

*Mastering Recovery*

Rooted in the Steps

Recovery Capital

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**Issue 6.20 - November 11, 2026**

# What's a Balanced Recovery Diet?



Two weeks ago, when I was exploring ways to eat more healthfully, ChatGPT told me not to count calories.

Don't turn healthy eating into another task, it said.

The goal wasn't to become an expert calorie counter. It was to develop a healthier way of eating.

## 🌈 That's Only the Beginning- Of Course!

Since this is about recovery, not nutrition (even though they do go together) the questions led me to the obvious.

What genuinely nourishes recovery?
What strengthens, restores, energizes, and gives meaning to me and my recovery?

I'm not taking this metaphor too literally, but it offers some playful possibilities.

**Recovery protein:** What builds strength?
Relationships, honest conversations, learning, practicing skills, asking for help.

**Recovery fiber:** What helps us process life's difficulties?

Reflection, patience, perspective, humor, accepting what we cannot control.

**Recovery vitamins**: What keeps us growing?
Curiosity, creativity, gratitude, hope, spiritual practice, wonder.

**Recovery energy:** What gives me the vitality to enjoy living?
Music, laughter, play, celebration, and simply enjoying life.

To live your balanced life isn't to follow someone else's menu. I'm not your new recovery food pyramid builder. It's to keep this thought alive:

## ...🌿 Living Recovery

**What is all this nourishment making possible?**

**Recovery Energy** isn't just about hobbies and entertainment. It's about being available for the life and relationships we've worked to recover.

Back when I worked in treatment, I used to tell patients that six months from now, their significant other might say:

*I'm glad you're sober, but I don't see you any more than I used to. You're always going to meetings.*

My advice was simple: Don't react to what you hear. React to what they mean.

They aren't necessarily saying, "Stop going to meetings." They're saying,

*"I like the person I'm beginning to see, and I want to spend more time with you."*

- They want a relationship that can grow;
- to be couple who can enjoy being together;
- to have a life together that includes more than the activities necessary to maintain sobriety.

*"I'm glad you're recovering. When do we get to enjoy the life we're recovering for?"*

Notice that may not mean fewer meetings if you still are feeling the need. It's finding a healthier balance between the practices that support recovery

*and* the relationships that recovery makes possible.

Recovery practices nourish the life we're recovering.
They aren't meant to replace it.

Needless to say my mind jumped to “Is there such a thing as recovery junk food?” You know- over indulgence, too many sweets.

Maybe, but it's not a particular activity at all.

Maybe it's the things that look like recovery but don't nourish it.

- Reading recovery books only to reassure myself that I already know everything.
- Giving advice instead of listening.
- Using recovery slogans to avoid dealing with something difficult.
- Staying so busy helping others that I neglect my own relationships.

Those things can look like good recovery practices on the outside while offering very little nourishment.

The question isn't whether an activity looks like recovery. It's whether it's nourishing the life we're trying to live.

🌿🌿 **Strengthening Recovery:**

**What is nourishing my recovery these days—**
**and what is that nourishment making possible in my life?**



*A balanced recovery diet should leave room for dessert.*

— Mastering Recovery

## 🔶 A Closing Thought

A healthy recovery life isn't measured only by how faithfully I practice recovery. It's also reflected in the life those practices make possible.

I want to be nourished by recovery—not so I can spend all my time working on recovery, but so I can live.



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