

# Mastering Recovery

A Newsletter on Long-Term Sobriety



## E-Book Launch: October 4

[Join the Launch Team](#)

**#10-- September 8, 2021**

### Making Decisions

Because we are able make better, healthier decisions in recovery,  
we can develop mastery.

#### What I'm Thinking

*We make decisions in several different ways, based on many factors. Most of the time we think we are making these decisions logically, with thought and attention. Most of the time we aren't. A lot goes on in the brain when we have to make a decision. The process begins, and even finishes at times, beneath our conscious awareness.*

*There are really two decision-making pathways in the brain. To oversimplify it so as not to be at this for days, they are the emotional and the cognitive. The emotional pathway is buried in the mid-brain. It is always on guard for danger and uncertainty. It knows what is happening around you well before you do. The cognitive pathway is the higher thinking portion of our brain. This part can review and consider and discuss what is happening.*

*At times, when the emotional pathway is engaged, the brain quickly shuts off the cognitive thinking process. At those time decisions are being made with little to no input from logic, common sense, or awareness of consequences. Again, to*

oversimplify, that is what happens in a brain that has been hijacked by a substance use disorder. That under-the-surface decision-making pathway jumps to its hijacked state. The decision then ends up favoring the ongoing actions of the disease.

*Recovery must involve the process of bringing the two pathways into a healthier way of making decisions. The path of recovery allows the brain to be rewired. That can happen because the brain has what is known as *neuroplasticity*. The definition given in [Wikipedia](#) says that neuroplasticity is the "ability of neural networks in the brain to change through growth and reorganization."* One important aspect of recovery is to give the brain the opportunity to change into healthier styles of decision-making.

*Once we have begun that process we are on the path that can lead us to mastery in recovery. We can get better at something that we like and is important to us.*



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## **Facing Challenges - Building Recovery**

Disputing Irrational Beliefs is a cognitive-based approach to rewiring the brain. The people at SMART Recovery have produced a video that has some very good ideas you can use at any time in recovery. They can help get past some of the thinking-based negative beliefs. Use the link below to go to YouTube

**[Link to SMART Recovery Video](#)**

Note: This is from the SMART Recovery group. It has excellent material on the cognitive restructuring needed for long-term recovery. As I say many times in the book, all the abstinence-based recovery programs use the same principles. They just describe them in different ways.

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## Picture of the Week



**Pay Attention**

**Cognitive,  
Emotional,  
or both?**

## Quote of the Week

The greatest day in your life and mine is when we take total responsibility for our attitudes. That's the day we truly grow up.

- John C. Maxwell

## Tools and Resources

Two books that I have found very helpful in understanding the way the brain makes decisions are these...

***Thinking, Fast and Slow***

by Daniel Kahneman

***Rewire Your Anxious Brain***

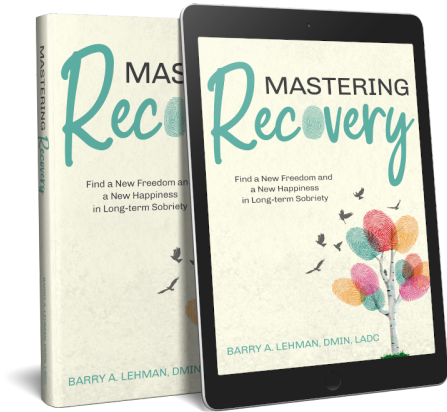
by Catherine Pittman and Elizabeth Karle.

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support the newsletter and allows me to continue to share mastering recovery.  
Thank you for the support!

## Book Update



Click the link below.

**Twenty-six Days**

**Monday, October 4, 2021**

The E-book will be available on Amazon! When you buy the book, there will also be a link to get a free three-week self-inventory journal to help you explore your recovery mastery journey.

Join the launch team and help spread the word.

[Join the Mastering Recovery launch team](#)

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