
Introduction

If you are reading this, most likely, it is because you have sexually abused someone. That is what this workbook is about. Over the last seventeen years, I have worked with well over one hundred teenage girls who have been involved in the criminal justice system, as well as some who have not. The one thing they have all had in common is that they have been sexually abusive. Please know you are not alone in this. Each one of them has taught me a great deal, and what I learned working with these girls is that their therapy is often different than it is with boys who have been sexually abusive; this is because what is important to girls is different, their needs and desires are different, and sometimes, the reasons they sexually abuse are different. What I guarantee is that by doing this workbook as thoroughly and honestly as you can, you will learn and grow a lot. You may already be involved with **offense-specific** therapy but this workbook will help you learn even more about yourself and your sexual behavior. You will also learn ways to prevent yourself from sexually abusing again. In addition, you will meet many of the girls I have worked with in this workbook – their stories speak for themselves. (Of course their names and some specifics have been changed to protect their identities.) I believe it is these girls who can teach you the most; I am just a voice to help communicate what they have learned. I have written this workbook for you because I wanted a resource for girls that addresses sexually abusive behavior; one that is written through the voices of girls.

I need to tell you a bit about this workbook. It is best you complete this workbook from the beginning to the end rather than jumping from place to place since the chapters often build on the previous chapters. However, you and your therapist and/or parent(s) may decide that it is best for you to work on only certain sections of the workbook. If so, that is fine. Important words for you to know will be placed in bold. Those words that are defined in the definition boxes (like the one below) will be both in bold and underlined. I will use the terms sexual **offense** and sexual **abuse** somewhat interchangeably. The main difference between offense and abuse is that the word offense refers to breaking the law. You can either write in the workbook and use extra paper when you need more room, or you can keep a separate notebook, depending on what your therapist and you decide. Keeping a journal where you can write what you think and feel about treatment can also be helpful. You will need to share your workbook or treatment notebook with your therapist so he or she can help you on your journey. You can also share your work with whomever else you think you need to (for example, a parent or someone else you are very close to) if you believe it will help you. Don't forget to ask questions. This is very important. If you're not sure about something I have written, ask your therapist for help. That way you will get the most from this workbook and your therapy.

DEFINITION BOX:

Offense: Breaking the law. The sexual abuse of another is an offense.

Abuse: Behavior that hurts or injures another person.

Offense-specific: Therapy that focuses on your sexual offense and learning the skills necessary to prevent further offending.

There will be some places for you to write questions and make comments in your workbook. These boxes will be found usually at the end of certain sections or chapters.

The goals of this workbook include: understanding your sexually abusive behavior and how your actions hurt others around you, understanding why you sexually abused, learning about yourself and your relationships, feeling good about yourself, learning about boundaries and healthy sexuality, and taking good care of yourself. Hopefully, you will learn other stuff on the way as well. I wish you the best of luck on your journey.

Susan Robinson