



Peer Support/Recovery Coaching An Interview with Kevin Brown, CARC, CRPA

For yet another spin on Recovery Coaching, this month *Recovery Talk* interviewed Recovery Coach and trainer of the Recovery Coach Academy (RCA), Kevin Brown.

Kevin is a Person in Long Term Recovery, a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA), Certified Addiction Recovery Coach (CARC) and a Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery ([CCAR](#)) Recovery Coach Academy Trainer.

NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL

Kevin tells us that he was attracted to Peer Support Services/Recovery Coaching because it provided another way of “carrying the message” (of hope and Recovery). What he liked, was that this model differed from the norm and moved beyond “treatment and 12 steps”.

Kevin took the Recovery Coach Academy training in 2012 at the Addiction Care Center of Albany (ACCA) with Marshal Rosier and then immediately went to NYC to take the Training of Trainers (TOT) with Dona Pagan at [The Resource Training & Counseling Center](#)).

He says that he wasted no time in becoming certified. He “got it done and got it done quick!”

GETTING STARTED In order to prepare himself to give the RCA, Kevin volunteered with Albany Behavioral Health providing informal Recovery

Coaching and training at the ACCA. For about a year and a half, he worked “behind the scenes” observing and asking questions. He says he wanted to know the infrastructure and to see how it all worked before striking out on his own.

Kevin’s first RCA course participants were community members and professionals. He then went on to train the staff at ACCA and members of Young People in Recovery (YPR).

MOTIVATION TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Kevin says that he has seen many members of the Recovery Community who really want to make a difference, however are frustrated that the system

doesn’t seem to be catching on to the peer professional movement quickly enough. He also says that although becoming a clinician is great it takes a long time and is considered more traditional. “As an independent recovery

coach you can think more outside the box, make your own hours and work with who you resonate with. Maybe you like to be out in nature, so you might look into starting an outdoor adventure based coaching practice”.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Kevin shared with us the practical advice that he usually gives the students in his courses. He says that you have to ask yourself some basic questions before you decide to take the class: Why are you taking this course?

- 1) What do you want to do with it?

“Find your niche market”

- Kevin Brown



- 2) Who do you want to work with? (Age group, gender, etc.)
- 3) Where do you want to work in? (Schools, Criminal Justice, Community Organization, Outdoors, in a Non-profit, etc.)

He says that the answers to these questions will help you to decide which credential you'd like to pursue (CARC vs. CRPA) and whether or not you want to work for someone else or open your own coaching practice.

WORDS OF WISDOM FOR ENTREPRENEURS

A lot of people are seeing that there are gaps in treatment services and are motivated to try to fill those gaps by opening up their own business. Kevin shared with us the very practical advice and steps that he shares with his students about getting started.

- 1) Choose a name for your business that reflects the answers to the "Who, What and Where" questions above. In other words, find your niche market.
- 2) Go to your County Clerk's office and register your business. You will have to decide whether you want to register as a DBA (Doing Business As) or LLC (Limited Liability Company), etc.
- 3) Open a bank account in your business name.
- 4) Get business cards (Staples or Vista print are inexpensive options)
- 5) Get liability insurance (contacting the company that carries your home owners or car insurance can point you in the right direction)

IT'S GOING TO TAKE ALL OF US

From our conversation it was apparent that Kevin believes strongly in the idea of Recovery Support Services, the community approach and multiple pathways of Recovery. However, he says "We

didn't get here over night. It's taken time to achieve what we've been blessed with - a daily reprieve from the ugly face of addiction. Recovery can and does happen". He also acknowledges that we didn't get here alone. "The only way to be great is to surround yourself with greatness." He says.



Kevin knows a lot of people who have been in Recovery for a long time who have started their own businesses specifically for people in Recovery; car and travel services, community centers, carpet cleaning, etc. He says that a lot of people take The Recovery Coach Academy Training to enhance what they are already doing.

Next month we will Recovery Talk will focus on a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate who is working in the OASAS treatment system.



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