

Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps. Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman



The Power of Hope: A Deeper Recovery Mini-Series

#5.11 – Hope Through the Fog

September 10, 2025

What I'm Thinking

We expect storms in recovery.
We're ready for the hard days, the grief, the cravings, the disruptions.
But no one really prepares us for the fog.
Not depression. Not relapse.
Just... fog.



You're sober. You're stable. You're doing the work.
But your inner life feels gray.

The meetings blur together.
The Steps feel flat.
The practices you once loved now feel like obligations.

You're not in crisis. You're not "slipping."
But something's off.
And part of you wonders:

- *Is this it?*

★ This is spiritual dryness

... a quiet season where clarity fades and momentum stalls.
It's not a sign that something's wrong.

It's a sign that **you're ready to grow again.**

Spiritual fog shows up in long-term recovery for a reason:

The way we used to connect isn't enough anymore.
What once felt fresh has become familiar — maybe even stale.

That's the invitation.

Not to return to something old —
but to go looking for something deeper.

🌀 Growing from Radical Hope

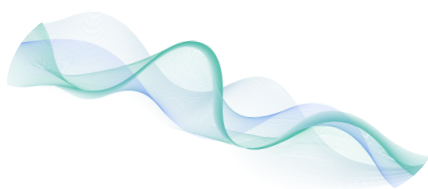
Last week I talked about Radical Hope the idea introduced by philosopher Jonathan Lear to describe what happens when a culture, identity, or way of life is wiped out — and yet people still choose to move forward.

This is different than early optimism. This knows there is more out there, more life ahead, ***because of the experiences of Radical Hope.***

When the fog of spiritual dryness moves in, the radical hope that moved us earlier becomes something new.

A lighthouse.

It doesn't clear the fog, it helps us keep moving through it.
Because the fog isn't the end of the story.





This is Still Recovery

That's why this part of the journey matters so much — especially in years 3 to 7 or so of recovery.

We're no longer trying to survive.

But we haven't yet found the full aliveness we're meant for.

This is the stretch of the path where some people drift... and others dig deeper.

Hope, Radical Hope, is what shows us that *there is more life ahead* — it's just not only on the old roads.

- *"Keep going. You ain't seen nothing yet!"*

I discovered this in my trumpet playing. On a regular basis I feel like I'm at the end of what I'm learning. Things just aren't falling into place like I want them to. In fact on some of those days, today feels like I have taken a step backward.

- The time has come to just be satisfied. I'm at the best I can ever be.
-

But I've learned over the years that I need to relax, pick up the horn and just enjoy what's happening. I'm where I am. It's not where I want to go, but I'm not where I used to be. It's remembering the hope. Even when I can't see it for the fog of the day.

What's next? I know there will be more ahead, because I've already been through it.

It's the same story in recovery.



Reflection Prompts

What feels faded right now — and what still stirs me?

Sit with that. Let the fog speak — even before it clears.



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

When things feel foggy, it doesn't mean you're lost —
it might just mean your soul is between seasons.

This **free Guided Online Gathering** is a space to pause, reflect, and gently reawaken what still stirs in you.

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

An online event for people in long-term recovery

✓ Includes the free guide: *Hope in Long-Term Recovery*

✓ No pressure. Just honesty, reflection, and quiet support for the season you're in.

 [Click here to sign up and receive the guide »](#)

LIVING THE STEPS



DEEPER RECOVERY

✓ Taking a Step Beyond

*There are years that ask questions
and years that answer.*

— Zora Neale Hurston



🌀 This Week in Practice:

Hope is more than a feeling. It's a direction.
A direction to move toward.

Again this week, take another small action that says:
"I believe growth is still possible."

It doesn't have to be dramatic.

Reach out to someone.
Write down a new dream.
Do something you would never have imagined possible.

Because sometimes, believing is an act of resistance.
And long-term recovery is worth believing in.



I will be exploring the heart of long-term recovery with my talk:
Connection, Humility, and Grace
at the annual MARRCH Conference.

Register today.

I partner with



The Center of
Addiction and
Faith.



Relevant
Recovery



Do you like the newsletter? Forward it to a friend.

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

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