



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps



Practicing the Principles

With Barry Lehman

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Becoming One Who Believes

In last week's monthly *Beyond Sobriety Master Class* we ended with integrity and wholeness as an ongoing work, the continuing practice of becoming the person I say I am.



And then a question:

How do I keep becoming that person?

I remember being stuck with this. I wrestled with it for months and longer.

- Gratitude? *Meh*. I wasn't there yet.
- How does my recovery fit with my career?
- How can I be the person whose wife believes him when he goes out to a meeting?
- How can God even consider forgiving me and why would God even bother?

When I entered treatment, I already believed in God.

I was a pastor. Believing was part of the job description

- Do I actually believe I can become that person?
- Do I believe that recovery gives me a new freedom to become that each and every day?
- Am I still trusting that Higher Power to continue to do more with me?

And yet recovery taught me how to **come to believe**.

I knew things **about** faith. Recovery required me to **risk living as if they were true**.

That's Only the Beginning- Of Course!

In long-term recovery, **we make these decisions again and again—and through living them, belief deepens.**

We become people who believe *because we've accumulated experience of trusting*—and discovering that we could keep going, growing, and becoming.

We don't know who we're becoming merely by examining what we believe. Eventually our belief becomes visible in how we live—how we respond, serve, forgive, change, listen, risk, let go.

Faith isn't simply believing something.

Faith is becoming someone who increasingly lives what they believe.

Living Recovery

And then there's an important long-term-recovery turn.

At 90 days, “came to believe” might mean I believe recovery can work.

At 38 years, “came to believe” means something different.

- *Can I believe there is still more growth ahead?*
- *Can I trust when life changes in ways I didn't choose?*
- *Can I loosen my grip on who I think I am supposed to be?*
- *Can I believe that becoming doesn't stop because I've gotten older—or because I've been sober a long time?*

At my age, those aren't theoretical questions anymore.

I don't know what lies ahead. In reality I never did, although at 40 I could more easily pretend that I did.

Recovery began for me when I had no idea what was ahead and made a decision to trust anyway.

Practicing the Principles:

Practice of the week:

Where am I being asked to live today as though I really believe what I say I believe?



◆ A Closing Thought

- **Almost 38 years later, perhaps Step 3 hasn't changed as much as I have.**

Can I continue to entrust the life I actually have—not the life I imagine—to a Power greater than myself?

Maybe “came to believe” was never meant to describe something that happened once.

Maybe it describes what happens when we keep practicing faith.

**We make decisions based on our growing belief
and trust in a power greater than ourselves.**

We become people who believe.

And perhaps that is where hope begins.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ben', written in a cursive style.



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