

# Mastering Recovery

A Newsletter on Long-Term Sobriety



**#42 -- April 20, 2022**



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

## From Flow to Freedom

### What I'm Thinking

[*The past couple weeks I have highlighted Carl Erik Fisher's book, [The Urge](#). It is a concise and readable history of our human approach to addiction over the centuries. His research and writing led him to conclude that "a therapeutic response alone is not enough." He describes the "something more" that's needed as what we call "recovery." ([The Urge: Our History of Addiction](#))*]

*It is far too easy to talk about addiction as a brain disease, a hijacking of the brain, and reduce it to something beyond our ability to do something about it. The millions of people in long-term recovery prove the opposite. It IS possible to address the issue. It IS treatable. Just because addiction, substance use disorders, have a biological impact does not mean we are lost in a wilderness. Another quote from Dr. Fisher brings that home:*

- Addiction has a powerful effect on our biology, but we must be careful not to interpret those findings in an overly reductionist way, because so does recovery.  
— *The Urge: Our History of Addiction* by Carl Erik Fisher

*Fortunately, our brain has something called [plasticity](#). Simply put that means it can grow and change. That may seem obvious when we watch a baby grow into a toddler and then eventually a pre-teen and on. But what we can miss is that in many ways it never stops happening. It is not just negative influences (like substance use disorder) that can change the way our brains function. So can positive influences and actions.*

*As a trumpet player, I practice the hard passages in order to develop what we have often called "muscle memory." That's what allows me, eventually, to play a particular riff almost without thinking about it. I practice all the different scales on a regular basis so that when I come to a passage in that scale, my brain guides my fingers to (usually) play it correctly. It is in the practice time that I develop the newer or stronger reinforcement of brain pathways. When I find myself stuck in my playing, it means practice. When I find myself seeming*

to be at a plateau, I remember that this means I am about to move to a new level.

*The memory is truly not in the muscles, but in the brain connections that move the muscles. Practice builds the path and reinforces the actions. In my mastery blueprint for recovery that is what I call the **flow** phase. It is where we practice the things that strengthen our sobriety and move it deeper into recovery. Flow is when things become second nature. We don't have to think about them in order for them to work.*

*When I first started doing Tai Chi with a video, I had to pay close attention to what the instructor was doing and saying. I watched his moves and tried to emulate them. I was often thinking about the mechanics of the move. While it was not difficult, it was not natural. As time has gone on, I find myself almost automatically going from one movement to the next. Because of that my mind can relax and allow the benefits of Tai Chi to happen. This is when freedom happens. That does not mean that I am "free" to do whatever I want, it means that I am free to move through the routine and not have to think about it, which allows my body and brain the freedom to get the benefits.*

*For this to work, it takes more than just practice, it takes mentoring, perhaps coaching, definitely a community. Which is where I am going in building and expanding the Mastering Recovery platform. For that to happen, I expect to develop:*

- 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.

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!*



## 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.

---

### ***Was this email forwarded to you?***

Click button for your own subscription.

[Subscribe](#)

*Whether you got this directly from me or had it forwarded to you- why not forward it to someone you think might be interested?*

---

### **Quote and Picture of the Week**

Life is like a river. The way of life is to flow with the current. To turn against it takes effort but the current will carry you if you let it. Float with joy and ease.

-- Anonymous



---

### **Tools and Resources**

You are among the first to be part of the adventure of mastering recovery. I will soon be sending out emails inviting others to join.

Here are the current resources:

- **The Mastering Recovery Facebook page** and the **private Facebook group** are both up and live **NOW**.

The **MR page** is a public face for posts about ideas, resources, and general thoughts from me.

### [LINK to Mastering Recovery Page](#)

- The **MR group** will be for those who want to engage more deeply in discussion and interactions regarding long-term sobriety and the ideas behind mastery. As a "*private group*" only those who are members, admitted by the administrator (me, for now), will be able to see and make posts.

### [Link to JOIN](#) **the members-only Facebook Group**

**For the moment there will be only periodic posts and information as I get the system running. By the end of April, there will be regular posts to both groups for fun, information, and discussion. Any ideas or suggestions will be welcome on the page or the group.**

<><><><><><><><><><><>

**Now would be a good time to forward this newsletter to others you think might benefit from it. Help them get on board.**

[Email Me](#) with ideas or questions and watch for more information in the next weeks.

---

#### **Barry Lehman**

4903 16th Ave NW,  
Rochester MN 55901 United States

Copyright © 2022



You received this email because you signed up on my website. Spam is not part of recovery. If you don't wish to continue to receive this newsletter you may unsubscribe.

[Unsubscribe Here](#)