



“Three Promises to a Loved-One Suffering from Addiction”

Importance of Motivation

Both *pain* and *hope* motivate addicts to get clean and sober. Pain comes from the increasing negative consequences of addiction and from the diminishing euphoria of drugs. Hope comes from a place in their hearts where dreams still exist: dreams for a better life. No matter where someone is in their recovery, *pain* and *hope* can continue to motivate them to reach their highest potential.

Dear _____ ,

I’ve noticed your inability to make healthy changes in the way you’ve been living your life. I’ve learned that complaining about your unwillingness to change has not been helpful. Nor is it helpful to hope that someday you’ll “magically” change. Therefore, I commit to the following three changes that I, myself, will make.

1. I promise I will work to accept your r _____ to change.

When I accept that resistance to change (even positive change) is normal, it allows me to learn how to support you in overcoming your resistance to change. I believe that when you stop resisting change, you will make healthy changes in the way you live.

2. I promise to shift my focus on how I h ____ you.

There are key areas of life where change may benefit you. (Such as excessive anger, dishonesty, irresponsibility, procrastination or lack of self-discipline.) I will stop trying to help you by doing things for you. (Such as telling you what to do, making excuses for you, making decisions for you, rescuing you from negative consequences of your actions, etc.) Instead I will focus on what motivates you to overcome your resistance to change. I will change from “How can I help you?” to “How can you help yourself?”

3. I promise to learn better methods that support you to m _____ yourself.

I will learn by following suggestions of professionals in the field of recovery. I’m already learning this unpleasant truth: *“When the pain of not changing becomes greater than the pain of changing, people will change.”* I will implement suggestions from professionals. An important part of my new learning is to set boundaries and consequences with you. It’s also important to enforce them. I will not save you from the painful consequences of poor decisions. I believe that when you experience true consequences, you will take your own steps to make better and healthier choices next time.

I hope you see these changes in my actions as being motivated by my love for you.

I love you,

Responsibility of Parents

“Our greatest responsibility to our children is to teach them how to live in this world as an adult.

If we don’t do that, no matter what we give them, we have failed them.”

- unknown

Lesson Suggestions

- + Accept the fact that change is hard
- + Stop unhealthy helping
- + Set boundaries and consequences
- + Do not rescue from consequences

“I love you enough to let you experience your own pain.”