

A sampling of the daily readings begins on page 1 of the numbered pages of this .pdf file. Immediately following are some of the introductory pages to the book.

A dual-diagnosis of a mental illness and addiction requires dual recoveries. This book addresses the opening of one's mind to accept the seeds of knowledge, courage in the winds of change, and the wisdom of the tears that grow our recoveries. We will reap a harvest we never imagined possible.

~ the Author

Prepare for the Harvest

*Daily Meditations for Those
with a Dual-Disorder of
Addictions/Alcoholism and
Borderline Personality Disorder*

By Amy L. Allison, M.B.A., B.P.D.

© Amy L. Allison
Indianapolis, IN

Contact info: harvest@alawebpages.com

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to (DBT-specialist) therapist, Barbara K. Wightman, PhD. She was my therapist for six years and retired in 2010. Her training, in part, was with the originator of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Dr. Marsha Linehan, Director of Behavioral Research at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Her calm and methodical manner of teaching, coupled with her continual application of the *DBT Skills, taught me that regulated emotions made for a more peaceful life. I could control myself.

Her unrelenting dedication to my recovery from BPD saved my life, literally, more than once. I believe that during this time, this guardian angel “with skin on”, stayed on board with me during

the raging storms, as well as when I was adrift. She also taught me to be mindful of the joy to be found in still waters. Her willingness to help me and her never-ending wisdom will never be forgotten.

From the Author

This book was written in a particular sequence was for a progressive unfolding of recovery from addictions along with the mental disorder of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD).

“Addictions,” says Joseph Frascella, director of the division of clinical neuroscience at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), “are repetitive behaviors in the face of negative consequences, the desire to continue something you know is bad for you.”

For a discussion of BPD traits, please refer to the reading on January 27th for clarification. You may start your reading on page *iii* of the introductory pages (numbered with Roman numerals). The introductory pages will provide you with some background information on addictions and BPD, enabling a better understanding as progression is made through the year. The daily meditations

begin on Page 1 of this book. You may then start the daily readings on today's date. An extensive index can be found in the very back of this book.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank all of those who encouraged me as I wrote this meditation book on dual-disorders. My sponsor, Jan L, and my therapists Linda Caldwell and Gina Minks, who cheered me on.

Special thanks goes to my writing mentor, Marion Redstone, J.D., who provided the light on the path of my writing and publishing journey with his wisdom and experience. He assisted with the proofing and editing of this book. Also, much appreciation goes to Doug Bunch, who spent countless hours proofing the original draft of this book.

Without the challenge made by retired therapist, Barbara K. Wightman, for me to *actually write* this book, it may not have ever been attempted or accomplished. It is my first book written and published. Other writings of mine may be found on my personal website (*copyright 2003*): www.rebelodysey.com.

Four Components of DBT
(Dialectical Behavioral Therapy)
as outlined by Dr. Marsha M. Linehan

1. Core Mindfulness -
Cultivate *Wise Mind*

2. Interpersonal Effectiveness -
“DEAR MAN”
“G.I.V.E. F.A.S.T.”

3. Distress Tolerance -
Wise Mind A.C.C.E.P.T.S.
I.M.P.R.O.V.E. the Moment
Radical Acceptance
Quieting the Mind

4. Emotion Regulation -
Opposite to Emotion Action
“P.L.E.A.S.E.”
Build Mastery
Build Positive Experiences

Any text with an asterisk (*DBT) will refer to
Dr. Linehan's book in the Bibliography.

Forward

Maybe we reached for this book on a bookstore shelf, because its title caught our attention, and we saw “for those with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD).” Or we heard this term casually mentioned by a therapist. Well, you are not alone. I suffer from alcoholism and Borderline Personality Disorder. A psychiatrist told me I could die without treatment for this disorder. A psychologist, specializing in the Dialectical Behavior Therapy treatment, coached me on how to live my life more skillfully. Found within this book are little gems of wisdom and recommended practices from professionals, who are dedicated to our survival and healing. Also, the echoing words and caring spirits of those who have recovered before me can be heard and experienced in this book.

I started a website of this mental health disorder in May 2009. (see p. 367 for more information.) This site updated frequently on a daily basis.
www.alawebpages.com/webquestbpd

Introduction

This book of daily readings is based on the Dialectical Behavior Therapy skills, and loosely on the other cognitive therapies: such as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, Schema Therapy, and combinations of these methods with other cognitive therapies. These combinations of methods in treatment hopefully re-program the Borderline's brain to operate at a more centered baseline starting point than from a constant state of erratically aroused emotions.

Many of the daily readings are based on these mental health practices and methodologies. Interwoven into the lessons of "Prepare for the Harvest", are the spiritual aspects of the basis of any of the Twelve-Step programs that are available for alcoholics, drug addicts, food addicts, gamblers, sex addicts, shoppers, and just about anything on which one can "get hooked".

January 3

The mystical “secrets” of a more serene life had eluded us for years. Our lives were *not* tranquil. We had heard that life was 10% *what happened* to us, and 90% how we *reacted* to it. Maybe life was going to keep on happening in its unpredictable manner, *but we had to do something with our “inner calm”-it wasn't just going to happen one day.* We may have been exposed to meditation in a *DBT Skills Group, and needed to try it again. It's all about clearing the mind; focusing on our breathing. It's just that simple. Breathing is necessary for living, and is pretty basic. We really can't mess the process up. Breathing *and* clearing our mind of thoughts will ripen our mental state for a *calmness* to appear in our consciousness.

Inner silence promotes clarity of mind; it makes us value the inner world. ~ Deepak Chopra

The “NO” Sentence

January 5

Feeling good about who we are as a person is vitally important to our recovery. Peoples' expectations of others, over-loaded schedules, inconsiderate ingrates, and our co-dependency can compel us to say "yes" to a request from our friend, instead of "no, my schedule will not permit it." We over-extend ourselves, and get tired, irritable, and resentful of *the favor* that we are doing for a friend. Mastering the art of *Saying No* may be a really good place to start building some self-esteem, and consequently reducing our guilt feelings when we are approached and asked to give of our time. It is our right to simply say, "No," without an apologetic explanation. This act is a *DBT Skill called *Building Mastery*.

The two words "yes" and "no" will always lead you to success. Undoubtedly, you've mastered saying "yes", so start practicing saying "no". Jack Canfield

Do the Opposite

January 7

The *DBT Skill of *Opposite to Emotion Action* is a tricky undertaking. It is necessary in regulating our emotions. Here is a scenario: my sister said she would help me with my algebra homework. However, at the last minute she always had something else to do and could not work with me. I got into trouble with my parents because my math teacher emailed them about my poor grades. I was angry with my sister for not keeping her word to me, and I ended up being grounded until the end of the grading period. I chose to not even speak to her for a week. But my school counselor pointed out that my grades were *my responsibility, not hers*. Gritting my teeth, I offered to do her chores for her on the weekend so she could have plenty of time to get ready for the big dance on Saturday night. I guess I just needed to get over myself. “*I cannot control what goes on outside; but I can control what goes on inside*”. ~ Wayne Dyer

March 5

A *DBT Skill from the *Distress Tolerance* category is that of *Radical Acceptance*. Similarly, from p. 449 of the Big Book of A.A. “*And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today...(paraphrased) I can find no serenity until I accept anyone or anything exactly as it is right now today.*” Let Go. Relinquish control. Live and Let Live. Go with the Flow. Slogans and a *DBT Skill for managing our distress repeatedly suggest to us to stop fighting reality. In doing so, our days will unfold a lot more smoothly; people in our lives will want to be around us; we will not be so tense all the time trying to stay on top of everything and setting the stage for the outcomes we desire. If two grave disorders of the body, mind, and spirit separately have a suggested solution of *Radical Acceptance*, we ought to pay closer attention to this. “*Keep your acceptance level high and your expectation level low!*” ~ A.A. Slogan

Build Mastery

March 23

Another manner in which we may feel “victorious” during a day of activities is to hone our skills at something we really, truly enjoy doing. This could involve learning to play a guitar or other instrument. Learning a card game like bridge or poker can be fun; repeated practice is necessary for winning. Practicing a sport such as basketball, hitting golf balls, or batting baseballs to improve our skills is building mastery. This is a *DBT Skill where learning to do something new, and possibly becoming really good with practice, helps to build our competence and self-confidence. Do we try out new things in the course of a week or month? If we do not, is our fear of failing holding us back? Becoming skilled in handling our resentments may help us in working our Program too. *Looking to others to supply us with self-confidence rarely works.*

I'm Confused

April 4

“I'm confused...no, wait - maybe I'm not.” (This humor was once spotted on a T-shirt.) The *DBT Skills explain to us that MYTHS exist about emotions. For example, “There is a right way to feel in every situation.” Who says? Not true. Believing this can lead to Borderline black/white thinking. It is believed that BPD's cannot see the color grey. It is very possible that five people involved in a highly-charged emotional situation could possibly have five opinions and reactions to that situation. Five interpretations. Five opinions. Five different emotions attached to the situation. Who is right? The majority? No one? The key word here is “feeling”. Feelings aren't facts.

*When you dance with a gorilla, it is the gorilla
who decides when to stop.*

Invalids of Invalidation

April 17

An invalid is one who is incapacitated (physically) by injury or illness. It stands to reason that someone who is invalidated verbally is subject to mental and emotional illness and injury. Typically, Borderlines grow up in an invalidating environment, or one in which their emotional responses were not correct or taken into account. Put bluntly, Borderlines are often emotional cripples. They may react in a manner opposite for what a situation dictates, or with more intensity. Learning appropriate responses to life's events is part of Emotion Regulation and Interpersonal Effectiveness in the *DBT skills. We have heard our behaviors cause us to be "social retards." We have found that not everyone will like us.

It is none of our business what someone else thinks of us. ~ A.A. Slogan

Your Decision

January 23

Upon reading yesterday's meditation, we may find ourselves thinking.... "*now what?*" It may feel like a purgatory as we sit in shock, just having realized that we are between just taking Step 1 (admitting our powerlessness), and wondering what's next. We feel as if we are standing on the edge of a huge, bottomless crater. We have just hit one bottom with our addiction or Borderline disorder, and now we stare into another vast void, where we pray to God *there IS a bottom*. As our sponsor once said to us, "There is no rush. Just sit with your powerlessness for a bit." A counselor once said, "Just sit with your feelings. Don't judge them." (a *DBT Skill)

The point of power is always in the present moment.
~ Louise Hay

A.A. Two-Step

April 30

Often, as newcomers to sobriety we are so enthralled with our new way of living that we completely and fervently work Step One. We admit our powerlessness over our drug of choice and attend meetings. That is all well and good. That's great! We then carry our new way of life to the ears of others, who may also have an addiction problem. We may not have had a spiritual awakening yet, nor do we practice the principles in all our affairs. *We may not have been clean and sober long enough to know of these principles.* We take Step 1, then Step 12. Step 1, Step 12. Repeatedly. This is called the A.A. "two-step". It is a very incomplete version of the program, as there are ten other steps to consider. Even people with a lot of sobriety time under their belts fall into the dance of the A.A. two-step.

The Twelve Steps: there are 12 of them in numerical order for a reason.

June 1

Step 6: “*Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*” Ready to have God remove our flaws? With a mixture of trepidation and hope we say, “Let’s do it.” At one point, there is a split-second between *not being ready*, and *being entirely ready*. It’s hard to actually pin-point the moment. Who cares? We’re *SO THERE*. We’ve identified them and spoken them to a trusted person, and we’re ready to be done with them. No rush. We just sit with that fact. What happens if you try to bake a cake or a soufflé too quickly?....*why, the darn thing will cave in on itself.* Again, we are not running up these 12-steps of recovery; we are walking them. We’re ready for God to once again take over and be the pilot of our programs.

*We might as well “ Let Go and Let God “ because
in the end He is going to do it anyway.*

~ Anonymous

Cereal Relapsing

October 5

Snap! We get a bright idea. *Crackle!* Goes our judgment out the window. *Pop!* Goes the cork on the wine bottle. We are off and running again; we've talked ourselves into another relapse. We have to eat our Wheaties so we can put some elbow grease into working our dual programs of recovery. Why do we merely exercise our jaws as to the virtues of being of being sober, and not put our words into action? Once again, how did we find ourselves drunk, all alone, and eating take-out Chinese? Why do we keep thinking that we can dig to the bottom of the Cocoa Puffs box and find a free ticket for sobriety there? "*Trix are for Kids. Siwwy Wabbit.*" Enough! *Grow up* and sober up.

Talk does not cook rice. ~ Chinese proverb

Thin Line

April 9

The symptoms of BPD can place us Borderlines in a position where we are walking a very thin line, a perilous dance between mental illness and addiction, shame and guilt, prejudice and stigma. We may fear going crazy and being locked up permanently. Perhaps we experience the terror of awakening from a blackout, wondering if we *really* were in a terrible car accident in which someone was killed, resulting in our being locked up indefinitely. If we eventually move into late-stage addiction and untreated (and possibly undiagnosed) mental illness, we may feel so hopeless we want to be put out of our misery. We have nowhere to turn to anymore - running from life and the law, and hiding from friends and family. Our Higher Power *can* still help us at this point.

*That one is God, may you find Him now.
~From the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous*

Isolation Wards

December 8

Even after having some recovery from two disorders, addiction and BPD, it is still our tendency to isolate from others. Shame, guilt, and the ignorance of others make it easier for us to avoid people altogether. In cocooning ourselves within the comfort of our homes, we can develop a sort of agoraphobia. However, we find that when we share our experiences with others, we are not alone in having emotional problems. The prison that we have created for ourselves in harboring our secrets becomes less confining over time. We find we truly do need other people in our lives, and we can grow as recovering and well-adjusted people who are managing their problems.

Just as light brightens darkness, discovering inner fulfillment can eliminate any disorder or discomfort. This is truly the key to creating balance and harmony in everything you do. ~ Deepak Chopra
