

THE PIPELINE

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Are These Extravagant Promises? Let's Find Out!

Step 9: *“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”*

“If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past, nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity, and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook on life with change. Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.”

Alcoholics Anonymous p. 83-84

Before I went into recovery, my life was in complete chaos, and I powerless over everything. My house was burning to the ground literally: my infant daughter came second to my addiction, my spouse was on the verge of leaving, and I was

hanging onto my job of a decade sparsely by a thread. I decided something had to change.



That change was based on me; my actions, dedication, and follow through. This was not what I wanted to hear in the beginning, but it was something I needed to hear. I cried the first time I heard the 9th step promises read out loud at a meeting. The tears were not rooted in hope it would happen, but that gut wrenching thought it would never happen for me. I had not started the steps that would bring about that change.

I felt alone. Slowly, I built a foundation for sobriety working the steps with my sponsor and with fellowship in the CMA rooms.

How did they know I would be amazed before I was half-way through? I finally could sleep the night through without a racing thought. I found my part in everything and was on my way to peace of mind. It was painstaking for sure, but no one gets sober without action. Working the program, I was provided tools to help me remove the obsession to use. A whole new world opened up to me. I felt joy for the first time in years.

CMAAZ.COM - Statewide Hotline: 1(877) 700-METH

The Girl Who Cried Wolf

And then I thought to myself... I could be that boy. The boy who cried wolf. Cause I've been that girl, the one to cry for help. But I wasn't trying to play a game, it wasn't a folly cry for attention. My heart wanted to change, my mind wouldn't let me. I was to blame for people not believing in me. For I presented them with false hope too often. I claimed to desire change but wasn't willing to do the work that it entailed. I held unreasonable expectations for people to fix me, but only by fixing themselves first. If they just understood, if they would just change, I'd be different.

When I burned all my bridges, when I ran my support dry with shallow promises, I had to understand that when the day came where I was finally desperate and willing to change, my support had been justifiably dissipating. As they had exhausted all efforts to help me. My verbal assurance no longer sufficed. They had to set healthy boundaries, boundaries that would protect them from further sorrow. They had come to the point where they needed to physically witness my actions towards prosperity. The unintentional burdening I had done left me feeling misunderstood and neglected.

I felt so guilty and shameful for the emotional, physical and financial anguish I had caused them. I was pitiful, self-loathing, and full of regret. Though I felt terrible for the things I had done, I felt more sorry for myself. I manipulated the shame because I had always been so comfortable with it. Notice all of the "me's, myself, and I's"... Though I had the desire to change, and regret for my actions, I manage to make it all about me and how I felt. When the whole point of feeling sorry for others is to consider how situations have affected them. If I was truly ready for a change I had to acknowledge my part, and be willing to understand why they had distanced themselves from me. I turned my pity into progress. I knew if I was to regain any trust or support I had to forget the guilt/pity and do something about it. With this revelation came action. With action came a small taste of what I could do, where I could go. A glimpse of a life I never thought I'd have.

You WILL be scared, but do not let the fear intimidate you, or result in doubting your capabilities. Recognize it as customary. It is a healthy fear if you allow it to be. Because we should be scared. Scared to remain the self pity we may feel, scared to endlessly struggle in this life.

Scared our last cry for help may not be heard.

By: yours truly

(Step 9 - continued from page 1)

Shame and guilt no longer engulfed my psyche. I was finally unafraid of the horrible events that led me to this point in my life. Once I accepted them and cleaned up the wreckage, they no longer stopped me from moving forward.

Meditation helped to settle my mind. When I understood that it did not require the absence of all noise or distraction, it worked wonders. I incorporate the sounds around me and find peace in the middle of it all. Everywhere I go, no matter what distractions are happening, I have a mind that knows serenity.

I could open-up to another addict about my past and not have it define me. I am not what I did in my past. Doing the next right thing, I am exactly who I need to be.

That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. This is where my life changed in the biggest way. I had always gone through life a victim and a fighter, which was so exhausting. No wonder I needed to use to escape! I was in a prison of my own making. Once I gave way to shifting the focus from me to service, life got better. The benefit of service work continues to work miracles in my life. I started to feel interconnected with other people in and out of the program. I was no longer dependent nor alone anymore. They say this is a selfish program, and I agree. But it is selfish in the way like when you are on an airplane and they tell you if the pressure in the cabin drops to put on your mask first, and then help others. Everyone

benefits if I stay

sober.

Love was different in addiction. Prior it was transactional – If I can just get that promotion, that degree, move to a different place, have a nicer car, maybe people will love me the way I deserve! Moreover, if I give you love, I expect it back with the conditions I put in place. My definition of love changed. Today I define love as an action of hoping the best for someone and expecting absolutely zero in return. Love is not about me, it is for others. Today I live in gratitude. Gone is the focus of never having enough. I make time for my program daily because anything I put in front of my recovery; I will lose.

I have money woes like everyone else. They never keep me up at night. I am the sole breadwinner for my family and that pressure is never a burden. I know that my Higher Power is always with me. If I lose my job, get a massive bill, or need to help someone financially, it will all work out in the end. I do not stress, as the partial furlough I had to take recently showed people in my life will step up to provide. Today I work and prepare for the next career phase, whatever that might be.

We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us. This is. Everything.

Once the steps were complete, I stopped second guessing myself so much. I, 'Think! Think! Think!' as they say. (continued on last page)

Central Arizona CMA meetings can be found at the following:

- <http://cmaaz.com/meetings.html>
 - <https://crystalmeth.org/cma-meetings/cma-meetings-directory/3197-centralarizona.html>
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Tradition 9:

“CMA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

Central Arizona CMA District Committees

The CMA Service Structure provides opportunities to be of service. Attend a committee meeting and find one that's right for you!!

- *Hospitals & Institutions - 1st Tues., 7:00pm*
- *Events & Fundraising - 1st Wed., 7:30pm*
- *Communications - 2nd Tues., 7:15 pm*
- *Central District (CADI) - 3rd Tues. - 7:30pm*
- *Public Info & Outreach - 4th Tues., 7:00pm*
- *Literature - 4th Tues., - 7:00 pm*

Visit CMAAZ.COM daily calendar and Central AZ District Facebook page for more info.

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I am much more energized to ask someone for help, to bounce ideas off them, to include others in helping me navigate all sorts of situations. My head is clear. My intuition could finally be trusted again for the first time in a long time!

My Higher Power loves me just as I am. It does not love my potential or only when I am doing good. It is not a punishing Higher Power. When things happen in life, bad or good, I see them now as happening – they are not punishment or rewards from my Higher Power. My Higher Power is there through all things that are happening in life to guide and love me to happiness.

Today my life is the Promises come true. I have a loving family, an amazing network of friends, a job I enjoy, and a future to dream about. Action brings change and the Promises do come true. They can for you too.

By Jennifer L.