



# Expanding The Role Of Professional Coaches In A "High" Society: Choosing Your Ideal Client



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## White Paper:

# Expanding the Role of Professional Coaches in a “High” Society: Choosing Your Ideal Client

By Jean M. LaCour

Professional Coaches have been changing lives and transforming organizations and systems around the world for over two decades. The efficacy of coaching is felt by individuals and families and impacts business, leadership development, education, behavioral health and primary healthcare. Powerful connections are possible in the coaching relationship that can accelerate personal growth and lead to integration and even transformation.

The International Association of Professional Recovery Coaches, a division of NET Institute Center for Addiction and Recovery Education, is committed to integrating the proven protocols of professional coaching with the best practices in drug, alcohol, and addiction recovery along with key principles informed by neuroscience. To this end, we have gathered a notable team of highly experienced professional coaches and addiction professionals who have devoted their lives to helping others.

## The Problem of Addiction

**How Society Pays** <http://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics>

Abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs is costly to the U.S., exacting more than **\$700 billion annually** in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and health care.

	Health Care	Overall
<b>Tobacco 400,000 deaths/year</b>	<b>\$130 billion</b>	<b>\$295 billion</b>
<b>Alcohol 100,000 deaths/year</b>	<b>\$25 billion</b>	<b>\$224 billion</b>
<b>Illicit Drugs</b>	<b>\$11 billion</b>	<b>\$193 billion</b>
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$166 billion</b>	<b>\$712 billion</b>

**Businesses pay a large portion** of the cost in terms of lost productivity, human error, accidents, thefts, identity theft, low morale, employee turnover, auto and other insurance losses, absenteeism due to sickness or family issues, and health care costs.

2 in 3 drug users are employed; 1 in 12 full-time workers use illicit drugs on a regular basis.

Addiction affects directly or indirectly over 130 million Americans when family members are included.

Addiction places a staggering burden on health care system:

- In 1990, tobacco was the most prominent non-genetic contributor to mortality in the US, with an estimated 400,000 deaths per year.
- Alcohol was the third largest contributor with over 100,000 deaths per year
- More money is spent on addiction than on either cardiovascular disease or cancer.  
(<http://www.uphs.upenn.edu/addiction/berman/society/> )

### **Addiction Defined**

Drug addiction is a complex disorder characterized by intense and, at times, uncontrollable drug craving, along with compulsive drug seeking and use that persists even in the face of devastating consequences.

While the path to drug addiction begins with the voluntary act of taking drugs, over time a person's ability to choose not to do so becomes compromised, and seeking and consuming the drug becomes compulsive.

This behavior results largely from the effects of **prolonged drug exposure on brain functioning**. Addiction... affects multiple brain circuits, including those involved in reward and motivation, learning and memory, and inhibitory control over behavior.

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/treatment-approaches-drug-addiction>

### **Lives and Families Ravaged by Addiction – from youth to seniors**

“Substance abuse has touched every family and circle of friends in America and causes and aggravates the nation’s most wrenching social problems – violent and property crimes, soaring health care costs, family breakup, domestic violence and child abuse, the spread of AIDS, teen pregnancy, poverty, and low productivity.” *High Society* [www.casa-columbia.org](http://www.casa-columbia.org)

Nearly a quarter of the nation’s college students meet the clinical criteria for alcohol and drug abuse and addiction. Every American child will be offered illegal drugs before graduating from high school, most on several occasions. (CASA, 2007)

Nearly 50 % of teens believe that taking prescription drugs is much safer than using illegal street drugs. Teens and many parents have a misconception that prescription painkillers are safe because they can be legally obtained when prescribed for legitimate use by a doctor. (Media Planet, 2015)

Since 2005, **145,000** people have died in the U.S. from LEGALLY prescribed opioids. **43,000** men, women and young people died in 2003, from abusing prescription drugs. (Friedman, Center for Disease Control)

The World Health Organization (WHO) says there are at least **140 million alcoholics** in the world; unfortunately, the majority of them are not treated. A US study estimated that about 30% of Americans report having an alcohol disorder at some time in their lives. (Medical News, 2014)

A person with untreated alcoholism will **die 26 years earlier** than they would otherwise, 25% of Americans die as a result of substance abuse. 95% of untreated addicts die of their addiction. ([www.robertperkinson.com](http://www.robertperkinson.com) )

North Americans, comprising only **four percent** of the world's population, **consume two-thirds of the world's illegal drugs**. (CASA, 2007)

The U.S. consumes more than 90% of the 259 million prescriptions written for opioids worldwide. (Media Planet, 2015)

Alcohol and substance abuse among the elderly is a hidden national epidemic. It is believed that about 10% of (U.S.) population abuses alcohol, but surveys revealed that as many as **17% of the over-65 adults** have an alcohol-abuse problem. In his work at the University of Kentucky, Dr. Hays found that 2.5 million older adults and 21% of older hospital patients had alcohol-related problems. ([www.oasas.ny.gov/admed](http://www.oasas.ny.gov/admed) )

Six to eleven percent of elderly hospital admissions are a result of alcohol or drug problems — 14 percent of elderly emergency room admissions, and 20 percent of elderly psychiatric hospital admissions. Older adults are hospitalized as often for alcoholic related problems as for heart attacks.

- Alcohol and drug use can temporarily numb feelings of loss, isolation and lost purpose or meaning in life. Drinking can fill the many idle hours.
- Alcohol or drugs replace the love, concern, emotional nurturing and warm intimate relationships that are no longer available. ([www.uphs.upenn.edu/addiction/berman/family/addiction](http://www.uphs.upenn.edu/addiction/berman/family/addiction))

## **Our Response – International Association of Professional Recovery Coaches will:**

Commit the energy and resources to “confront a plague that has maimed and killed more Americans than all our wars, natural catastrophes and traffic accidents combined.” (Califano [www.casa.columbia.org](http://www.casa.columbia.org) )

Enlist the efforts of the professional coaching community, therapists, clinical treatment and behavioral health professionals, the medical community, people and families in recovery, educators, faith communities, business and governmental leaders to reduce the stigma and destructive policies related to addiction; and to multiply the behavioral health workforce to provide strength-based recovery services across many systems at the local, national and international level.

Nurture, Equip and Train a growing cadre of effective and capable Professional Recovery Coaches at many levels who embrace the Coaching Stance that believes people are creative, resourceful, whole and free to make authentic choices. Such Recovery Coaches will be able to walk alongside people on their journey out of addiction as they personify the definition of Recovery promulgated by the U.S. federal agency called SAMHSA, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration:

“Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”

### **Context**

We acknowledge that it is difficult to quit using alcohol and drugs and to stop other addictive behaviors once certain patterns are established. It can even be hard to make it through early recovery for someone who has gone through clinical treatment. It is the mental struggle of recovery that is the most difficult and is something that most recovering clients cannot do on their own without growing in self-knowledge, appropriate coping skills, and support.

Through Professional Recovery Coaching, recovering persons can get the assistance they need to start their sober life with a clean slate. Life beyond addiction is wholly possible with a Recovery Coach who truly believes in them, and who is skilled in helping clients to find their own motivation and the inner strength needed to make the changes they desire.

Recovery Coaching is rapidly becoming the norm in today’s treatment continuum and is to the twenty-first century what counseling was to the twentieth century. The IAPRC has created Certificate Programs for Professional Recovery Coaches to address the major paradigm shift in the addiction treatment continuum. Since 2001, there has been a shift in focus in the addiction field from clinical, acute treatment services to holistic, long term recovery services.

Professional Recovery Coaching has emerged from this paradigm shift and is intended for Professional Life Coaches, Helping Professionals, Therapists and Addiction Counselors, as well as Peer Recovery Support Specialists, people in long term recovery, or family members with an addicted loved one. Each one brings something special to their work, even though they may be at various stages of experience and skill development.

Anyone is welcome who has a genuine desire to help people overcome the stigma and dilemma of addiction and who also holds the intention to master the fundamental building blocks needed to change lives. It is critical for Professional Recovery Coaches to master the basic elements outlined in the coursework in order to understand how to make interpersonal alliances with clients based on neuroscience and best practices that help clients make cognitive adjustments in their thinking.

*Foundations of Recovery Coaching* is one of the program components that offer an overview of effective strength-based coaching principles and the concept of Whole Life Recovery, which addresses the mental, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual states of being. When these five domains are integrated and kept in balance as a recovery fundamental, it will foster the “recovery capital “ our clients must have to maintain long term sobriety, thus making them more resilient as they learn to “reframe” the futility and possibility of relapse.

Recovery Coaching is founded on two core beliefs: 1) there are many pathways to making a full recovery and 2) once sober, the solutions to the many challenges facing a client in recovery are found within themselves. The coursework will illustrate this idea through evidence-based models that demonstrate how a Professional Recovery Coach serving as a guide and partner to clients, can elicit solutions and strategies based on a client’s own strengths.

Our students are about to embark upon a journey that focuses on ending a client’s struggle with an alcohol or drug relapse cycle. You will be doing this by helping recovering clients identify, analyze and change their irrational belief system as it relates to their recovery journey and their struggles with fear of relapse. You will be introducing new methods in which clients can take back their lives and adopt healthier, more productive behaviors. Recovery Coaching is not a treatment program, instead, it is a Professional Coaching model that is **intended to complement**, not replace treatment or counseling or 12 step mutual aid groups.

The driving force of our program is called cognitive restructuring, a psychological term that focuses on helping clients to be aware of and change their patterns of thinking which for a time have been maladaptive and out of sync with reality. Before you can change addictive behaviors you must first change addictive thinking. Motivational Interviewing also provides key skills for helping clients move through the change process with greater success.

## Purpose of IAPRC Training

The purpose of our Certified Professional Recovery Coach (CPRC) training is to offer specialized yet practical strategies that can accelerate recovery, introduce mindfulness, and help clients replace their self-defeating, addiction-based habits. We offer a positive approach that provides our clients with new and healthier behaviors that address the body, the mind and the spirit; in a sense, a whole life recovery attitude. We do this because shame and blame models are disempowering to 21<sup>st</sup> century clients, and are therefore ineffective.

Professional Recovery Coaching is a product of the **paradigm shift in today's treatment continuum**. It is rapidly becoming an accepted practice. It provides a road map based on sound recovery principals that offer strategies that can strengthen recovery practices. It bears repeating that it is intended for peer and professional coaches alike who are at various stages of experience and skills development. Our CPRC Program was created in essence because something more was needed than the old traditional models.

## Choosing Your Ideal Client and Niche

Recovery Coaching is a voluntary process that flourishes in supportive communities and relationships. It also gives back to individuals, families and communities what addiction has taken away. Substance use treatment must move beyond emergency responses and care that is just about pain-relief to holistic care that is oriented to promoting long-term recovery. We believe Professional Recovery Coaching is the next wave in effective addiction recovery aftercare.

As a Professional Coach you may have a certain niche or type of client you have a passion to serve. It may be youth, or families, or managers or business owners. Perhaps it's helping people in life transitions, like Baby Boomers or people experiencing divorce or grief; you may work with people in highly skilled professions like medicine or IT or law; and you may already have clients who have shared their personal recovery with you and want to explore their current status.

In essence, Professional Recovery Coaching reduces stigma and shame; it effectively:

1. Encourages people to examine their alcohol/drug use before it becomes problematic
2. Empowers people to start their sober life on a solid footing.
3. Energizes people in long term recovery from addiction or codependency to discover new levels of satisfaction & purpose in life.

## Seven Types of People Who Benefit from Recovery Coaching

### 1. Family Members of Young Adults:

If you are a Coach with a passion to serve families and youth, you may offer your services to wise and proactive parents of high school or college age students. As you are helping them clarify values, explore possibilities, set priorities, you can naturally surface the topic of substance use, abuse and other at risk behaviors. It is preferable for you to help them research the facts on reputable sites like <http://drugabuse.gov> as well as [www.brainplace.com](http://www.brainplace.com). Coaching them in how to communicate their boundaries, helping them with coping skills like mindfulness and healthy eating. You can also reinforce their confidence in using effective refusal skills as you role play likely situations they may encounter.

### 2. Older Adults or their Family Members:

Everyday 10K people turn 65 in the U.S. Similar demographics exist across the developed world. In Japan for example, more disposable adult diapers are sold than diapers for infants and babies. Creative non-medical, non-clinical services and companies are being formed daily to meet a host of special needs for our aging populations. Professional Recovery Coaching for older adults is a service needed now. Families will be looking for qualified coaches, not just a '12 step sponsor'. Companies that provide shopping, cleaning and personal companions for older adults report that alcoholism and prescription drug abuse is common. It is also disturbing and beyond what they can address.

People in this age group are vulnerable for two major reasons.

a. Metabolism: Physical changes in our metabolism means we cannot metabolize alcohol as quickly and a few drinks can quickly become problematic, especially if a person is also taking one or more prescription medications and over the counter medication. Vicodin and Benzodiazepines take a longer time for an older person to break down so they stay in the body. Addiction can develop very quickly for a person who used to be able to drink 1 or 2 drinks daily; this amount can now be problematic.

b. Transition: People at retirement age often relocate great distances from their established support systems, AA groups, faith communities, social networks, etc. They may move to Arizona or Florida. They may become isolated or perhaps a bit depressed from the loss of friends, a spouse, their sense of community, etc. Alcohol can seem like a great way to lessen the disappointment.

**3. People Leaving Clinical Treatment:** Recovery Support and follow up is very important for people who have recently been released from a residential treatment facility, or other program



of clinical counseling or therapy. Many treatment centers schedule follow up phone calls to check in with clients weekly and then less frequently. Professional Recovery Coaching is well suited to provide personalized accountability and structure so critical in early recovery, along with help in identifying thinking errors and emotional triggers. The first 6 to 12 months of sobriety are critical for most people. The unique coaching connection we teach Professional Recovery Coaches is vital in helping people move from survival to sobriety, then to satisfaction, and with time, they experience true personal significance. Our Recovery Coaches are fully prepared in understanding the stages of addiction and the important stages of recovery. No matter whom they are coaching, they will have a roadmap for the journey and quiet confidence in their role as coach and supporter.

**Note:** In the last year several directors of treatment programs contacted me about hiring our Certified Professional Recovery Coach graduates to coach their clients who are leaving treatment. It is a sign of things to come.

You need to be aware of two other non-clinical types of ‘Coaches’ in Behavioral Healthcare. People who are “**Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialists**” often work in treatment centers or in recovery programs. They are certified through various addiction counselor certification boards. They perform a type of case management often called ‘care coordination’. They may serve as part of the treatment team as a person with ‘lived experience’ of addiction who is a role model for hope and recovery. Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialists typically receive 30 to 75 hours of training and must work under supervision; they do not have private clients but they are often referred to as “recovery coaches”. You need to know the difference between the two roles. Certified Professional Recovery Coaches have a much broader academic preparation, ‘scope of practice’, client focus as well as increased fiduciary and ethical responsibilities.

Another type of Peer role pertains to people with ‘lived experience’ of a mental illness. They focus is typically to serve on mental health treatment teams or volunteer at community ‘club houses’ that serve people in recovery from a mental illness. These Peers role model hope and the reality of recovery and wellness. They typically have 40 hours of training and are called “**Peer Recovery Supporters**”. Various US states and nations have their own certification processes. (NET Institute also provides complete online training programs for these two non-clinical roles mentioned above, including a 40 hour online Peer Recovery Supporter training for US military veterans and service members. [www.netinstitute.org](http://www.netinstitute.org) )

**4. People in Long Term Recovery:** Many people in recovery from addiction or codependency are grateful for their sobriety and stability yet they know then need something more, maybe a recovery ‘tune up’ similar to what is needed for a valuable automobile. They know they do NOT need to go back to counseling or back into treatment. Yet they sense there could be a new level

of growth or personal goals to explore. Perhaps this person has returned to 12 Steps meetings to help “the newcomer” or to serve and give back. But years of 12 Step or community service work is not the same as Professional Recovery Coaching which is designed to help a client explore and develop their potential based on their own values that are emerging over time.

Working with a Professional Coach with a Specialty in Addiction Recovery is an ideal way for these clients to continue to remain anonymous and still have a ‘Recovery Check Up’. They are re-energized as they discover deeper insight to reclaim their possibilities and experience a more vibrant way of life beyond their identities as ‘addicts, alcoholics’ or a person ‘in recovery.’

**5. Family and Friends:** Family members and loved ones of addicted persons benefit from Professional Recovery Coaching as well as Adult Children of Alcoholics/Dysfunction. Every member of an addictive family system will struggle with co-dependency and self-worth and years of anxiety from living with an out of control addict or depressed alcoholic. Recovery Coaches who understand Family Systems dynamics including bonding and boundary issues, the rules and roles of a dysfunctional system, the rituals and recovery steps best suited to the client’s temperament will be able to provide a safe and supportive space for people as they debrief from the trauma and grief of living with an addict.

Profound change can happen for the entire family when the person who is the ‘chief enabler’ enters into their own recovery and restoration. Adult Children of Alcoholics/ Dysfunction are another group of people who respond with great appreciation and joy as they reclaim their true identities and cast off dysfunctional roles and rules.

**6. High Pressured Professionals:** Many people who have come through addiction may have a credential or license at stake. This may include doctors and other healthcare professionals, or attorneys, airline pilots, etc. You may have heard the term ‘impaired attorney’ or ‘impaired nurse’. Their professional or trade associations have specific programs and guidelines they must adhere to in order to retain their right to work in their career based on their credentials. They have increased pressure to maintain their own personal recovery and the pressure can be a trigger for relapse.

Business executives, sales directors, accountants, IT managers, computer systems analysts, and even law enforcement personnel who work in high performance, high risk or other stress filled environments can benefit tremendously from a Professional Recovery Coach who is knowledgeable and skilled in supporting clients in recovery. Engaging in wellness is vital along with identifying values, exploring priorities and defining base line self-care.

**Note:** There is no stigma associated with having a Personal Professional Coach; rather it is seen as a positive, growth enhancing investment in personal and/or career development. People who choose to keep their recovery a confidential matter can benefit greatly by engaging a

Professional Coach who just happens to have a Specialty in Addiction Recovery and understands the need for confidentiality and anonymity.

**7. People who want to cut back:** Often people want to address their problematic substance use or other negative behaviors. They are in the contemplation stage of change and can utilize the unique services of a Certified Professional Recovery Coach to explore their actions and options to gain a new perspective. The caring and direct non shaming accountability within the coaching connection can effectively build a client's self-esteem and confidence and support their desire to make healthy behavior changes before addictive patterns progress.

## **Be a Force Multiplier in a Life Giving Community**

The phenomenon of addiction lends itself to many metaphors. At a large international addiction conference in Mexico last year, I presented Addiction in the context of a Hurricane. My examples were Katrina that hit New Orleans and Sandy that came on shore in New Jersey and New York City. These massive storms build over time in known stages, wreak havoc in random yet predictable ways, and devastate huge areas, populations, buildings, and economic capacities; and, they are followed by systematic triaged disaster relief responses at huge financial cost for months/years.

I presented Professional Recovery Coaching as one of the emerging roles of nonclinical services that is part of an expanding continuum of care of triaged disaster responses to the epidemic and suffering of addiction. This is the perfect time to expand your reach and to extend your hand to the types of clients you are well positioned to serve. You can add the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are truly needed to heal our "high" society.

As you ponder who is your ideal client or clients, you will be defining where you fit into the triaged relief responses. You may already have an instinctive sense of where to find them and how to reach out to them. I believe that you will discover important ways to contribute. You will see the profound impact you can make on individuals, families, businesses and communities.

### **Take the Next Step!**

If you have a genuine desire to help others, the Certified Professional Recovery Coach Program is a natural path to truly making a difference and leaving a lasting legacy.

You will learn how to help people affected by addiction to move through the change process and take steps to discover and restore the possibilities in their lives.

**CPRC Program:** We train **Certified Professional Coaches** who want to increase their base of clients in a growing niche market by adding a **Specialty in Addiction Recovery**.

You will receive 100 hours of self-paced, online training created by leading experts in Addiction Recovery who embrace the value and effectiveness of Professional Coaching. You will learn potent methods and tools to expand your capacity for a lucrative career changing lives.

**CPRC Dual Program:** If you or some you know wants to become a Certified Professional Coach, we offer a full online training component within the CPRC Dual 100 hour Program that includes outstanding Coach training and preparation to help you launch your new Coaching practice. You will earn two credentials in the Dual Program: 1) Certified Professional Coach (CPC) and 2) Certified Professional Recovery Coach (CPRC).

<http://www.recoverycoachtraining.com/program-overview/>

**Join our Global Initiative!**

**Become a Certified Professional Recovery Coach!**

If you would like to join us in leading the way to providing the finest in coaching as a Certified Professional Recovery Coach, you can learn more on our website.

Find us online at [www.recoverycoachtraining.com](http://www.recoverycoachtraining.com)

You can easily register on our Homepage to attend a free Webinar or sign up to schedule a personal no-obligation call to “Discover Your Recovery Coaching Future.”

Email us at [info@recoverycoachtraining.com](mailto:info@recoverycoachtraining.com) or give us a call at +1.407.446.3740.

Reach out to us today. Let us help you get started helping others.

**About the Author:** **Dr. Jean LaCour** is a Certified Prevention Professional who comes from three generations of alcoholism and authored the book “Solutions for Codependency: The Path of Wholeness.” In 1996, she co-founded NET Institute Center for Addiction and Recovery Education, a nonprofit international training organization specializing in online training programs in counseling, addiction, recovery support services, peer specialist skills, pastoral care, and professional recovery coaching. Dr. LaCour is a sought after trainer, author, curriculum developer and international consultant who has participated in United Nations addiction projects and trained in twenty five nations including Egypt, Pakistan, India, Cambodia, Malaysia and Chile. As a tireless advocate for people in recovery and for people who serve in the addiction field around the world, she is best known for her enthusiasm and energy in sharing an uplifting message of hope in overcoming the challenges of life with grace and courage.