

Reflections on Promise 2

Promise 2: We do not regret the past or wish to shut the door on it.

When I regret things, I wish they didn’t happen. When I shut the door, I’m cutting myself off from the past - keeping it from other’s awareness. The past is integral to which I am. I can only be grateful for my past – even the painful parts. My past made me who I am. Sometimes I am selective in terms of what I dwell on and whom I share things with. That’s neither regret nor shutting the door – that’s discernment - exercising good judgment. Can I trust that this is a good time and a good person to share this with and reflect upon it? That’s the key! — Scott J., *EAI President*

My biggest regret in life was the fact that I left a good job. The way the promises are written in the Big Book, the book entitled Alcoholics Anonymous, is as if we don't have these promises but we can attain them. This promise is written, "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it." That tells me that I have to do something in order for that to happen. These 12 promises come true after we have completed the 9th step. Newcomers come to a few meetings and wonder why they are not feeling these promises, especially in meetings where the 12 steps are not the focus. So, newcomers get discouraged and don't come back. I am so very grateful that my early meetings and the meetings I go to now focus on the program, the 12 steps... — Derita P., *EAI Trustee*

This is one of my favorite promises because regrets and resentments–the two Rs–seem to go hand-in-hand for me and have always posed a danger to my emotional health. I have to continually remind myself that I have great tools to manage these pests. The 4th and 5th Steps give me a chance to get my tormenting ghosts out into the open and to share them with another person and with my Higher Power. The 8th and 9th Steps give me a chance to make amends to myself and others, allowing me to reconcile my past with my present and set a new course for the future... — Colleen C., *EAI Secretary*

‘Move past it,’ ‘Get over it’: these are phrases that we hear when we go through something traumatic in our lives. In fact, I think a lot of us join the fellowship due to these traumas. In some respects, this advice is valid. In order to move forward in the world and experience a life guided through our Higher Power, we need to put past events in a healthy context. If we don’t, it can cause us to act inconsistently with how we truly want to relate to the world. Heal from the past, but don’t forget it, so that we can grow from it... — Paul N., *EAI Treasurer*