

## ~ INTRODUCTION ~

1- Embark - (em-bark) - to start, to set out on.

2- From her *Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder* (1993) and *Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder* (1993).

3- Astounding - (uh-stound-ing) - surprising, amazing.

*Happiness is not given to us, nor misery imposed. At every moment, we are at a crossroads. We must CHOOSE the direction we will take.*

*M. Richard*

4- Many become great motivators and teachers because they're filled with the excitement and joy of recovery and they want everyone to experience New Life!

5- Self-mutilation - (mute-till-a-shin) - harming one's body by cutting, burning, scratching, or other forms of self-abuse.

Welcome to DBT-CBT! This is an exciting time! You're about to embark<sup>1</sup> on a journey that CAN change your life! The original DBT program developed by Marsha M. Linehan, Ph.D.<sup>2</sup> was designed to treat some of the MOST DIFFICULT to treat individuals...and the results have been ASTOUNDING!<sup>3</sup> This program, DBT-CBT, is based on Dr. Linehan's work, but it has been GREATLY modified! It includes many original concepts, principles, and techniques developed during 24 years of patient care. MANY PEOPLE have described DBT-CBT to be LIFE-CHANGING, so HAVE GREAT HOPE! Applying the principles of DBT-CBT to your life CAN BE LIFE-CHANGING...but only if you're WILLING TO MAKE CHANGES in your life.

I assume you have great interest in changing your life...in feeling better, in responding to the world better, and having better life outcomes and experiences... else, you wouldn't be reading this book...especially an Intro!! You've already taken the first step on this journey...and the Road to Recovery! WELCOME ABOARD!

This workbook is written for people who are hurting and suffering the pain of life. It's about bringing hope and peace and the life-changing gift of healing and recovery. I hope you heal and recover. I hope this workbook leads you there. Even if it's just about "planting seeds" or watering the seeds of recovery that were planted before, then, IT IS GOOD. This workbook CAN BE life-changing...AND HOW I HOPE...it is YOUR LIFE that is changed!

Think about this...if we do not make positive changes in our life, our life will NOT change for the positive. Please remember this. Repeat it over and over..."IF I DO NOT MAKE POSITIVE CHANGES IN MY LIFE...MY LIFE WILL NOT CHANGE FOR THE POSITIVE." Let that penetrate your soul. Making major life changes is hard to do, BUT with effort, support, and the grace of God, MANY people RECOVER! We all know these people or we've heard their stories.<sup>4</sup> They're RECOVERED drug addicts, alcoholics, career criminals, "treatment failures," and "hopeless cases." They're people with long histories of depression, anger, anxiety, suicide attempts, self-mutilation,<sup>5</sup> abusive relationships, aggression, eating disorders, Bipolar Disorder, codependency, Borderline Personality Disorder, and other major life issues. Something Happened and they became disgusted enough or slowed down long enough to Think Things Through. They set their heart, mind, soul, and spirit on recovery...and THEY RECOVERED.

*Tomorrow is the future. Today, we'll focus on the things we can do to bring about a brighter tomorrow. Today, we'll set a foundation for recovery and tomorrow, we'll build on it.*

Think about people you know who have recovered...or recovery stories you've heard. How did they do it? What changes did they make in their life? \_\_\_\_\_

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6- Life-enhancing - (in-han-sing) - to enhance or improve life.

*Change isn't easy, that's why we struggle with it. If change were easy, we'd all be doing it and we wouldn't need programs, rehabs, classes, workbooks, sponsors, psychologists, pastors, and support systems to help us through it!*

7- Perseverance - (per-suh-veer-ance) - sticking to it and Getting Through it!

*Through hope, self-discipline, and perseverance, we CAN radically change our lives.*

### ***Recovery Requires Us...***

*...to make major life changes...including changes in how we think and respond to life... our life in the past, the present, and the future.*

*...to turn away from old ways and respond to life in new ways.*

*...to use Life-Enhancing<sup>6</sup> Coping Skills to deal with tough and trying times rather than our preferred Self-Destructive Coping Behaviors.*

*...to make changes in what we allow in our life and what we allow ourselves to be involved in.*

*...to remove toxic people and situations from our life... and add life-enhancing, recovery-supporting people and situations.*

*...to fill our life with meaningful activities and relationships... things that give life meaning and value.*

*...to have hope and faith that things will get better as we get better.*

*...to accept that life isn't easy or always enjoyable.*

*...to accept and deal with the difficult things that Come Our Way.*

*...to give ourselves time to grow into and be... more and more the person we were designed to be.*

People who recover make many changes in their life. They realize recovery is a process...a lifestyle...and NOT a one-time event! Recovery requires work. It's work worth doing...because we're worth the work and the people who love us and depend on us are worth our work and sacrifices! Recovery requires dedication and perseverance<sup>7</sup> to live, eat, and breathe the principles, concepts, and skills for living a Recovery Lifestyle. This workbook also requires dedication and perseverance to work through. It'll teach many principles, concepts, and skills for living a Recovery Lifestyle.

People who have major problems in living...tend to have experienced major problems in living.

We weren't born this way. We became this way. We're a product of our experiences.

Many of our "abnormal" behaviors are actually normal given our experiences. In many cases, these behaviors served as survival skills.

However, their period of usefulness is long over. We've overused these behaviors and now they're causing us tremendous pain... and they're destroying our lives.

8- The book, *Getting Started in AA*, credits "The Serenity Prayer" to Friedrich Oetinger. Other sources credit Reinhold Niebuhr.

9- Minimize - (men-uh-mize) - to reduce to the lowest degree possible.

10- Studies show the average number of recovery attempts from drugs and alcohol is 8 - 18 tries. If we're just getting started in recovery, this doesn't (continued)

### *Our Humanity*

*It's important to accept we're human...and because of our humanity, we've made many errors and bad decisions. Most of us have done some pretty stupid and shameful things...and many self-defeating things over and over!*

*We're human and we have a record of our life to prove it!*

*If you find yourself wearing these shoes, realize you're not the trailblazer.*

*Many have come before you...and many are walking the same path right now.*

*You might say, "Yeah, some more than others!"...and you're right!*

We're a product of our past experiences and the environments we were raised in. It's RARE that a kid with a stable home environment, emotionally healthy parents, positive role models, and good self-esteem begins to live a troubled life. Something generally happened that led the kid off course. RARELY do kids with "good enough upbringings" just "go bad." This isn't meant to minimize OUR RESPONSIBILITY for our behavior and choices, but it's important to understand "why we are the way we are" is because Something Happened in our life, be it one very difficult situation or many.

### *On Acceptance*

*Recovery requires us to accept what has happened...has happened...and what we've done, we've done. These things are of the past. They're over and they're done. Nothing we can do now will change the past. It's history. It's our history. Today is the present...and the things we do today CAN CHANGE our life...our today and our tomorrows. Focus on today and plan for tomorrow...and live the wisdom of "The Serenity Prayer" - "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."<sup>8</sup>*

This workbook will help us develop skills to manage our life in the here-and-now. We'll learn skills to cope effectively with our problems, to set boundaries to prevent and minimize<sup>9</sup> emotional distress and problems, to gain peace and acceptance, and to make lifestyle changes which will gradually lead to relief, peace, then satisfaction, and finally, joy. Some people recover on the first try; however, recovery usually takes many attempts over many years.<sup>10</sup> Some days may be easy...and some more difficult. Recovery hinges on minute-to-minute and hour-to-hour decisions to remain on the Recovery Path. We can help ourselves along the way by seeking people who will support and encourage us along the path of recovery...AND BY AVOIDING people who are critical or negative BECAUSE THESE PEOPLE ARE TOXIC TO OUR RECOVERY.

(10 - continued)  
mean we have permission to relapse 17 times on purpose just so we can be normal!! 8-18 is just an average! Some do it on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> try...and others on the 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> try. After reading this workbook, it'll be clear why recovery can take so many tries!

### ***On Recovery***

*We can be "straight A" therapy students. We can earn extra credit on every assignment. We can have all the answers and understandings possible. However, to recover, WE'VE GOT TO BE WILLING TO APPLY THE PRINCIPLES OF RECOVERY TO OUR LIFE! Knowing what to do is one thing...actually doing it is another! We must DO recovery things and LIVE a Recovery Lifestyle. This often requires us to STEP OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE AND TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO CHANGE OUR LIFE. The question is..."WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO GIVE UP OR CHANGE IN ORDER FOR YOUR LIFE TO CHANGE...FOR THE BETTER?!!"*

11- Reflect - to really think about!

That's a difficult question. Honestly reflect<sup>11</sup> on it a minute. What are you WILLING to give up or change in order for your life to change? \_\_\_\_\_

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*Recovery is a process. It's decision by decision, step by step, gain by gain, day by day, month by month, and year after year.*

No doubt you have some things in mind...and heart...that YOU KNOW MUST CHANGE...in order for YOUR LIFE to CHANGE and your LIFE SITUATIONS to IMPROVE. There are many things we need to give up and change. These are often things we have NO DESIRE to give up or change. That's where we run into problems. We have the gut wisdom TO KNOW what these things are...they're just hard to look at and deal with! What do you NEED TO CHANGE? This question will come up many times during this study. The answer you write today may be very different from your answer later. That's because this study will help you gain insight and learn more about the things that mess up our lives and keep our lives messed up.

*Knowing and doing are two very different things. We can be WISE and have all the knowledge; however, there's nothing wise about not doing what we know NEEDS to be done!!!*

Take a few moments and reflect on your thoughts and feelings about this opening reading. Does it make you excited? Uneasy? Anxious? Does it bring a sense of hope and peace...and light at the end of the tunnel...or does it bring a sense of dread...or some of both? \_\_\_\_\_

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