

FEBRUARY / 2020



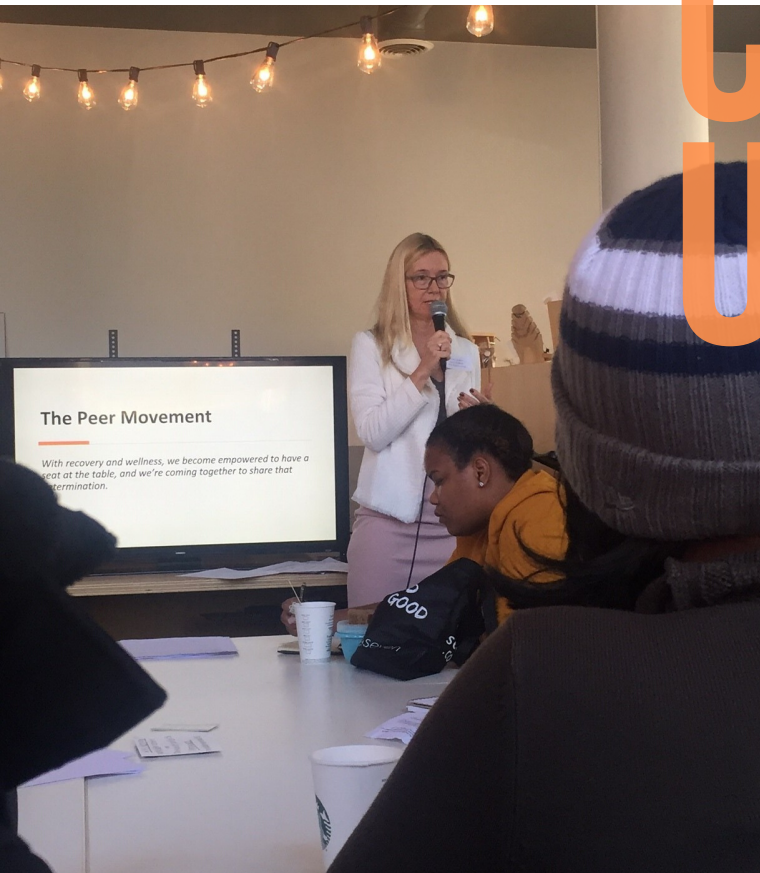
MY START UP MAGAZINE

KEEPING YOU
INFORMED &
CONNECTED!

CATCHING UP
UPCOMING EVENTS
MONTHLY TIP & TALK BACK

CATCHING UP

THIS MONTH WE CATCH UP WITH ELIZABETH TREMBLAY, A GRADUATE FROM COHORT ONE



Hi, Elizabeth! Can you provide us a brief snapshot of your business?

Mentor/Mentee Canada responds to major system challenges through Peer (People With Lived Experience of trauma, homelessness and poverty) pre-employment recovery training and ongoing connection. We provide peer training for organizations to implement peer support roles within a healthy and social change team. As a silent voice of the Peer Movement, Mentor/Mentee facilitates and measures peer and organization collaboration to evidence Peer Support as an essential social service. We are creating a team of peers and organizations building on each other's experience and strengths to get to the bottom of this - ending homelessness, poverty and inequality with collaboration and recovery as our common goals.

Photos:
Above: Elizabeth Tremblay of Mentor/Mentee Canada
Bottom: Panelists from first monthly panel discussion



What has been your biggest challenge in getting your business off the ground?

- 1) Having to learn how to keep going when I yell into my pillow, "is it all worth it?" is one, but there are many
- 2) The countless creative times to overcome the countless zero dollar times is a hardship and a challenge. This is completely unfunded, as were the extra business courses – on O.D.S.P.!
- 3) Starting in big scale barrier mode as honestly 'a bottom of the barrel' vulnerable person, and step by step showing results that prove I'm not at the bottom of the barrel anymore.
- 4) Finding balance in a well rounded life as an social entrepreneur. Answering alarms to take vitamins, exercise, and call family has become needed.
- 5) Having a physical and mental health disability. Pain is a challenge, anxiety is a challenge. My business is a cycle of recovery to stability, so I'm helping myself to overcome one hurdle at a time while I help others!

What made you choose this type of business?

I was in two emergency shelters with staff who retraumatized clients in the shelter. I understood that they documented and evidenced well, or that they showed up for the long 12 hour shifts back to back reliably, but they were a part of the broken shelter system. Peers – my people in the dining rooms – were a community who understood each other, supported each other as organic Peer Supporters and had solutions, but we weren't being asked – and most of us were not moving forward. We needed empowerment and leadership, and to get to the bottom of this by Equal Mentoring – the weakest learning from the strongest and mutual learning as a team. And so it began.

What do you know now that you didn't know at the beginning of your journey?

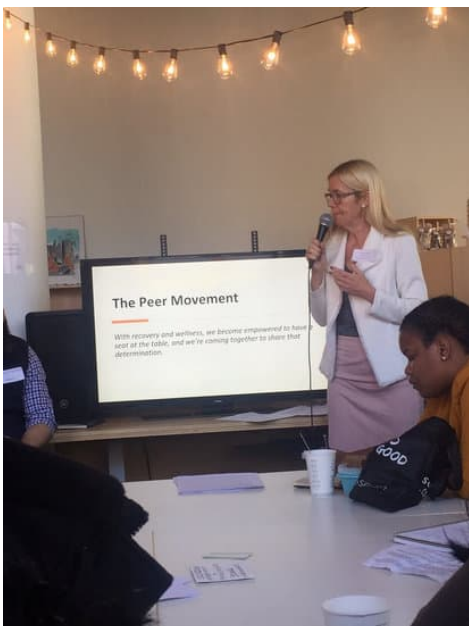
Everything I needed to know in the first place – ha ha. I'm taking care of myself by living recovery that I did not know about earlier at all – now that I've started, I'll never stop learning. And that to get ahead, it just takes time. Keep networking!

What is unique about your business?

We are hosting monthly Panel Discussions with leading social service organizations and peers learning together about recovery; creating a peer resource video to inspire both pre-crisis and post-crisis service engagement and Peer Supporter engagement for people in struggle. We will be hosting The People With Lived Experience Conference on November 17th, 2020 Unique, too, is that my business started when I was in a Fred Victor transition house - on the refurbished lap top I was given as a part of the My Start Up program and using a borrowed library hot spot!

What would you tell others who are looking to do the My Start Up program?

Despite the challenges, this could very well be the best thing that has ever happened to you. You are going on a surprising journey – one of empowerment. I started out feeling like I was on the outside looking in at the world, I wasn't well, and I was starting life over from a place of great disadvantage. My Start Up helped me find a purpose, to create and be inspired! The other thing I would tell you is that when you are done – you are going to be feeling so much better mentally and physically, and everyone, including you will see it. This is going to be really hard at times, but all you need to do is to take good care of yourself so you can take good care of your business.



UPCOMING EVENTS



@EFRY

MENTORING SESSION #3 FEB 11
10 am - 12 pm
Rotman School of Business
3rd Floor RT 374

POST PROGRAM SUPPORT SESSION #1 FEB 13
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Elizabeth Fry Conference Rooms

BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM FEB 25
12 pm - 3 pm
Family Service Toronto
(355 Church Street, Toronto, ON, M5B 0B2)

MENTORING SESSION #4 MAR 11
10 am - 12 pm
FOCUS GROUP
12:20 pm - 2:30 pm
facilitated by Blueprint
Location TBD

POST PROGRAM SUPPORT SESSION #2 MAR 17
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location TBD

TALK BACK!

Anything you want to see in the next issue? Talk back to us and let us know by February 21st!
Send your ideas by email to: dthompson@efrytoronto.org

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

HOW TO OPTIMIZE YOUR BUSINESS FEB 18
8:30 am - 12:30 pm
Vantage Venues (150 King St W,
Toronto, ON, M5H 1J9)

WOMEN WITH PURPOSE FEB 25
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm
CSI Annex (720 Bathurst Street,

ATTRACT MORE CUSTOMERS & BOOST YOUR PROFITS FEB 27
9:30 am - 11:00 am
NorthSpace Don Mills (15 Gervais Drive, Suite 700, North York, ON, M3C 1Y8)



Ask for help, advice, mentors, and anything else you need.
Asking questions is empowering.
Asking questions is how to learn.
The more you ask- the more you know, the more connections you make, and the more you become a business woman.

Supported by::



"DON'T GIVE
UP, DON'T
TAKE
ANYTHING
PERSONALLY
AND DON'T
TAKE NO FOR
AN ANSWER"



— SOPHIA AMORUSO, NASTY GAL CLOTHING AND AUTHOR OF #GIRLBOSS