



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps



Practicing the Principles

With Barry Lehman

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Hope: Beyond What I Can See

Barry, weren't we finishing this?

Why are we back at Step 2?

Is this getting confusing or what?

I keep thinking I've wrapped up what I have to say.

Here it is. This is the point.

And then I turn another corner and—oops.

Maybe not.

Now I find myself moving backward through the Steps.

Maybe there's a reason for that.

When things make sense but still feel foggy, perhaps it's time to go back to the basics.

I've been thinking about life as though we're supposed to keep moving in a forward direction. Whatever that is.

But maybe the only truly linear thing about life is that it has a beginning and an ending.

In between, we return.

We encounter the same questions, the same principles, the same practices—not as exact repetitions, but from different places in our lives.

Maybe we're not going backward.



Maybe we're returning to the same principles, but we aren't the same people when we return to them.

That's Only the Beginning- Of Course!

In 1988, early in recovery, Step 2 asked something like:

Can I believe there is a life for me beyond this?

I can live in hope. Over and over for nearly 38 years I have taken next steps with hope. Believing in hope. Believing with hope.

Stop.

I was about to get back into the rabbit hole of trying to explain what I've already talked about. See how easy it is to fall into these endless spirals?

What I am asking, actually practicing, is how does my having hope and being one who believes work together.

In 1988: I didn't need to believe that one day *I will be sober 38 years and this is what my life will become*. I couldn't possibly have believed that in any meaningful sense - because I couldn't see it.

- I needed something much smaller:
 - Could I stay sober today?
 - Could there be a life for me beyond this?
 - Maybe tomorrow.
 - Maybe even next week.

Living Recovery

So I took the next steps because I believed something is possible.

Then something happened.

It always does.

Another day came. I discovered that I could keep going. That gave me more reasons to believe and a greater capacity for hope.

Both... and.

Day in and day out.

And the horizon out there, where I am going, is still out there.

Maybe that's the question I keep returning to.

1988: *Can I believe there is a life for me beyond this?*

2026: *Can I continue to believe there is life, growth, meaning, and becoming beyond what I can presently see?*

Even when we think we know what's just beyond the horizon, we don't.

We never have.

Time and age haven't changed the horizon. They have changed my illusion that I could see beyond it.

🌿 Practicing the Principles:

Practice of the week:

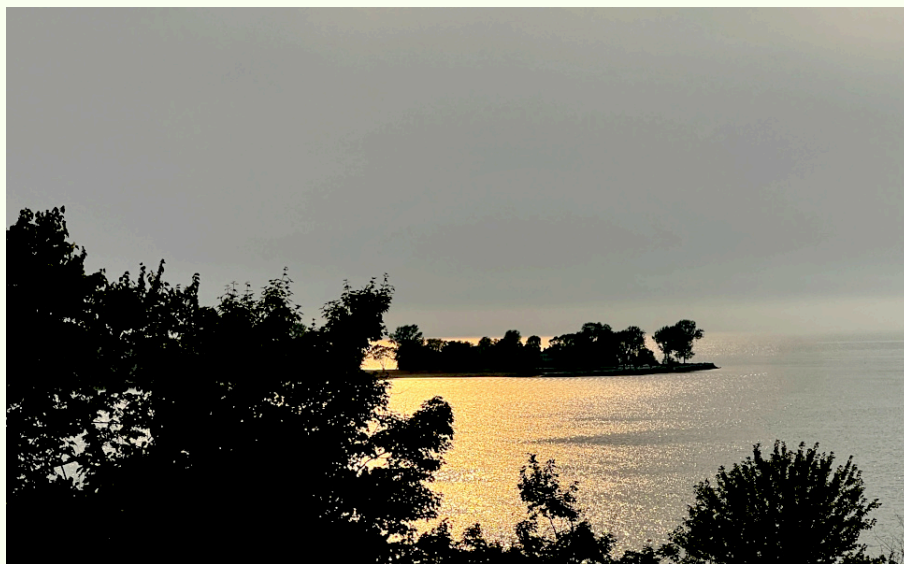
When you find yourself trying to figure out what comes next, stop.

Ask:

- **What do I know today?**
- **What can I trust today?**
- **What is the next step I can take today?**

Then take it.

Let tomorrow disclose what you need to know tomorrow.



Bill W said it best:

We realize we know only a little.

God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.

◆ A Closing Thought

There is a power that can help me move toward that horizon. With trust and hope and acceptance.

There is a power that can and will break me away from the mental gyrations and circular reasoning toward

Life.

And thus restore me to sanity.

Thinking as clearly as I can at this point in time until tomorrow and next week and next month when more will be revealed.



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