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What's Next: A Recovery That Keeps Growing

What I'm Thinking



Four years ago, I started *Mastering Recovery* with a single idea:

That long-term recovery needs long-term vision.

Not just tools for staying sober—

but conversations about how we live, grow, create, and serve... for the long haul.

Now, as we begin Year 5, that vision is coming into clearer focus.

And with it, a shift—one that I've been circling around for weeks, but today, I want to say plainly.

The Heart of It

Mastering Recovery will be even more strongly rooted in the 12-Steps—
but not just as a structure to follow. As a foundation to **build on**.

In Year 5, we'll explore what it means to grow beyond maintenance—
to live recovery as a **creative, relational, and spiritual** experience.

Not just avoiding relapse... but embracing your capacity to live, love, serve, and
evolve.

Because long-term recovery isn't just about holding the ground.

It's about walking forward with it under your feet—

with intention, with joy, and with the tools that helped you get here still in your
hands.

Here's What That Looks Like

Nine years ago, I attended a trumpet workshop at the Shell Lake Arts Center in Wisconsin.

Now, I wasn't new to the trumpet—not after 50+ years of playing. I was active in multiple bands and could hold my own as a first trumpet (as long as we stayed out of the stratosphere).

But that week? Something shifted.

I wasn't there to "get better" in the usual sense. I was there to listen more deeply. To challenge old habits. To be a beginner again—even with decades behind me. It reawakened something—**curiosity, connection, joy**.

That's when I began to understand mastery:

Not as perfection or control, but as *renewed relationship*.

As returning to something I loved with humility, attention, and openness.

And *that's* what long-term recovery can be.

Not sobriety as survival,
but sobriety as a platform for becoming more fully yourself—
through creativity, spirituality, and real connection.

So What's the Shift?

You won't see a complete overhaul.

But you will notice a new rhythm and focus:

- **More storytelling** — reflections from long-term recovery journeys, including my own, and real-world moments that bring the process of growth to life.
- **More tools you can use** — practical prompts, checklists, journaling cues, and ways to apply the Steps when you're no longer just trying to stay afloat.
- **More ways to connect what's worked... with what's next** — including group opportunities, fresh conversations, and themes that bridge foundational recovery with the creative, purposeful life that follows.

And here's the thing:

Sometimes, before we know what the next chapter *is*, we already feel it stirring inside us.

It shows up as restlessness, as hunger, as a quiet knowing that something in us

is shifting—even if we don't have words for it yet.

That's not just longing.

That's life inviting us forward.

What Comes Next

July will bring a five-part series that follows the arc of mastery:

- **Connection** – how curiosity and relationship reawaken long-term recovery
- **Foundation** – what Steps 1–3 offer us, even years later
- **Flow** – how Steps 4–9 keep us moving, healing, and growing
- **Freedom** – what it means to live Steps 10–11 as a spiritual rhythm
- **Purpose** – how Step 12 reveals that mastery was never just for us alone

If you've ever asked, "What now?" or "How do I keep recovery fresh and meaningful?"

This next season is for you.

Reflection Prompt

What part of your recovery is asking to be re-engaged—not because it's broken, but because you're ready to build something more?



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✓ Taking a Step Beyond

The future enters into us, in order to transform us, long
before it happens.

— Rainer Maria Rilke



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