



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps. Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman

#5.35- The Human Practice of Spirituality

February 25, 2026

What I'm Thinking

A Different Change

When Joe left his 12-Step meeting after telling us life wasn't fair, nothing in the room had changed.

The program hadn't changed.

The Steps hadn't changed.

God hadn't issued a new policy.

Joe had changed.

Something inside him had shifted. Something that once held him steady no longer did.

When I finally found my way back to the trail near the Mississippi headwaters, nothing magical had happened either.

- The forest hadn't rearranged itself.
- The sun hadn't broken through in dramatic fashion.



- A sign hadn't dropped from heaven pointing me home.

The woods were the same.

I wasn't.

Orientation didn't change the wilderness. It changed how I was standing inside it.

That's where this month has been leading.

We don't rebuild certainty. We practice connection.

Hope Is Not the Reward

Hope isn't the prize at the end of spiritual clarity. Hope is the result of practiced relationship.

That may sound backward.

But recovery already taught us this from the first day of abstinence and sobriety.

Last month I spoke about radical hope — the kind that survives even when the old way of life collapses.

Radical hope doesn't begin with optimism. It begins with practice, not feeling hopeful.

We are practicing living into hope.

A Word About Practice

We talk about "muscle memory" as if our bodies somehow think for us. That's not exactly how it works. Muscle memory is simply repetition. The more you do something, the more natural it becomes.

That's why I practice scales on my trumpet every single day. For me, it might be twenty or thirty minutes. For more accomplished musicians, it can be hours.

That, too, seems backward. Shouldn't the beginners practice the basics longer?

Actually, the better you get, the more you realize how much there is still to learn.

The more I practice, the more I realize how much I don't yet know. And the more natural the scales become.

The more I practice them, the more the scales become music.

Spiritual practice works the same way.

You don't practice because you've mastered it.

You practice because relationship deepens through repetition.

🌿 The Heart of the Week:

Practice isn't dramatic.

It might look like:

Staying in conversation with God even when you don't have answers.

Showing up in community when it feels strained.

Sitting quietly instead of chasing clarity.

Acting in alignment with your values even when outcomes feel uncertain.

It's not about rebuilding a structure that guarantees comfort. It's about remaining in relationship when the structure loosens.

- Connection.
- Relationship.
- Surrender.
- Repeat.

✨ The Radical Move

The radical move isn't to define God or Higher Power or Spirituality better.

The radical move is to remain in relationship, connected, without demanding clarity.

✅ Taking a Step Beyond

**The time of business does
not with me differ
from the time of prayer.**

— Brother Lawrence



Presence isn't confined to a sanctuary.

Or a meeting room.

Or a moment of crisis.

It's practiced in the ordinary.

A Closing Invitation

In March winter begins to loosen its grip. We'll turn toward small, steady practices that prepare us for what's next.

We'll begin exploring what daily spiritual practice can look like in ordinary life — simple rhythms that help us stay oriented as the seasons change.

This week, don't search for certainty.

Practice connection.

Stay.

Attend.

Relate.

Repeat.

Hope will grow from there.



Back issues of the newsletter can be found at: [Newsletter Hub](#).

[Email me](#). I always look forward to hearing from you.



I've opened a small, quiet online space called **Safe Haven- a community within Mastering Recovery**.

It's not a program or a discussion group. It is a quiet space for steadiness, reflection, and room to breathe in long-term recovery.

If you're curious, you're welcome to step in and see if it feels like a fit.

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