

Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps. Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman



#5.05- Purpose:
The Fifth Arc of Mastering Recovery
July 30, 2025

What I'm Thinking

We've explored **Connection**,
Foundation, Flow, and Freedom.
Now it's **Purpose**.



Purpose — the reason for which something is done, created, or for which it exists.

- Why me?
- Why am I here?

Purpose — a person's sense of resolve or determination.

- What do I want to see happen as a result of the way I live?
- How can I make a difference?

My Discovery

I was eight months sober, sitting at one of my daily meetings, still doing 6 a week. My sponsor, a nut about gratitude, had suggested it to be the meeting topic. Again.

I pondered and wrestled as the discussion went around the table. I didn't have much to say when it came my turn.

Yes, I know I should be grateful. But I don't feel it today. So I'll pass.

My sponsor, surprisingly, didn't say anything after the meeting. He just smiled and walked away. I let it go. I didn't even feel like thinking any more about it.

Twenty-four hours later, I was at a choir rehearsal. Someone came to get me — I had a phone call. A member of the church. Their 26-year-old was drunk and alone. I had done the wedding months earlier; now the spouse had left. They were spiraling. Could I come by?

I went as their pastor. But I also went as a newly sober person. Still uncertain of my gratitude.

Four hours later, I had helped that person get into a treatment center.

I got home at 2:00 in the morning.

And I realized something:

I was grateful.

Because I was sober.

Because I was present.

Something I had struggled to see the day before had just shown me what it meant.

That night, a new direction opened up.

“I want to help others find a new purpose in their lives.”

It wasn't a bolt of lightning — but it was the beginning of a new path.

I began exploring a Doctor of Ministry program in counseling and to become trained as an addictions counselor. That moment gave clarity to a purpose that had already been quietly forming in me.

Purpose Grows With Us

That story happened decades ago. It reminds me that purpose doesn't always show up fully formed.

- Sometimes it comes in service.
- Sometimes in struggle.
- Sometimes in silence, after the meeting, when someone smiles and walks away.

It's easy to treat Step 12 like a finish line. But really, it's a door.

Having had a spiritual awakening...

Freedom Moves Us to Grow Into Purpose

Last week, I shared how **Freedom** in recovery isn't just about letting go. It's about stepping into something greater.

Purpose allows direction to form.

- It's not a job title.
- It's not a checklist.
- And it's not just about helping others — though it always includes that.

We are invited to carry the message — and to let that message reshape how we live.

A spiritual awakening doesn't just wake us up — it pulls us forward.

Purpose:

- It's not a job title.
- It's not a checklist.
- And it's not just about helping others — though it always includes that.

Purpose is the *why* underneath our continued growth.

Need a Place to Begin?

Before you stretch forward, here's a new checklist.

 **Purpose Ready Checklist** — to help you reflect on the balance of challenge, skill, and movement in your recovery.

 You can also revisit:

- **The Connection Checklist**
- **The Foundations Self-Check** and
- **The 12-Steps Growth Mini-Guide.**

A New Space for Purpose-Driven Recovery

The Deeper Recovery Mastermind

The Living Steps: Taking the 12 Steps Further

Over the past few months, I've been quietly shaping a space for people walking this road of recovery and wondering what comes next.

Not because sobriety isn't enough.
But because the spirit keeps growing.

This vision took clearer shape as I approached my retiring after 17 years at Mayo Clinic.

That's why I've been planting seeds. Reflecting. Listening.
And now, opening the door.

- The **Deeper Recovery Mastermind** is a small, honest, reflective group for those who have done the work — and are ready to go deeper.

We won't just revisit the Steps. We will find deeper ways to live them.

Through shared wisdom and spiritual honesty, we will explore how recovery can keep evolving — toward freedom, purpose, and the life we're meant to live.

This isn't coaching, a course, or a workbook group. It's a sacred circle — where grace meets truth, and recovery becomes more than maintenance.

Because recovery doesn't end at Step 12.

It begins again.

Interested?

If this speaks to where you are — or where you want to be — I'd love to hear from you.

Watch for a free Pop-Up Mastermind session in late August. Information in next week's Newsletter.

Today, though, [email me](#) and let me know what kind of growth you're looking for right now.

*If you're unfamiliar with the term, a **Mastermind group** is a small, focused circle of people committed to growing together.*

It's not coaching. It's not a class or webinar.

It's a space where each person brings their experience, insights, and goals — and gains momentum from others doing the same.

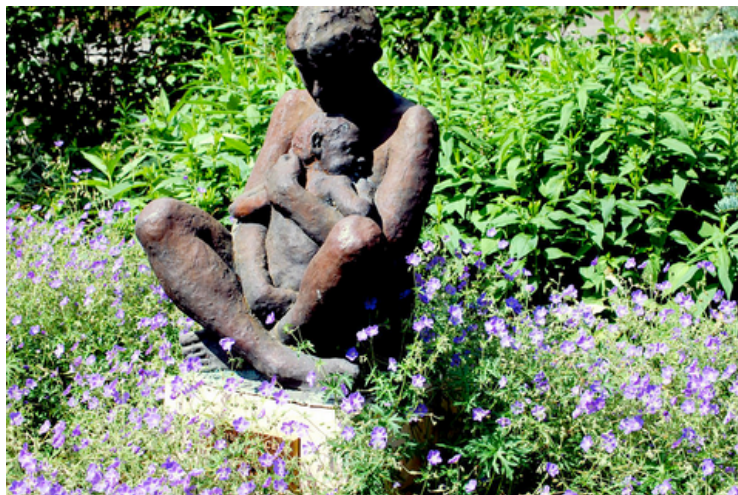
In long-term recovery, it can be a powerful tool to strengthen purpose and practice the Steps in real-time, not just in review.

✓ Taking a Step Beyond

The meaning of life is to find your gift.

The purpose of life is to give it away.

— Pablo Picasso





[Link to CAF](#)

The Center of Addiction and Faith.
Many resources are available on their website.

MISSION STATEMENT
Awakening Faith Communities to Address
Addiction

*Offering the hope of recovery to the addicted,
and to those who love them.*



Do you like the newsletter?
Forward it!
Share it!



Wherever you are in the journey- come back to what grounds you.
You're not alone.

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