



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps. Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman

#5.38- Practicing in Good Company

March 18, 2026

A quick note before this week's reflection.

Two small opportunities are coming up in the next few weeks that some of you may find helpful.

- A **7-Day Spring Email Challenge** beginning soon — a simple way to re-engage recovery practices as we move into spring.
- A **live small-group masterclass on April 8** called *Beyond Sobriety*, where we'll explore how recovery practice continues to grow in long-term sobriety.

If either sounds useful, you can learn more here.

7-Day
Spring Challenge

Beyond Sobriety
Masterclass

What I'm Thinking

Alone or Together...

Last week we talked about the difficult passage. The part of the music that keeps slipping.



The notes that refuse to cooperate.

In recovery, those passages show up as impatience, resentment, fear, or withdrawal. They're the places where life reveals that something in us is still forming.

But musicians rarely practice entirely alone.

At some point, practice has to move into ensemble.

You have to listen to the tempo around you.

Adjust your timing.

Blend your sound with others.

Recovery works the same way.

The sober community is not just where we started recovery.

It is where we continue to practice it.

From Early to Long-Term

In early recovery, meetings often feel like survival.

We show up because we have to.

Because the alternative is too dangerous.

But over time something changes.

Meetings become familiar.

The language becomes second nature. The urgency softens.

It's easy to assume we've graduated.

But in reality, the community remains one of the most important places we practice recovery.

- Because most of the things that challenge us now are relational.
 - Listening when we disagree.
 - Admitting when we're wrong.
 - Letting someone see uncertainty.

- Telling the truth before resentment grows.

Those are not skills we develop in isolation. They are practiced in good company.

A healthy recovery room is something rare in modern life. It is a place where you can admit struggle without losing status.

Where you can say “I was wrong” or where someone else’s story suddenly shows you your own.

That kind of honesty is difficult to find in the outside world. Which is why these rooms still matter long after the first years of sobriety.

They remain a practice space. A place where we can refine the difficult passages before life turns up the lights.

The Heart of the Week:

If long-term recovery is the practice of learning how to live well, then community is the place where that practice continues.

So this week consider a simple question:

Where do I still have places where I can practice recovery honestly?

Not perform it. Practice it.

Because long-term recovery doesn’t grow in isolation.

It grows in good company.



Taking a Step Beyond

**We are shaped and fashioned
by what we love.**

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The Recovery Move

This week’s recovery move is simple:

Show up honestly.

Not with the polished version of your story.

Not with the answer you think people want to hear.

Just show up with the part of life you are still learning.

That's how practice works.

And that's how long-term recovery deepens.

A Closing Invitation

Next week, we'll talk about when practice becomes life.

For now, just practice.

That isn't failure.

That is growth beginning.



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

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

Don't miss this tonight!

**Relevant Recovery Webinar:
What is Coaching?**

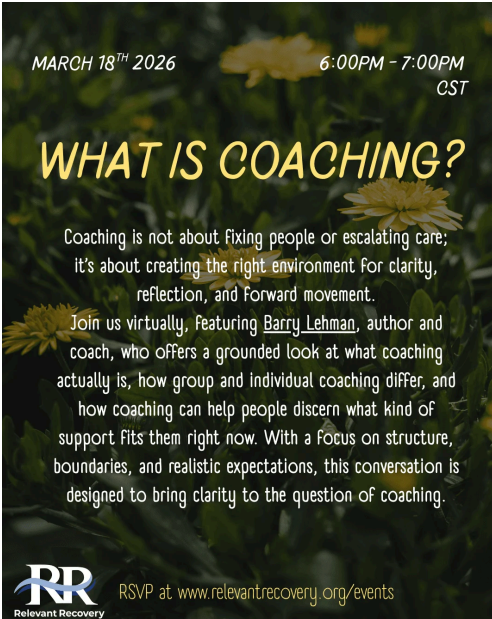
Featuring *Barry*.

**This Evening, March 18
6:00 - 7:00 pm CT**

Coaching: A Structured space for reflection, learning, and forward movement.

Relevant Recovery's John Magnuson and I will look at what coaching is all about and how individual and group coaching offer different experiences.

RSVP at [This Link!](#)




MARCH 18TH 2026 6:00PM - 7:00PM
CST

WHAT IS COACHING?

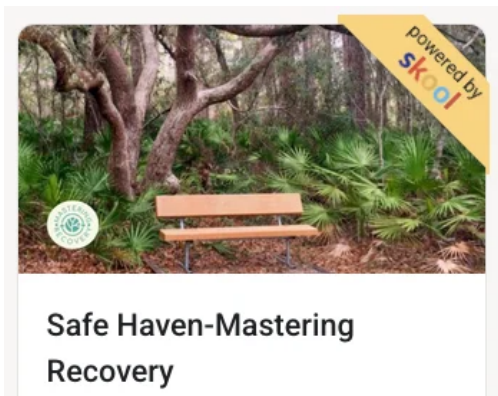
Coaching is not about fixing people or escalating care; it's about creating the right environment for clarity, reflection, and forward movement.

Join us virtually, featuring [Barry Lehman](#), author and coach, who offers a grounded look at what coaching actually is, how group and individual coaching differ, and how coaching can help people discern what kind of support fits them right now. With a focus on structure, boundaries, and realistic expectations, this conversation is designed to bring clarity to the question of coaching.

 RSVP at www.relevantrecovery.org/events



Do you like the newsletter? Forward it to a friend or colleague!



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.

[LINK](#)

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