



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps. Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman

#5.39- Practice Becomes Life

March 25, 2026

A quick note before this week's reflection.

- The monthly **Circle of Hope** is next week at noon.
- A **live small-group masterclass on April 8** called *Beyond Sobriety*, where we'll explore how recovery practice and the Steps continue to grow in long-term sobriety.

If either sounds useful, you can learn more here.

April Circle of Hope
Save a spot.

Beyond Sobriety
Masterclass

What I'm Thinking

Both of these programs are part of the mission and purpose of *Mastering Recovery*: to help people in long-term recovery grow with purpose, clarity, and freedom. As I talk about this week below, they are a means to find deeper ways of practicing recovery as a lifestyle:

Alone and Together- We Grow



Over the past few weeks we've talked about practice.

The foundations.

The difficult passages.

The places where we refine recovery in community.

Practice matters because it prepares us for life.

But eventually something else begins to happen.

The music leaves the practice room. Instead of thinking about every note, we begin to play. Instead of analyzing every response, we begin to live. Making music becomes a habit.

Musicians are often told:

Practice as if you are performing.

Perform as if you are practicing.

Over time, the goal is simple: the way we practice recovery becomes the way we live.

Late winter has a quiet lesson about this.

On the surface, everything still looks frozen. But underneath, the ground is already shifting.

- Roots are waking.
- Light is returning.
- Growth is preparing itself long before anything visible appears.

From Early to Long-Term

Recovery can feel like that.

Much of the real work happens quietly.

Small adjustments. Subtle corrections. Practices repeated over time.

Nothing dramatic.

And then one day you realize something has changed.

You respond differently to stress. You listen longer before reacting. You notice gratitude where frustration once lived.

The music has begun to play on its own.

Long-term recovery is not about perfection.

It is about alignment.

Learning how to live with honesty, humility, and connection.

And that kind of life grows slowly.

Practice by practice. Conversation by conversation. Season by season.

✨ The Recovery Move

Next month we will begin to explore renewal.

Spring reminds us that growth does not come from forcing change.

It comes from preparing the ground.

From tending what is already alive beneath the surface.

From trusting that steady practice eventually becomes new life.

It's our getting the soul and awareness ready for moments that arrive, like the one in a meeting recently that I almost missed.

Nothing dramatic. Just like a spring thaw.

Someone was sharing, and I found myself quietly disagreeing.

Not outwardly. Just internally.

A few years ago, I would have stopped listening right there. Started forming a response. Waited for my turn to say what I thought.

But this time something different happened.

I noticed it.

And I kept listening.

Not to respond. Just to understand.

By the end of the share, something had shifted.

I didn't need to correct anything. I didn't need to prove a point.

I didn't need to show how good *my* recovery is.

I had simply stayed present.

Later, it struck me:

That used to take effort.

Now it felt natural.

I hadn't been practicing.

I had simply lived it.

The music of recovery playing on its own.

Ten days ago, just days before the calendar said spring, we had one more storm.

(I couldn't have planned it better with the themes of this month's newsletters.

But, hey, don't blame me.

I'm as powerless as you. 😞)

Snow again. Wind again. Shovels back out again.

It's the kind of storm that reminds us how little control we actually have over seasons.

We can't rush spring.

We can only prepare for it.

Recovery teaches the same thing.

We do the work we can do:

- practice honesty,
- practice humility
- practice showing up.

But the deeper changes — the thawing, the new growth — come in their own time.

Sometimes the most faithful response is the one we already know from the Serenity Prayer:

Acceptance.

Accepting the season we're actually in- with courage and wisdom.

Starting right here and now- where we are.

Spring doesn't begin with flowers.

It begins with thaw.

And thaw begins quietly. Renewed life is already here.



✓ Taking a Step Beyond

In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.

— Albert Camus

A Closing Invitation

For now, simply notice this:

- The work you are doing matters.
- The small practices matter.
- The difficult passages matter.

Long-term recovery is the practice of learning how to live well.
Over time, that practice becomes the way we live.



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



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



**Safe Haven-Mastering
Recovery**

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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