



A Book Written By a Social Worker?

Many books in this field are written by doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists. Advanced education can be so valuable with regard to understanding the nature of and the complexities involved with helping others with difficult mental, emotional and behavioral issues. Still, there is a different perspective of this same population which comes specifically from the eyes of a Social Worker. Social workers are often firmly rooted “within the trenches” in the substance abuse and mental health field and they often stay there for years, even decades. As you will see in the upcoming pages of this book, I will outline several reasons why the field of working with people with substance use issues and coexisting issues has changed drastically over the past few decades. As a social worker who has served as both a direct clinician and clinical supervisor within this challenging field for 20 years I have personally witnessed how the this field and the nature of substance use and coexisting issues have changed drastically in recent years and likely will continue to change. This book provides a necessary new perspective for the modern substance user and for those working or living with them.

I realize that I am not the first social worker to write a book. What I have always appreciated are the tools, techniques, and ideas that are practical in nature, particularly for use with those people who are in more challenging situations due to struggles with motivation and insight. There are far too many strategies out there focused on helping those who are ready to cooperate, listen and accept change. Almost every new counselor has had the experience of opening up a book and finding a group activity that they are absolutely sure will get everyone excited, opening up, talking and learning only to bring that same activity to the group the next day and then watch the group literally chew the activity to shreds and spit it out like garbage in less than 10 minutes. I am not saying that this won't ever happen with any of the activities in this book either. That is because it is not just the tools and activities that you bring to the table but how well we know how to use them. Nevertheless, the materials and activities in this book are time-tested with proven success with an extensive variety of individuals who may not have been so excited about getting help in the first place but were gradually able to generate the insight and motivation needed for inspired progress.