

*Excerpt – Chapter 6, Misdemeanors Become Felonies*

*I was a 27-year-old, foulmouthed, street-hardened young woman. I was loud and abrasive, my face scarred from hard living, legally blind and scared to death. That fear manifested itself as anger. At my intake interview (at the drug treatment center), I answered all the questions as clearly and concisely as I could.*

*There were three components to this interview that impacted me:*

*1. My counselor said, “You seem to have an awful lot of pride, but I am not hearing a lot to be proud of.” As cocky as I was, I was surprised that I accepted that from her, but I did. I only remember feeling my posture soften.*

*2. There were more questions and then she asked, “Wow, aren’t you tired? Living a life like that must take a lot of work.” I had never thought about that before. Yes, I was tired. Big exhale...*

*3. The finale was when she asked if I had ever considered suicide. I again answered honestly, that no, I had not. She then turned in her chair to look at me and said compassionately yet sternly, “Really? Why not?”*

*This silenced me... it offered me a clarity I needed. I had exhausted everything and everyone. I had nothing left. This was the moment I received the gift of desperation. If I were to survive, I would need to change.*

*“Are you ready to try something different?” she asked. Yes, yes, I was.*