

# **THE TWELVE PROMISES OF CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS**

Gold Cost Focus Group 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008

The Twelve Promises of CoDA tell us we can “**expect a miraculous change**” by working the program. For newcomers, who often feel hopeless or depressed when starting the journey of recovery, the Promises provide hope and encouragement. They give sustenance and reassurance to all codependents who work the program.

**Promise 1: I know a new sense of belonging. The feeling of emptiness and loneliness will disappear.**

Codependents are not all stamped out of one mould. One thing that keeps us coming back is our identification with other codependents. As we listen and share in CoDA meetings we begin to discover that others have similar feelings and behaviours . We hear our own stories coming from the mouths of strangers. Our sense of isolation finally begins to lift.

*(Common Threads P 9)*

**Promise 2: I am no longer controlled by my fears. I overcome my fears and act with courage, integrity and dignity.**

**Promise 3: I know a new freedom**

Many of us spent a lifetime fearing and often defending ourselves against exposure. “If you really knew me you wouldn’t like me” could have been our collective chorus of shame. In Step 5 we were asked to relinquish our protective shields and admit to another person who we really were.

*(Step 5 Pamphlet)*

**Promise 4: I release myself from worry, guilt, and regret about my past and present. I am aware enough not to repeat it.**

**Promise 5: I know a new love and acceptance of myself and others. I feel genuinely lovable, loving and loved.**

Most of us had lived with an undercurrent of constant tension that had sapped our energy and our joy. As we revealed to ourselves that which we had hidden for so long we began to experience the feelings we had long suppressed. As we worked our Fifth Step the pressing weight of what we had locked inside began to lift. This self-admission was a vehicle for self-acceptance.

*(Step 5 Pamphlet)*

**Promise 6: I learn to see myself as equal to others. My new and renewed relationships are all with equal partners.**

**Promise 7: I am capable of developing and maintaining healthy and loving relationships. The need to control and manipulate others will disappear as I learn to trust those who are trustworthy.**

Becoming willing to make amends in Step 8 was the beginning of mending our relationships, both with ourselves and others. It prepared us to venture out from the relative safety of the Fellowship. We would begin to interact with others in a new way. Self-forgiveness would be instrumental in moving us out of our codependence and into healthy, whole relationships with God ourselves and our fellow human beings.

*Step 8 Pamphlet*

**Promise 8 : I learn that it is possible for me to mend – to become more loving, intimate and supportive. I have the choice of communicating with my family in a way which is safe for me and respectful of them.**

We have physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and sexual boundaries. It is up to us to determine where those boundaries begin and end. We need to be aware of our own feelings so we can let others know when we feel uneasy or uncomfortable. **We cannot assume other people can read our minds.** Setting boundaries is a skill that requires practice and can lead to a sense of freedom in our lives.

**Promise 9: I acknowledge that I am a unique and precious creation**

**Promise 10: I no longer need to rely solely on others to provide my sense of worth.**

The miracles of recovery unfold. Loving relationships with our Higher Power, ourselves and others improve and evolve. We begin to feel more assured that our deepest needs will be cared for. We don't turn as often to other people or to an unhealthy lifestyle to satisfy our spiritual hunger. Like the light of dawn, our Higher Power's will radiates through us with reassurance and trust.

**Promise 11: I trust the guidance I receive from my Higher Power and come to believe in my own capabilities.**

**Promise 12: I gradually experience serenity, strength and spiritual growth in my daily life.**

In Step 3 we made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of our Higher Power. By working Step 11 we opened ourselves to the nourishing light that conscious contact with God provides. When we were ready, our everyday lives and relationships could reflect the peace and serenity that comes from this conscious contact.

*(Step 11 pamphlet)*