

Mastering Recovery

A Newsletter on Long-Term Sobriety

#2 -- July 14, 2021

Finding What You Need

Do I "need" it or do I "want" it?
How do I know which is which?
Where do I look?

What I'm Thinking

A number of years ago I was involved with the opening of a housing program for elderly homeless. When they first opened, all the clients moving in were moving directly from the street or shelters. Nobody anticipated what would happen almost six months to the day later. Most of the residents had emotional or mental health breakdowns. These had always been under the radar while they lived on the street with only overnight shelter for safety and breakfast. Now, with their basic needs being met, the issues that were pushed away by meeting their most fundamental concerns came flowing out. When the physical needs are met, then come the emotional and psychological ones.

Way back in the previous century, the psychologist Abraham Maslow suggested that there are five basic human needs.

1. Physical- air, water, food, sleep, health.
2. Safety- security, a place to live, the ability to get needed resources.
3. Psychological- love, friendship, belonging
4. Emotional- self-esteem, respect, freedom.
5. "Self-actualization"- morality, creativity, confidence, problem solving.

Most people moving into early recovery are wrestling with the psychologically- based needs and many are facing physical, safety,

and health needs. Many of the human needs further up the list have slowly disintegrated. That's one of the reasons long-term recovery takes at least two-years of sobriety.

*After the first two years, though, one's world has grown stronger. Needs are being met. People discover greater self-reliance and confidence, move toward improving daily life-skills in new ways, and they find renewed meaning and purpose. That is what **Mastering Recovery** is all about. Growing in self, in ability, and meaning.*



Facing Challenges - Building Recovery

A Moment for Reflection and Inventory

- Think back to when you started this journey of recovery.
 - Where were you on Maslow's list above?
 - What was most important to you in those first few months, in other words, what was your greatest *need*?
 - How did you meet it?
- Think about today.
 - Where are you on Maslow's list?
 - What is your greatest need today?
 - How do you meet that need today?
- What can you do today to strengthen your skills to meet your needs for tomorrow?

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Picture of the Week



Finding What You Need

She is most likely building a nest. Where does she find what she needs?

Wherever it is.

Those threads in her beak came from the twine I use to hold my tomato plants to the cage. (See the twine? It's left of and below center.)

That's how recovery works. You start with where you are, look around for what you need, and use it. No, you don't "steal" it or take it away from others, You explore the resources at hand and move forward.

Have You Seen This?

The ideas of mastery are vast and diverse. Brad Stulberg, best-selling author of *Peak Performance* and *The Passion Paradox* has listed a number of them on The Mission website.

15 Practices for Staying on the Path of Mastery:

Immerse yourself deeply in the process of growth and development — and enrich your life.

Quote of the Week

When I got sober, I thought giving up [alcohol] was saying goodbye to all the fun and all the sparkle, and it turned out to be just the opposite. That's when the sparkle started for me.

Mary Karr, author of *Lit: A Memoir* ([-- The Fix](#))

Tools and Resources

One of the best books I have ever read on the Twelve Steps (other than the Big Books of AA or NA) is by the popular and wise spiritual director, Fr. Richard Rohr. While coming to the Steps from his own religious background, he goes far beyond the religious into the deeply spiritual. Can open many new ideas for movement in recovery.

[Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps](#)

And the book by Mary Karr will take you into her world. A good reminder of where we have all been in one way or another.

[Lit: A Memoir](#)

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## Book Update

Two milestones in the next week:

- **Mastering Recovery** will go to the formatter! The plan is to have Kindle eBook, paperback and hardback versions available by the end of August. Audiobook most likely in late September.
- The cover design will be finalized.

Watch this spot next week for information about being part of the Mastering Recovery Launch Team.

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