

Introduction to Four Bitter Pills For Feeling Better Fast- The Purpose of this Book

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I hope that by reading this book you are able to make some simple changes in your life that will help you feel better than you do now.

The Title of this book is **Four “Bitter Pills” For Feeling Better Fast**. It has nothing to do with taking pills or medication. The bitter pills I speak of are purely metaphorical in that they represent four principles for maximum mental health. My intent is to convey to you that by accepting these four principles you can make dramatic changes in the way you feel and the relationships you have with others.

Now, even though there are no pills necessarily involved here, if your depression or anxiety is severe enough that you want to seek medication from your doctor, go ahead. Taking medication does not mean that you can't use the ideas in this book. I have many clients that take medication and benefit from counseling. If you take medication I would just caution you against thinking when your emotions improve, that the gains are due *only* to the medication. Sometimes clients tend to give their medication more credit than they do themselves. Realize that you had some role in helping yourself to feel better.

I wrote this book to help my clients who I see in therapy get a little more out of their therapy experience. However, I also hope that it can stand on its own and be helpful to you whether or not you are in therapy.

Some people learn by hearing and engaging in learning activity. But sometimes reading the ideas can offer an added boost because you the reader can go back and re-read it again. For some, the printed word is the way they learn best.

There are of course many self help books that you can read, and some of them even contain some of the ideas you will read here. These ideas are not new or mysterious, nor are they a bunch of psychological mumbo-jumbo. These ideas come from the field of cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), and have been around for a long time. My hope is that I can present these ideas to you in a way that is straight forward, practical and that comes across as almost “common sense.”

The thing I don't like about the term Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is that it sounds like something someone does to you. I've found that many people are uncomfortable with therapy or counseling because they are afraid that the therapist might do something to them. Some people think that a therapist can read their minds, or give them unconscious suggestions. No therapist or counselor can do that. I wouldn't like seeing a counselor if I thought they could do that and I don't imagine that you would either. Therefore, I call my approach Cognitive Behavioral SELF Therapy. As the therapist I don't do anything to you. I merely teach you an approach and help you learn it and practice it. For clients who are in counseling with me, I hope this book can help reinforce what we discuss in counseling sessions.

One way that I intend this book to be different from many of the self help books that you might read, is that I intend it to be brief. One self help book that I have in my office that uses a similar Cognitive approach, has over 700 pages. Another has over 400 pages. Getting a little briefer, I have another book that is just slightly over 200 pages. When I have referred my clients to books I have often found that they start out strong, but usually don't end up finishing the book! They might be missing some good stuff there, but I can't blame them. Self help books can be boring to read. So I'll keep this book brief.

Although the book is brief the steps to feeling better are intended to be done in order. Each step or *bitter pill* builds upon the one that came before it. I encourage you to do each step in order.

Just one more quick thing. Don't think that just because this is brief, there isn't some serious substance to be gained here. Like the game of chess or Othello which can be learned in about ten minutes, it can take a lifetime to master. I can present these ideas to you briefly and quickly, but you are the one that needs to put into practice what you read. You will truly get out of this what you put into it. Let's get to it.