

The Promises of AA

As laid out in chapter 6 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, alcoholics who stay sober and work the Twelve Steps will see these Promises come true:

Promise 1: We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

Promise 2: We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

Promise 3: We will comprehend the word serenity.

Promise 4: We will know peace.

Promise 5: No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.

Promise 6: The feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

Promise 7: We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.

Promise 8: Self-seeking will slip away.

Promise 9: Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.

Promise 10: Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us.

Promise 11: We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.

Promise 12: We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

What do the Promises mean?

The Big Book's Promises mostly describe the change in attitude that will transpire within the alcoholic, "sometimes quickly, and sometimes slowly." They may take time, but they "will always materialize if we work for them."

A person working a good program to recover from alcoholism will surely experience an internal shift that produces a new level of peace and well-being. Readers of the Big Book will notice the following words emphasized in these Promises, found in chapter 6, that represent the central benefits and primary purposes of recovery:

- Freedom
- Happiness
- Peace

- Serenity
- Benefit to others

Simultaneously, the Big Book promises the departure of these unwelcome byproducts of alcoholism:

- Fear
- Regret
- Feelings of uselessness
- Self-pity
- Selfishness and self-seeking

So the Promises are two-fold: the person who works a good program will gain a spiritual foundation and a whole new outlook on life, and the dread and negativity of alcoholism will be undone.