

# Mastering Recovery

A Newsletter on Long-Term Sobriety

#40 -- April 6, 2022



Links to **Mastering Recovery** on **Facebook** are in the **Tools and Resources** below. Check them out.

## It's All About Recovery

### What I'm Thinking

*Last week I used a quote from Carl Erik Fisher in his book, *The Urge*. It is a concise and readable history of our human approach to addiction over the centuries. After he goes through history he said:*

- To truly meet the challenge of addiction, a therapeutic response alone is not enough. For centuries, people have sought out a further step, something more recently called recovery. (*The Urge: Our History of Addiction*)

*In his reading of history, Fisher, an MD and person in recovery, kept noticing the different ways we have dealt with overcoming addiction. Nothing, alone, seemed to have *the answer* in spite of our human tendency to look for one. He called the search as something more- "beyond the therapeutic"- and pointed to the idea of recovery.*

*At that point I really sat up and took notice. After all, recovery is what I am deeply involved with. It is recovery as I understand it that, this is truly something more, beyond the medical and therapeutic. It is what I refer to as a lifestyle, not something we do.*

*My goal with Mastering Recovery as an approach to dealing with addiction comes from the same general understanding that Fisher lays out. He points out that building the idea of recovery is a source of hopefulness. At another point, Fisher writes:*

- Taking this broad definition of recovery—stable improvements in functioning and purpose in life—most people with substance problems will recover, and most do not need medical help to do so. And, according to the largest survey studies we have, the longer people are in recovery, the better their quality of life, family engagement, and functioning. In the

first months after entering recovery, happiness and self-esteem tend to drop after an initial period of stability, but after that, general measures of well-being increase exponentially.

*(The Urge: Our History of Addiction)*

*I will expand a little more on that in future newsletters.* But there is hope built in to the growth beyond early sobriety. Mastery is the term I have decided to use to describe the *ongoing process* of maintaining long-term sobriety through recovery. That can be built on many different platforms and approaches.

*Many years ago, when I was early in my recovery journey, less than two years, in fact, I heard a speaker at a church youth camp tell about her getting clean and sober. She kept talking about one thing or another, but always about doing it on her own. If she had any thoughts about AA she didn't share them. She was doing it on her own, simply with her faith.*

*I sat and listened with skepticism. "She's going to relapse," I said to myself. At which point she said, "And then I relapsed."*

*No, I had no clinical or other insight at that point.* I was just one more recovering alcoholic. But her story was too superficial, and too self-centered. She was simply staying sober. She was fighting the addiction, not building her new life. She never did use the Twelve Steps. She used other groups and means of recovery from that point forward. And it worked. As Fisher says above, the longer people are in recovery, the better their quality of life, family engagement, and functioning."

*Mastering Recovery* moves us forward. Next week I will talk a little more about this process and how I hope to make several things available. These will include

- A series of webinars on building recovery
- A 30-Day build blueprint for getting- and staying- unstuck.
- Possible opportunities to be part of an online Mastermind group.

*They will all use various resources that are mentioned in the roadmap you can download below. Stick with me. Go to Facebook and "join" the private group or "like" the *Mastering Recovery* page. I am taking my time in building this out. Join the team, watch for more information and other emails.*

*No matter where you are in your recovery beyond those first two years, you ain't seen nothing yet!*



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**Facing Challenges -  
Building Recovery**



The stages of the blueprint of recovery are:

- Phase 1- Foundation

Growth Mindset  
Awareness and Autonomy  
Desires and Empowerment

- Phase 2- Flow

Make a Plan  
Work the Plan  
Stay Unstuck

- Phase 3- Freedom

Spirituality and Community  
Values and Purpose  
Gratitude and Acceptance

[Link to a copy of the Mastering Recovery Roadmap](#) to download.

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## Quote and Picture of the Week

The pessimist complains about the wind;  
the optimist expects it to change;  
the realist adjusts the sails.

- William Arthur Ward



**Email Me** with ideas or questions and watch for more information in the next weeks.

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