

## **Declaration of Interdependence by BJ Gallagher and Lisa Hammond**

We hold these truths to be self-evident:

That all women are created equal -  
but each is blessed with different gifts and talents.

That all women are endowed with certain individual rights -  
but each must assume shared responsibilities.

For the happiness of all  
depends on the commitment of each  
to support equality and individuality,  
rights and responsibilities.

We declare all women to be mutually interdependent -  
banding together to support one another,  
sharing our experience, strength, and hope,  
that all may enjoy life, love,  
and the pursuit of laughter.

We agree to encourage one another in tough times  
and celebrate in good times.

We commit to taking turns leading and following,  
inspiring and teaching,  
listening and learning.

We agree to give credit where credit is due -  
including us.

We commit to loving ourselves first -  
because we can't give what we don't have.

With this Declaration of Interdependence,  
we set ourselves free -

free from old beliefs that are no longer true,  
free from self-doubt, insecurity, and loneliness,  
free from self-imposed perfectionism.

We set ourselves free -  
heeding our intuition in all her guises,  
loving our bodies through every change,  
finding our voices to speak our own truths.

We set ourselves free -  
to create fulfilling work,  
to form nurturing families,  
and to build great friendships.

We are strong;  
we are beautiful;  
we are generous;  
we are wise.

We are women -  
committed to creating  
a world that affirms us all.

**The poem above is found in the book “Oh, Thank Goodness, It’s Not Just Me!” by BJ Gallagher and Lisa Hammond. Shared by Mac Anderson, the founder of Simple Truths**

**It was read at the 11th BWA State Membership Conference on May 16, 2010 by Hawaii Federation of BWAs President Donna Higashi.**