

Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps • Growing Through Connection

With Barry Lehman

Issue 5.41 - April 8, 2026

Beyond Sobriety ● Deeper Recovery

Something Happens

Today feels a little different.

For a long time, this has been a conversation we've had here—through words, reflection, and practice.

But today, something begins to shift.

In a few hours, a small group of us will gather—not to hear more ideas, but to step into this conversation together.

Not a presentation.

Not a webinar.

A shared experience of something we've been circling for a long time:

What happens after sobriety?

For many people, sobriety is the goal.

And rightly so.



It takes courage.
It takes honesty.
It takes a willingness to begin again.

It's essential.

But over time, another question begins to surface.

Sometimes quietly.
Sometimes persistently.

“Is this all there is?”

Not because something is wrong.

But because something is ready.

There's a stage in recovery that can feel like nothing new is happening.

Life is stable.
The urgency is gone.
Things are... fine.

But what if that isn't the end of growth?

What if that's the moment just before something deeper begins?

From Early to Long-Term

In early spring, the ground doesn't look all that different at first.

And then, almost without warning, something small appears.

A shoot.
A bit of color.
A sign of life.

And then, every once in a while, something like that appears in us.

Not dramatic or overwhelming.

Just a quiet sense that something is... right.

A new way of responding, even a different kind of conversation.
A moment of clarity that wasn't there before.

It may only be a few small shoots.

But they're unmistakable.

And something in you recognizes it immediately:

“Yes. That’s it.”

For me, it often shows up in small, unexpected ways.

Not long ago, I found myself in a conversation where I was convinced I was seeing things clearly—and that the other person wasn’t.

Then something shifted.

Instead of holding my position, I stayed with the conversation.

And I began to see that my understanding of their words might be just as shaped by my own perspective as I thought theirs was.

It wasn’t dramatic.

But it was enough to make me pause.

To listen differently.

And I recognized it:

“Yes... that’s it.”

That moment matters more than it seems.

Because it’s not random.

It’s what growth actually looks like in long-term recovery.

Quiet.

Subtle.

But real.

And when we begin to recognize it,
we can begin to live into it more fully.

I’ve seen it in others, too.

Someone is sharing their thoughts—

“Yeah, I get that... but...”

I listen; I respond. Not arguing. Not pushing. Just talking.

And then something shifts.

They stop mid-sentence.

A pause.

A moment where something clicks—not in a big, dramatic way—but quietly.

A different response and a softening.

A willingness that wasn’t there before.

You can see it happen.

Even if they don't say it out loud, you know:

something just shifted.

And they recognize it:

“Yes... that's it.”

The Heart of the Week:

For me, this has been one of the most unexpected parts of recovery.

After all these years, I'm not trying to “fix” my life anymore.

I'm learning how to **participate in it more fully.**

There's a sense of:

- curiosity
- creativity
- connection
- and at times, even awe

Not because everything is easy.

But because something deeper has begun to grow.

An Open Invitation (Today at Noon)

In a few hours, we'll step into this together.

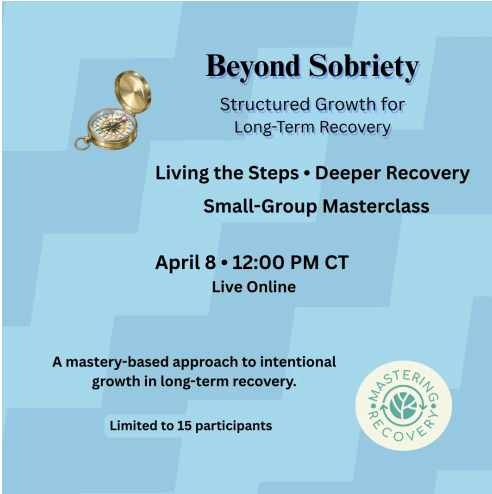
If you've been considering it—and your schedule allows—you're still welcome to join us.

It will be a small, interactive conversation, and there's still room for a few more people.

Which is why I'm inviting you to join me for a live

***Masterclass -
Beyond Sobriety***

today, at noon CDT



Beyond Sobriety
Structured Growth for
Long-Term Recovery

Living the Steps • Deeper Recovery
Small-Group Masterclass

April 8 • 12:00 PM CT
Live Online

A mastery-based approach to intentional
growth in long-term recovery.

Limited to 15 participants

MASTERING
RECOVERY

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Whether or not you're able to be there, the movement itself is worth paying attention to.

Because this is not about an event.

It's about a shift.

A Closing Thought

Early spring doesn't announce itself loudly.

The ground softens.

Light changes.

Something underneath begins to move.

And then, quietly, life begins to show itself.

Long-term recovery often unfolds the same way.

Not through dramatic change,
but through small, unmistakable signs of something deeper taking root.

So maybe the question this week isn't:

“What should I do next?”

But simply this:

“Where have I already seen those small shoots?”

And just as important—

“Am I willing to trust what is beginning to grow?”

Growth doesn't happen by accident.

It grows from what we choose to do with what we've already been given.

Next week, we'll take a closer look at what it means to grow into responsibility—
and how these small beginnings begin to shape the way we live.

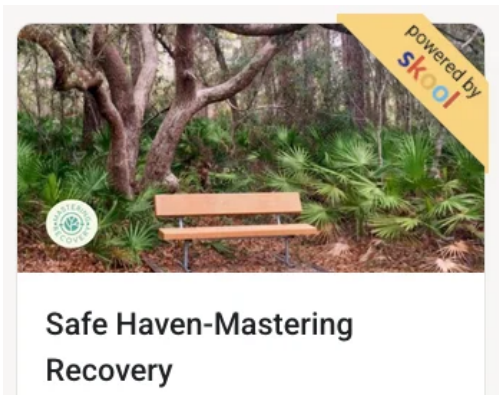


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Email me. I always look forward to hearing from you.



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](#)

I partner with



**The Center of
Addiction and
Faith.**



Relevant Recovery.

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