

In trying to find a satisfactory philosophical account of the specific role that promises play in our moral lives, it comes naturally to refer to the notion of trust. One central thing that promises do is help engender trust in situations where it otherwise may be difficult to come by. Recently, a number of philosophers have built on this intuitive idea to develop a comprehensive theory of promissory relations. In this contribution, I will discuss the prospects of such a Trust View of Promising in closer detail. I begin by fleshing out the core idea behind the Trust View, showing how it can make sense of much of the normative contours of our promissory practice, and provides an attractive account of its unique and valuable point and purpose in our lives. Finally, I turn to the all-important question of how to explain the *normativity* of promising. Building on the Trust View's general idea, I will sketch three distinct options – an effect-based view, on which the wrong of breaking promises is derived from a general duty to perform actions one has knowingly led others to trust one to perform, a more elaborate second construal, which locates the wrong of breaking promises within the broader wrong of showing respect to those one has *invited* to something, and finally, a normative power view, which holds that promising is a normative power that serves our interest in facilitating or enabling the relationship of trust between promisor and promisee. I will argue that all three aspects plausibly create reasons to keep one's promises in ordinary circumstances, but only those embracing the last will be able to fully account for the distinctive obligation that results from the giving of a valid promise in all of the circumstances in which we intuitively judge it to do so.