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# CHAPTER ONE



## Why Enter Treatment?

**M**ost men who have committed sexual crimes go to a treatment program with one question and one goal in mind. The question is: “Why did I commit the crime I did?” The goal is: “To make sure to get the help I need so that I never commit another sex crime.” Treatment can help you start to answer the question and will provide guidance for you to reach your goal to not commit another crime. If you are not in a treatment program and have decided to read this workbook to help yourself, you have probably asked yourself similar questions and have similar goals.

### Why Change?

There are many reasons that men who have committed sexual crimes seek help and decide to change. For some, becoming involved in treatment is a question of curiosity: “I wonder what it is like in treatment?” Others enter a treatment program because a parole board, a probation officer, a parole officer, or the courts require them to do so, and in some cases entering treatment is a way to avoid going to prison or get out of prison early. If you don’t want to know why you did your crime and you don’t want to change your behavior, then you are reading this workbook for the wrong reasons. No matter what your reasons may be, if you have committed a sexual offense we would still recommend that you take the time to read this workbook. You may find new reasons why you want and need treatment. If you are not in a treatment program and have decided to try to help yourself by reading this workbook, we suggest that you read the entire book and do the assignments. If you are doing this on your own, you may want to return to this workbook repeatedly (both in the next few months and throughout your life) to improve your understanding.

We hope that your reason for reading this workbook is to help yourself so that you do not commit another sexual crime. But even if that is not your main motivation, give yourself, the program, and the workbook a chance. Take time to see if there is anything important that you’re overlooking. It may be that you will discover for yourself why treatment is important. If after the evaluation period and reading this entire workbook, you still do not want to become involved in treatment, then spare yourself another failure and consider what other options are available to you.

### What Can I Get Out of This?

This workbook is written for you to help you understand yourself so you can begin to answer the question of why you committed your crime. It will also assist you in creating some realistic goals so that you are able to get the help you need. This workbook cannot set goals or make progress for you. Just reading it is not enough, it requires you to look at yourself and understand how the material fits you. So when you think about the question, “Why did I do this?” and an answer doesn’t come quickly, don’t become frustrated. It may seem like one big question that is overwhelming, but in reality it is a series of questions that you can answer one at a time. Of course, the answers to your questions will not come at once, nor

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will they come to you easily. Finding the answers to your questions will require effort on your part. If you feel comfortable admitting to others that you have a problem, are willing to ask for help or seek help on your own, and work hard, the answers will eventually come.

It is tempting to evaluate your progress by comparing yourself to others. Be aware that everyone is different and everyone works at a different speed. This is okay. If you compare your progress to how you think others are doing, then you can make yourself feel like a failure when you are not. If your motivation is good, then you are reading this workbook to help yourself. You have a set of problems to work on that are similar to those of other men who have committed sexual crimes. You also have a special set of problems that may be different from those of other men. You will design a treatment plan that meets all your special treatment needs. The plan must include: goals, both long and short term; methods to use to arrive at the goals; measures that you will use to evaluate progress; and rewards for achieving your goals.

### **It Is Necessary To Work Hard**

The reason you are using this book is to reach your goals of personal change. It is important for you to understand that you will have to work hard to make progress. If you remain as you are and don't understand why you committed your crimes, the research suggests that you will be at risk to go out and commit other crimes. If you are honest you won't blame your criminal behavior on alcohol or drugs, or on other people or situations. Most men who have committed sexual crimes say things like, "I know I will never do this again," but statements like that require self inspection, self knowledge, and hard work to make them come true. Hope and willpower alone are not enough to stop you from reoffending. You must also have the tools and knowledge that treatment can offer you. If you are not in a program and have decided to use this workbook as a self-help aid, then this workbook may temporarily serve as your treatment program.

### **Homework**

At the end of each chapter you will find homework assignments. Doing these thoroughly will help you to gain insight into yourself and will make much of what we say more meaningful. After you complete each of the assignments, keep them in a notebook. You will be asked to review assignments and to get information from the earlier ones to use for later assignments. If you are in a treatment program, your therapist may only assign you certain of these homework assignments, or may give you assignments along with those in this workbook. If you are working alone with this book, we recommend that you do each of the assignments and go over them and share them with a friend who is supportive of your desire to change. Again, keep all the assignments you complete. Sometimes you will need to go back and refer to an earlier assignment for one you are doing later on.

In summary, treatment isn't easy, but it can be a very rewarding experience. Some of the rewards are self-understanding, a better and more productive life, an improved ability to handle the stresses in life, and relief at being able to keep the promise to yourself that you will not abuse a new victim or harm the same victim another time. Changing your life takes hard work but it is your best insurance policy against committing future sex offenses. We hope that you will succeed in treatment and effectively change your lifestyle for the better. Again, **good luck**, and let's begin!

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## Chapter One Assignments

— Do Not Write In This Workbook —

**1** In your notebook for homework assignments make three (3) columns. Label them #1, #2, and #3. Under Column #1 make a list of the good experiences you have had in your life. Under Column #2 make a list of the bad experiences you have had. Under Column #3 make a list of experiences about which you may have felt both good and bad. The experiences you list should be as specific as possible. If the experience is one that happened many times, list a specific instance. For example: “My uncle sexually abused me. Beginning when I was six, he fondled me for three years,” or, “I did many drugs. I experimented with different types of hallucinogens such as LSD and mescaline.” This assignment will help you identify some of the problem areas for treatment.

Sample Work Sheet for Assignment #1

### EXPERIENCES

1 Good	2 Bad	3 Good & Bad
Boy Scouts	Dad would hit mom	Dad would be gone for long periods of time
Camping	Mom would yell at us kids	Parents fighting
Fishing with dad	I would be punished	Leaving for school in the morning
Swimming in the pond		

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## 2

This assignment will help you to look at what motivates you to want treatment. The following is a partial list of some of the motivations of offenders who want to help themselves. In your notebook, make a list of your motivations for being in treatment. If you are honest with yourself, you will have some that are positive, and some that are avoiding the negative consequences of your actions.

- ✓ I don't like being in jail or prison.
- ✓ I don't like how I think.
- ✓ I don't like my sexual behavior.
- ✓ I have seldom pleased my wife or family.
- ✓ I have lost a number of jobs.
- ✓ I have lost my family.
- ✓ I have wasted years of my life.
- ✓ I have hurt many people.
- ✓ I have never failed so badly as now.

## 3

Your motivations for being in treatment are closely related to your treatment goals. A treatment goal is what you wish to achieve (in the future) while in treatment. For this assignment review Assignment #2 and begin listing your treatment goals. Your goals can be small or large, immediate or long-term. Examples of goals are:

- ✓ I want to stop having abusive sexual fantasies.
- ✓ I want to learn to feel comfortable around other adults.
- ✓ I want to learn to communicate better with family and friends.
- ✓ I want to become more assertive.
- ✓ I want to improve my self-image.

When you have finished your list, rank your goals by number (with your first goal being #1), and place the ranking numbers on the left side of each goal on your list.

**Review your answers to these assignments with your therapist and your group. If you are working on your own, share your answers with a friend or person you trust.**