechanisms with sustainable stress relief.
4. **Rebalancing the brain's reward system.** Stepping away from intense, artificial dopamine spikes allows natural baseline pleasure and motivation to slowly return.
5. **Deliberate, gradual progression.** Focusing on small, consistent daily wins builds lasting momentum rather than relying on unsustainable bursts of willpower.
6. **Increasing resilience and tolerance for discomfort.** Sitting with difficult emotions without immediately reacting strengthens emotional regulation over time.
7. **Navigating cravings and urges.** Using distraction, delay tactics, and grounding techniques helps intense psychological or physical urges pass without acting on them.
8. **Reclaiming conscious choice.** Replacing automatic routines with intentional, values-driven habits shifts control back to the individual.
9. **Repairing and rebuilding life areas.** Restoring physical health, relationships, finances, and personal trust reinforces the tangible rewards of recovery.
10. **Ongoing maintenance and community.** Committing to long-term support systems, healthy routines, and self-compassion protects wellbeing against future setbacks.

W. I. N. is Growth-Oriented



Beyond habit change that is filled with cons, shame, and failure.

1. **Growth edges / Learning edges:** Acknowledges areas that are currently expanding or waiting for more development rather than being permanently broken.
2. **Developmental opportunities:** Frames the behavior or habit as a chance to learn new skills and emotional tools.
3. **Blind spots:** Refers to patterns or reactions you might not notice in real time, removes shame, and focuses on awareness.
4. **Adaptive responses / Coping strategies:** Sees defensive or difficult behaviors (like shutting down, controlling, or overworking) as things you once learned to survive or manage stress, even if they no longer serve you well.
5. **Habits to unlearn:** Treats the behavior like an old software program or routine you can replace, not a permanent identity.
6. **Areas for growth / Areas of focus:** Looks forward rather than backward.

The W. I. N. Facilitator



A facilitator who has been there, practiced habit improvement for 50 years, and coached thousands of people locally and globally.

Sandy Hinden
developed and facilitated
more than 200 interactive sessions
for local libraries, organizations, and online,
in habit improvement, meditation, meaning and purpose,
wellbeing, relationships and communication, wisdom,
and Community Conversation Circles.

He is the author of 7 Keys to Love, founder of
Wisocracy and the World Wisdom Council
for Local Wisdom Councils, and
host of Wisocracy World Café.

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