

In Person

ALAN BROWN

by Kenneth E. Seaton



Within One Inch

There are many words that could be used to describe Alan Brown: smooth, impassioned, orator, leader, polished, motivator, but the adjective that fits him best is “crusher.” It is fairly easy to get people to follow a leader; however it is much harder to move them out of their comfort zones, introduce them to livable coping strategies and empower them into taking control of their lives. Alan Brown through his website ADD Crusher™ and his personal appearances is doing just that and a whole lot more.

He is a “mess-to-success entrepreneur, ADHD coach and classic ADDer” who at 56 is crushing ADHD and its naysayers.

Alan states that his ADD Crusher™ website “is more than videos and tools to help you escape the overwhelm and live to your potential. It is a unique ecosystem of resources, community, advocacy and affiliated coaches.” He not only has the ringing endorsements of over 50 affiliate coaches world-wide - but they also practice the Crusher™ approach, many of whom use his videos in coaching their clients and/or groups.

He wasn’t diagnosed with ADHD until he was 36 and as with most later diagnosed persons, “I was delighted to know why so many things in my life were as they were and I was energized to learn about the condition and start living to my potential.” Since then Alan has learned to embrace his “dark years” of undiagnosed ADHD. They provide what he calls a “negative nag” (covered in Way 2 in Video I) that fuels him to keep moving forward.

His diagnoses only came five years after he first approached his physician with

suspicions that he had ADHD and he was told by his doctor, “Alan, ADD is a myth created by the media...you just need to do more crossword puzzles”. Thankfully, he was able to find a more enlightened physician and to the relief of tens of thousands of followers and loyal customers he has never looked back.

Never one to shy away from who he is and where he came from; Alan discloses in a 2013 TED Talk presentation that he has many times come “Within One Inch” of being among the very worst off! One inch - on any given day - across years of abuse saying that, “there have just been so many instances where I could have ended up badly. Driving drunk, crashing cars and motorcycles, getting into fist fights, hanging around in very dicey places, walking around town with a bag full of drugs in my pocket, driving an unregistered car to Harlem for drugs, hanging out with bigger-time crooks.”

Alan grew up in New Jersey, spent his 20s doing booze, drugs and crime and somehow he ended up working at an ad agency at age 29. Oddly enough he soon discovered that he liked working,

focused on becoming a harder worker and unwittingly began to develop some coping strategies. Strategies, which he would later develop and hone to form the base curriculum for ADD Crusher™ videos and tools.

Moving up the corporate ladder he worked his way up to vice president and was chosen as Employee of the Year of what was then the largest office of the biggest ad agency in the U.S. Alan takes up his story here and then, “I pulled an ADHD-risk-taker move: I quit my six-figure ad exec job to go full-time in a start-up I’d co-founded with two partners. No product, no money, no investors. Long story short, we busted our butts and the company was sold in 2007 for over \$11 million. That set me up pretty well.”

In 2010 it became CRUSHER-time. He created a Facebook page called ADD Crusher™ that dispensed “fresh thinking and strategies for adults with ADHD.” Later that year he also had the idea of releasing instructional videos and their audio companions, went to work on them and began to release them in 2011.

Motivational moxie aside, Alan was

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lacking (he is currently working towards his ADDCA accreditation) the official credentials that many professional associations were looking for. Knowing that he was entering an arena that was already chock-full of books and videos; populated by top coaches and experts, he buckled down, did his research and due diligence. He took his curriculum to a Board-certified psychiatrist (the same one who had diagnosed him) had him scrutinize and verify the content.

"The ADHD coaching community is so incredibly open, welcoming and curious." Alan explains, "I imagine there are other professional associations that would not have embraced someone like me with no official credentials. But ADHD coaches tend to be ADHD adults first, and coaches second. No pretension. Great people."

The idea for ADD Crusher™ came to him about a week after his diagnosis. He left

the doctor's office, ran to a bookstore and purchased an armload of books on adult ADHD. However upon arriving home, "I remembered that, as with any book I bought or borrowed, I wasn't likely to read, let alone finish any of them." He recognized that there had to be a better way of coping with ADHD.

Since he had already been subconsciously developing his own brand of coping strategies - a mishmash of mindfulness, exercise, Zen - he got busy studying the topic. While doing his research he soon discovered that the solutions that he was working on were "closely aligned to time-honored coping strategies." His methodologies had a fresh perspective that has proven to be attractive to a lot of industry veterans.

For the last three years he has lived in San Diego, but still has a home in Brooklyn, NY and he is constantly on the road,

promoting his website and perusing his personal mission of "helping 9,000,000 ADHD adults to live to their potential." His Facebook page has over 26,000 fans and growing. He has created one of the largest online communities for ADHD adults and has thousands of followers on Twitter and YouTube.

ADD Crusher™ he claims, has touched people in the tens of thousands "Nine million is the number of ADHD adults estimated in the US alone....sadly, 85% of them still need to FIND OUT about their ADHD!" He plans to continue to build his platform by releasing new videos and other products that will not only focus on acquiring a new audience but, "will find new ways to awaken the 85%, so that we are indeed helping peoples in the millions. All I know is there's nothing else more important to me...or more rewarding...or more fun!"



Law School Admission Council Settles Disability Lawsuit

LSAC, the organization that administers the law school admission test (LSAT) has agreed to a settlement on a claim that it failed to accommodate exam takers with disabilities. A class action lawsuit was initiated by a group of students, including students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD, who had been denied accommodations for various reasons.

The lawsuit alleged that LSAC routinely denied accommodation requests, even in cases where applicants have submitted proper paperwork and demonstrated a history of testing accommodations. The US Justice Department had intervention status in the case, which argued that students were denied their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Under the terms of the agreement, LSAC will pay \$7.73 million to compensate the more than 6,000 individuals who over the past five years had requested accommodations such as extra time. One litigant with dyslexia was allegedly denied extra time despite extensive documentation of the diagnosis and his long history of testing accommodations on exams, the SAT and other tests.

As part of the settlement agreement, LSAC will make it simpler and easier for students to get accommodations on the test. The council will also reform its policies and stop flagging LSAT scores for people who receive extended time—a practice the lawsuit alleged was discriminatory because it identified to law schools that a test taker had a disability.

