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I have known Alan Rowland since May 2002. Alan is dedicated to improving mental health services for the benefit of others, his passion, drive and energy for supporting people with mental health problems is very unique and inspiring, this translates into an unusual quality of meaningful content in his training. This has been evident throughout the time I have known him.

We have collaborated on two European Leonardo da Vinci Pilot-Projects. In the first project 'Harmonising Mental Health Nursing across Europe' Alan participated in the development of university training modules for mental health nurses working in community settings. Alan's were excellent.

In the second project "EX-IN (Experienced Involvement)" Universities, Mental Health Services and Client organisations from Norway, Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and Slovenia worked together to develop a range of training topics for mental health clients to become experts by experience themselves, working as recovery guides or trainers delivering training to mental health clients, professionals and other staff.

Alan developed a creative and innovative training module using a variety teaching techniques for the 4 day training module 'Comprehensive Assessment'. Using his experience, knowledge and communication skills he has produced a first class training module and developed a range of practical recovery tools which is currently in use across Europe.

In November 2008, we invited Alan to Germany to deliver a two day training workshop on recovery for mental health professionals and clients from different organisations in Bremen. Similar training workshops were delivered to professionals at a large rehabilitation service in Hamburg. He then delivered a well attended lecture of his experiences at Hamburg University.

We received fantastic feed back from all participants. He combined his personal experience with recovery theory. He explained and demonstrated the method of using the recovery tools he has developed, based on building relationships of trust. These tools work on many different levels, they have a wellness focus not an illness focus. The participants were very inspired by the diversity of training methods as well as by Alan's ability to explain complex issues in a simple and easy way. During the workshops every participant received a mock recovery injection and I'm sure every participant will agree; it still works.

We are all looking forward to seeing and using the new recovery project 'Emocards'

Jorg Utschakowski  
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