



#2.8 - August 24, 2022
Learners Only and Always

What I'm Thinking

One of my mentors loves to remind his students that having the "mind of a child" is important to any student who wants to get better t what they are doing. He tells us that to have the mind of a child is to be open and curious. But when I did some Google-searching on the phrase, I found a lot of definitions and thoughts about the physical and psychological side of a child's mind. They were often negative. They had to do with incompleteness and undeveloped. Some even went off on the "disorder" of an adult who can't mentally grow up, like Peter Pan.

"Yeah, but wait. There's more than that." I wanted to move these definitions into a different direction. One of openness and willingness to learn. I wanted to say curiosity and playfulness can have advantages.

Then I realized that if we get stuck and refuse to learn, we will not grow up. The curiosity of a child can get them into trouble, but they can also learn from what happens. If they believe that they know all they need to know and nothing can change their mind, that will not help their move toward mastery. An overly protective parent, can also get in the way, keeping a child from learning. Just as dangerous.

A healthy mind of a child, or what is often referred to as a "beginner's mind" in Zen, is not overly protective. It does not say don't learn. It doesn't insist that you already know what there is to know. It doesn't sit back as an armchair expert. For many of us that can be a real struggle. We easily get into a rut. Or get lazy. Of refuse to hear anything that doesn't fit our fixed mindset.

I am sure I have missed many beautiful and wonderful things by having that attitude. What we know and how we grow is built on where we have been. But what I know and where I've been is only one small piece of this amazing world. Recovery itself has opened many of those awe-filled moments for me. Mastery keeps me moving toward the next one.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ben', is located at the bottom left of the page.

**Facing Challenges -
Building Recovery**



Digging deeper into how mastering recovery helps us not get stuck.

[First week] Definition:

- Mastery- the mysterious process during which what is at first difficult becomes progressively easier and more pleasurable through practice.

[Second week] Basic Idea #1

- The most successful path to mastering anything is to practice for the sake of the practice itself, not for the result.

[Last Week] Basic Idea #2

- All significant learning is composed of brief spurts of progress followed by long periods of work where it feels as if you are stuck on a plateau.

[This Week] Basic Idea #3

- There are no experts-only learners.



On the blueprint for mastering recovery, the middle stage is where we build and practice our plans. And then do it again. Oh- and again. It is where the learning happens. We will regularly return to the first stage to see that we can do it- we have been growing. We then renew our inventory of what's next. We will see how the freedom of the third stage has propelled us forward. In this middle stage, though, we are always beginners!

[James Clear](#), summarizing author George Leonard says:

- Mastery reveals so much more to learn as you continue the journey. The destination is two miles farther away for every mile we travel. Masters love the practice and because they love it, they get better. And the better they get, the more they enjoy the practice. It's an upward spiral. The beginner's mind is required for learning anything new.

[Link to a copy of the *Mastering Recovery* Roadmap](#) to download.

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Quote and Picture of the Week

The mind of the beginner is empty, free of the habits of the expert, ready to accept, to doubt, and open to all the possibilities.

-Shunryu Suzuki



Where You Are...

...is always the starting point.
Therefore you are always at the beginning and able to grow.

Here are current resources:

- *Mastering Recovery: Find a New Freedom and a New Happiness Through Long-term Recovery.* [Amazon link.](#) (Kindle, paperback, hardback, and audio book)
- *Mastering Recovery: A Three-Week Journal to Start the Path of Mastering Recovery.* [Amazon link.](#) (Paperback only.)
- **The Mastering Recovery web** pages. Go to the home page: www.masteringrecovery.net
- **The Mastering Recovery Facebook page-** [LINK to Mastering Recovery Page](#)
- The **Mastering Recovery Facebook group** A "private group" only those who are members, will be able to see and make posts. [Link to JOIN](#)
- **Newsletter Archive** of all the weekly newsletters. [Link to past newsletters.](#)

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Thank you to all who took the survey I sent out and posted in the last newsletter. I am working on putting the responses together and will let you know what I've discovered in next's week's newsletter. [Here's the link](#) one more time if you missed it. Or you can [email Me](#) with ideas or questions,

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