

Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps. Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman



#5.07- Surrender and Humility

August 13, 2025

What I'm Thinking

Last week we talked about connection as the thread that holds long-term recovery together.

This week, we begin stepping into the arc of the 12 Steps—not just as a process, but as a path to mastery.



The Steps of Long-Term Recovery

In this model of living recovery the three phases of *mastery*, getting better at the things that are important to us, are experienced with the steps in mind.:

- **Foundation** is built on *humility* (Steps 1–3)
- **Flow** is refined through *forgiveness* (Steps 4–10)
- **Freedom** emerges through *grace and purpose* (Steps 11–12)

Each stage carries us deeper—not away from the 12-Steps, but further into them.

It all begins with a different kind of surrender.

Step 1: The Quiet Courage of Truth-Telling

Admitting powerlessness isn't easy—especially not after we've “been around a while.” But Step 1 doesn't lose its truth with time. It just takes on a new shape.

We may not be powerless over the same things that brought us into recovery—but there's always something we're trying to control, deny, or manage alone.

In long-term recovery, Step 1 becomes an invitation to truth without shame. To face what's real—gently, honestly, without self-condemnation.

If that quiet voice of truth is stirring in you... you're not alone.

Later this month, I'm offering a free Guided Online Gathering for those who've been sober for years—who are doing well on the outside, but feel something inside shifting. It's called

Now That I'm Sober... What's Next?

This free Guided Online Gathering on Deeper Recovery is a safe place to name what's real, reconnect with what matters, and hear from others who are living the Steps in a new way.

👉 [Click here to register](#) — **you'll also receive my new guide, Hope in Long-Term Recovery.**

Step 2: What Else Might Be Possible?

If Step 1 is about honesty, Step 2 is about imagination.

To come to believe in a Power greater than ourselves is to ask:

- *“What if the story isn't over yet?”*
- *“What if there's more to this than I can see?”*

Step 2 doesn't demand certainty. It asks for curiosity. For openness. For wonder.

Long-term recovery can become rigid without that spark. Step 2 keeps us spiritually limber.

👐 Step 3: Trusting Something Greater Than Control

We often talk about “turning it over” in early recovery.
But what does that mean years later?

In mature recovery, Step 3 is less about surrendering crisis and more about *cooperating with life*.

We don’t turn our will and our lives over once—we keep doing it, over and over.

Each time we let go of control, we return to trust.

And trust is the gateway to grace.

- **Steps 1, 2, & 3: The Foundation steps-**
the bedrock of long-term recovery and transformation
 - Truth-telling without shame
 - Curiosity without fear
 - Trust without control

✨ Living the Steps, Not Just Doing Them

Steps 1–3 aren’t something we graduate from.
They’re something we inhabit—more fully, more freely, over time.

That’s the vision behind the upcoming Deeper Recovery Mastermind this fall.
But before that begins, this month’s free, guided gathering is a gentle entry point.

It’s not a pitch. It’s a space. For honesty, curiosity, and trust — the three anchors of the Foundation Steps.

🔗 [Register for the free Guided Gathering here.](#) You’ll also get the Hope in Long-Term Recovery guide when you sign up.

There are two sessions — come to either or both.

Reflection Prompts: The Surrender of Humility

Where in your life right now are you being invited to tell the truth—gently, without shame?

- Think beyond “confession.” This might be an area where you're quietly struggling... or quietly growing and haven't shared yet.

What old belief might be limiting what you think is possible now?

- In what area of life or recovery have you quietly stopped believing in change—or settled for staying stuck?

What would it look like to trust something greater than control in this season of your life?

- Where might surrender become a path forward, not a fallback? How might you live that trust this week?

A New Space for Purpose-Driven Recovery

The Deeper Recovery Mastermind

The Living Steps: Taking the 12 Steps Further

- The **Deeper Recovery Mastermind** is a small, honest, reflective group for those who have done the work — and are ready to go deeper. It is a sacred space for connections.
- It will be a three-month mastermind group, limited to 6 - 8 individuals.
- In long-term recovery, this mastermind group can be a powerful tool to practice the Steps in real-time, not just in review

Because the spirit keeps growing.

Because recovery doesn't end at Step 12.

It begins again.

Interested?

You can start by registering for the Guided Conversation on *Now That I'm Sober... What's Next?* and the free *Hope Through Long-Term Recovery* guide.

[Register here](#) and get the guide.

✓ Taking a Step Beyond

Humility is simply the acceptance of the truth.

— Bill W., *As Bill Sees It*



→ Coming next week...
SOON

“The Movement of Forgiveness”

*How Steps 4–10 become a rhythm of release, restoration,
and daily grace..*



Do you like the newsletter? Forward it!



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

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