View in browser



Mastering Recovery

Rooted in the Steps

Recovery Capital

With Barry Lehman

Issue 6.16 - October 14, 2026



I'll be at the MARRCH Annual Conference again this year.

Hope to see you there.

More Than a Checklist



If you're like me, and naturally, you are and you aren't, you look at the words "recovery capital" and you do one of at least three things, maybe all of them and more.

#1, "oh, a new program I can learn- THE Recovery Capital Program."

#2, "at least give me a checklist of what the assets are I need in order to build my own (more perfect) program."

#3, "meh. Move on. (Which can be said before, during, or after any of these or other reactions.) It's just one more thing to forget."

But if I don’t do something with this, I’ll forget it. (See #3 above) How do I know what I need, want, or even, should care about in my own daily recovery. Even years of sobriety later?

This long-term recovery stuff is getting complicated.

🌈 That's Only the Beginning- Of Course!

In one of the few ways I stay organized, I keep things gathered together in the bookcases in my office.

Some are gathered by topic. The recovery books on the top shelf- easy to see; easy to reach. Spirituality is right next to them.

Behind me are my books, and those written by friends and a section of books in Spanish. (Don’t worry. It makes sense to me.)

Think of Recovery Capital as everything available on my mental bookcase that can support my recovery. It kind of looks like this:

Personal: health, skills, resilience, purpose, hope...
Social: family, friends, peers, sponsors, professionals...
Community: housing, work, transportation, healthcare, organizations...
Cultural/spiritual: identity, values, traditions, faith, meaning...

And there I did it. I said I didn't want a checklist and gave you one.
Sorry about that.

But this isn't a shopping list.

Nor is it the whole bookcase: How about-

- Creativity. Recreation. Curiosity. Humor. Music. Asking for help. Tolerating uncertainty. Knowing when to say no. Knowing when to say yes...

Like the order of my office bookcase, this is my list. It makes sense to me.

Yours doesn’t have to look like mine. All the specifics of the things in my lists above reflect me, my life, and my years of recovery.

You don’t need to go out and learn how to play trumpet to strengthen your recovery.
But I do.

No argument with the Twelve Steps being there for many of us. In fact, the Steps are plainly on my bookcase.

It says so at the top of this newsletter every week. “Rooted in the Steps.”

They're just not the entire bookcase.

...🌿 Living Recovery

Recovery is larger than doing a particular set of things in a particular order. What has recovery actually added to my shelves?

Not merely what recovery activities have I performed, but what capacities have developed because I've been living this way?

Perhaps I am more resilient. More willing to ask for help. Better able to tolerate disappointment. More connected. More curious. More comfortable with myself. Better at boundaries. More able to sit with uncertainty. More hopeful.

Those are recovery assets.

And some came through Steps. Some through therapy. Some through faith. Some through relationships. Some through getting older. Some through screwing something up and learning from it.

My MARRCH presentation will be on Tuesday morning, Oct 27 at 8:00 AM.

From Maintaining Recovery to Living Recovery:
Helping Clients Build a Sustainable Recovery Life

We will explore Recovery Capital along with *hope, practice, and connection*. How do we help our clients (and ourselves) move into long-term recovery*?*

🌿🌿 Strengthening Recovery:

What's on your shelves?
What's there now that wasn't there when you began recovery?
What have you got from your own experience, strength, and hope?



You know you are building recovery capital when you misplace things like a car key instead of a entire decade.

— Sober Community Meme

🔶 A Closing Thought

So, is it truly a bookcase?

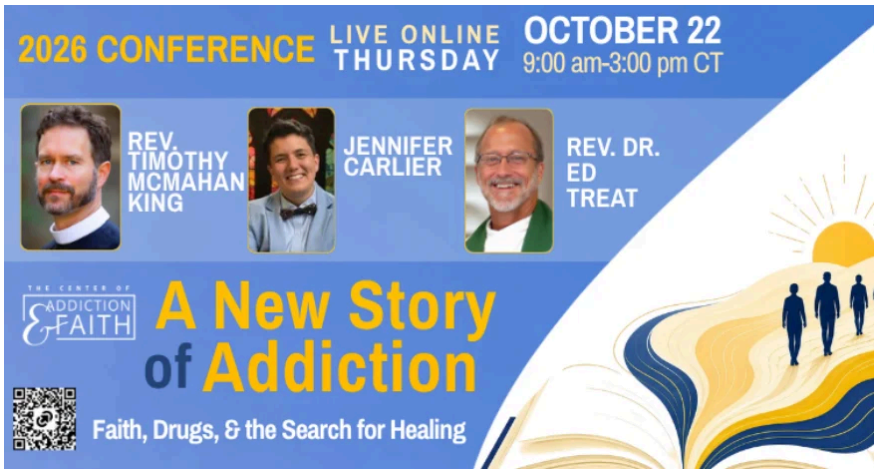
Might it be hoarding?

Or is it a vault where I keep my most prized and protected assets?

I have a hunch there's something important about that question.
But that's for another time.
Focus on the bookcase this week.



Upcoming Event: Thursday, October 22



Register

Back issues of the newsletter can be found at: **Newsletter Hub.**

Email me. I always look forward to hearing from you

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

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

All photographs are my own.

Copyright © 2026

Spam is not part of recovery.
You may unsubscribe at any time.

Unsubscribe