



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps • Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman

Issue 5.43 - April 22, 2026

The Courage ● To Keep Growing

Getting to Where I Am

This week marks my wife's and my 54th wedding anniversary.

And like any life lived over that many years, it hasn't been a straight line.

There have been highs.

There have been lows.

And in between...

a lot of ordinary time.

What many people might call a plateau.

But ordinary time does not mean dull or uninteresting.

And plateau is not the absence of growth.

For a long time, I think I misunderstood those stretches.

They didn't feel like growth.



Nothing dramatic was happening. No big changes. No obvious movement.
Just... life.

From Early to Long-Term

But over time, I've come to see something differently.
Those stretches weren't empty.
They were where the relationship was actually being lived.
Where it was tested. Where it was shaped. Where it quietly deepened.

And that realization has changed the way I see long-term recovery.

Because recovery has its own version of this.
There are seasons of intensity:

- early sobriety
- moments of crisis
- breakthrough insights

But those aren't where most of life is lived.

The Heart of the Week:

Most of recovery unfolds in the in-between.

The days when nothing feels especially new.
When things are stable.
When the urgency is gone.
When it's easy to wonder:
"Am I still growing?"

And this is where something important can be missed.

What feels like a plateau is often the place where everything is being built.

Not dramatically.
Not visibly.
But steadily.

It's where:

- trust is formed
- patterns are reinforced
- character is shaped

It's where we learn how to live what we already know.

And that takes a different kind of courage.

Not the courage to make a big change.

But the courage to stay.

To remain present. To keep showing up. To keep practicing— even when nothing feels especially new.

Sometimes growth looks like moving forward.

And sometimes...

it looks like not leaving.

Not leaving the work. Not leaving the relationship. Not leaving ourselves.

Because something is still happening.

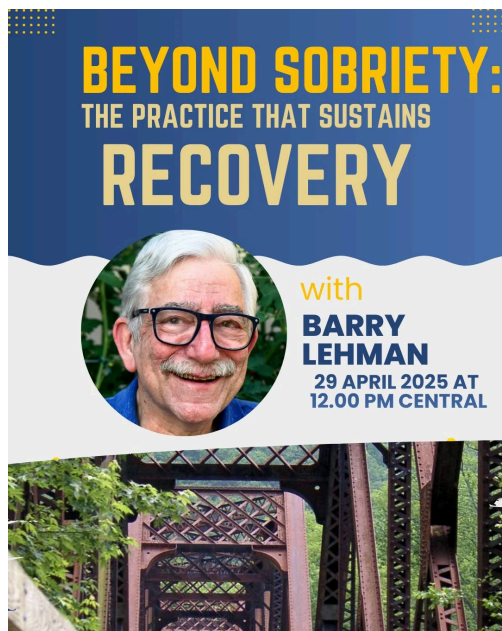
Even when we can't see it clearly.

This is the kind of growth I've been thinking more about lately.

Not dramatic change—

but the steady, lived practice that sustains a life over time.

It's what I'll be exploring in a conversation next week with
the Center of Addiction and Faith:



**Beyond Sobriety: The Practice
That Sustains Recovery**
Wednesday, April 29
12:00 PM Central / 1:00 PM Eastern

We'll be looking at:

- how people actually grow
- why practice—not just insight or belief—is the engine of expanding recovery
- and how to build a life that keeps growing—not just maintaining sobriety

It's free and open to all.

[Save Your Spot](#)

 A Closing Thought

Early in recovery, growth often feels like change.
Later, it begins to feel like depth.

Less about becoming something new—
and more about becoming more fully what we already are.

So maybe the question this week isn't:


“Why does this feel flat?”

But:

“What is being built here that I can't yet see?”

Because the quiet seasons—
the steady, uneventful, in-between stretches—
are often where the strongest parts of our lives are formed.

 **A simple reflection for the week:**

-  Spend time looking at what is different today that points toward growth.
What courage is showing up that tells you to keep going?

Next week, we'll step back and look at the bigger picture:
What begins to take shape over time when we stay, grow, and live into these
seasons.



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

Email me. I always look forward to hearing from you.

A blue ink signature that appears to read "Becky".

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](#)

I partner with



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Addiction and
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Barry Lehman
2370 Lexington Ave. S
Mendota Heights, MN 55120
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