Welcome!

This workbook is about building a better life and achieving life goals that are common to all human beings. Sexual offenses often involve the pursuit of worthwhile goals, even though sexual abuse as a means of achieving these goals is unacceptable and harmful. In this workbook, you will learn about the relationships between what you want out of life (your personal life goals) and how those goals relate to your offending.

What Makes This Workbook Different?

In the past, the focus of most treatment programs has only been about reducing your risk to re-offend. Although that goal is essential, this workbook will help you to reduce and manage your risk as well as help you to have a good life—a satisfying and balanced life, and one in which you are able to meet important goals without offending.

Among other things, this workbook recognizes that people are happiest and most fulfilled when they are working toward goals they can achieve. People tend to have more distress in their lives when their goals are only to avoid bad things. People have less distress when they also actively work toward having a positive life. In this workbook, you will also find an emphasis on enhancing your motivation and your ability to work toward these goals. The goal is to help you to have a better or good life that is satisfying and that does not include offending.

You will notice this workbook requires many written exercises. You will need to work closely with your therapist and others involved in your treatment to fully understand and apply the material ahead. Your therapist will help you to devise the best plan for moving forward. This workbook deliberately involves reviewing material and moving forward one step at a time.
WHAT MAKES TREATMENT WORK?

One thing is for sure: a workbook is only as helpful as the treatment program it is used in, and the work you put into both. It is important for you to work hard to develop the best relationships you can with the people involved in your treatment. Research shows simply having a good working relationship with a therapist improves how well people do in treatment. So you will need to work closely with your therapist and other people on your case management team. If, for some reason, you are unclear about what you are learning or the goals of your treatment program, it is essential that you bring these issues to the attention of others so you can work well together. It is the same with your community support team—your probation or parole officer, your community supports, your family, and any others committed to helping you.

As you work in treatment and through this workbook, you will probably do much better if you take regular breaks to review your accomplishments, no matter how big or small. Ask yourself: How is your life even a little better than it was this time last week? It is easy to list all the negatives. Finding and celebrating the positives is not only good treatment, but a good way to live.

You are in a treatment program because you want to change. While you need to be motivated to do this, many other people are willing to help you. You will also need specific strategies to make changes—motivation by itself is never enough. This workbook provides information to help you to explore and develop new ways of living, to achieve your goals, and to manage factors that might put you at risk to re-offend. You will be most successful at making these changes if you establish a solid foundation of personal motivation for change. If you are reading this workbook and you are in treatment, you have already taken that first important step.