

LOVE LETTERS

A GUIDE FOR SENDING LOVE THROUGH THE MAIL

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INTRODUCTION

Who doesn't want to get a love letter?!

I love the "bleeding heart confession of undying love" kind of love letter.

But I also love the "friend, your presence in the world is what makes life bearable for me" kind of love letter.

And the "Mom, you are the BEST!" love letters.

And the "Hello gorgeous co-worker! I just want you to feel SEEN today!" love letters.

So in order to spread MORE LOVE,

I created this fun little eBook called *Love Letters*.

It's full of simple ideas for love letters you can write.

I recommend collecting some fun paper or cards and envelopes. Get a pen you love. Order some stamps. (Did you know you can [order stamps](#)!?)

You probably have a stack of cards somewhere already. Dig them out and clear a little letter writing space on a desk or a table. While you go through this book, perhaps you can dedicate a little corner of your desk or kitchen table as a sacred letter writing space. Put a small lamp or a candle nearby. You could even light a candle of intention before you write each letter.

If you don't want to write physical letters, you can use the prompts to write emails and text messages instead. Digital love letters also make people smile! But maybe set a goal of writing one or two physical letters. You could choose a day of the month that is your letter writing day. Mark your calendar and set an intention.

Then grab your pen and join me in spreading the kind of LOVE that makes someone's heart skip a beat.

CHAPTER 1: A LETTER TO SAY THANK YOU

This chapter is for when it's time to write a letter to say THANK YOU!

You can send a *Thank You Letter* to a person in your life that you've been meaning to thank.

Or you can send a *Thank You Letter* to a stranger or a service provider that consistently makes life better for you: your barista, your therapist, your mechanic, your doctor, your hairdresser, your dental hygienist, your waiter or waitress. The list of folks in your life who could use a kind Thank You Letter could go on and on.

But to avoid overwhelm, just choose one and go for it.

Here's my all time favorite advice about how to thank someone. It comes from a man named Marshall Rosenberg who dedicated his life to teaching people how to use nonviolent language. Here's what he says:

When you thank someone, tell them how they made life wonderful for you.

So instead of saying:

Thank you for the flowers.

Say:

The flowers you brought me brightened up my kitchen table, and every time I walked by and saw them, I would smile. You brought beauty to my kitchen, and you made me feel remembered and valued. Long after the flowers faded, I felt your thoughtful gesture. So thank you so much!

Here's another example you could use for a monetary gift:

Instead of saying:

Thank you for the gift. I really appreciated it.

Say:

Last month when I got my oil changed, I discovered that I needed new tires for my car. I had just begun the process of looking at what expenses I could cut in order to buy them when your

check arrived in the mail. You can't imagine how relieved I was or how surprised I was by the grace of the timing. I went and got new tires that afternoon. Now I remember your thoughtfulness each time I get in my car to drive somewhere. Thanks for helping me feel a bit safer out on the road!

OR:

Last year, I stopped getting pedicures in order to save money. I found that I was really missing them, but I have been saving for a new dishwasher so I stayed strong! So when I received your gift in the mail, I booked my first pedicure in six months and it was just delightful, maybe more so after having gone several months without one. I loved spending the time being still in the massage chair and the pure luxury of having my feet soaked and toes painted. Now every time I look down at my toes, I feel happy and grateful. Thank you so much!

Of course you could insert any kind of need or small pleasure in the place of new tires and pedicures, but the idea is that you let the giver know how they made life more wonderful for you with their gift.

Even if a gift is something small like a smile or a kind word, you can share your gratitude for how that small thing made the day brighter for you.

Ok, now it's your turn! Go write a Thank You Letter.

Extra credit if you mail it or hand-deliver it before the day is up!

CHAPTER 2: A LETTER TO A FRIEND YOU HAVEN'T SEEN IN A WHILE

For this chapter, you're going to write a letter to a friend you haven't seen in a while.

Maybe it's someone you haven't seen for a very, very long time (20 years!)

Or maybe it's just been a few years.

Or a few months.

It could be a relative. Your college roommate. A co-worker from a job you no longer have. A neighbor from a place you no longer live. A childhood friend.

Write a letter just to say, "I'm thinking of you."

Sometimes you spend what feels like a lifetime with someone, and then seasons change and schedules shift and for whatever reason, you don't see one another anymore. But what you shared together is still present with you in your heart. It's still real.

And that's exactly what you can say in your letter.

Remind them of why they are still special to you.

Recall a few things you shared together.

Maybe you even have an old photo you can tuck into the letter.

You can share a little of what your life looks like today. If it feels overwhelming to try to describe all the life that has passed by, just give a few snapshots:

Maybe one amazing thing (*I'm learning to crochet.*)

And one hard thing (*I'm going in for a knee replacement.*)

And one thing you're grateful for these days (*I'm thankful for how podcasts make exercise so much easier!*)

Then, just say you're thankful for the memories you share with the person you're writing to.

And you hope that the year ahead is bringing beautiful things into their life.

Now, track down their address (Message them on Facebook?) and pop your letter in the mail!

Imagine how happy you would be to hear from this person.

That's exactly how you're going to make them feel!

Cheers to memories and friends you've loved long ago.

CHAPTER 3: A FAN LETTER

As a young tween, I was a proud member of the *Joni loves Chachi* fan club.

I was a big *Happy Days* fan, but who I really loved was Scott Baio.

In exchange for a small fee, I received a fan club button (for my jean jacket) and a Joni loves Chachi poster.

I also had an address where I could write to Joni and Chachi about all of my dreams for their future life together.

I could tell them how much I loved watching their show, and that I wished it would go on for more seasons and if they found themselves in need of a spunky 11 year old to be in a scene or two, well then, I was available.

These days when you're a fan of someone, you can just follow them on Instagram and "like" their photos. If you're a fan of an author, you can find them on Goodreads and leave reviews of their books. If you like a podcast, you can subscribe to it and leave good reviews. Follow and like. Honestly, it's become so easy to be a fan.

I love being a fan. And I'm a fan of a lot of folks: musicians, authors, actors, teachers, bloggers, photographers, chefs, artists...

But I don't really write that many fan letters any more, which got me to wondering:

Without fan letters, do our fans ever get to know how we really feel?

So today, you're going to write a fan letter.

Pick someone you're a fan of.

Write them a letter saying,

Hey, I just wanted to write to you and say I'm a fan!

I LOVE the music you make/words you write/movies you act in/recipes you create.

Your song/poem/recipe/book made the world a brighter place for me.

Then tell them why.

I once wrote a letter to a songwriter just to tell him that his songs helped me through a really rough season of my life. I told him that whenever I got to a dark place, I would listen to his music and it would help me to feel the light again. Then I named a few of the specific songs I listened to on repeat that year.

You can write a fan letter to someone famous whose work you admire and appreciate.

Or you can write a fan letter to someone that you know that you're a fan of.

I'm a fan of all my kids.

I'm a big fan of the gal who colors my hair.

And of my yoga instructor.

I'm also a fan of any bartender who makes a good whiskey sour.

When you're ready to send your letter, if you don't have an address, you can post your fan letter on the internet as a review or on social media.

If it's going to a celebrity, you can look for an address on their website.

Maybe they'll even send you back a button for your jean jacket.

CHAPTER 4: A CONDOLENCE LETTER

Emily Post may disagree with me here, but I believe that there is no statute of limitations on condolence letters.

Never have I ever received a letter from someone who was expressing their sympathy to me for something and I have had the thought: Well, this is too late.

On the contrary, I always think: *How kind of them to remember me.*

Whether it's been a month, six months or six years, pain and loss manage to hold onto places in our hearts for way longer than the world around us remembers.

Death has a long memory.

And we never stop feeling the absence of someone we love.

So, that note you've been meaning to write to your friend who is hurting?
The card you've been meaning to mail but you just don't know what to say?

Today is the day for that one.

Today you're going to write a condolence letter.

To your friend who lost her mom.

To your family member who lost a child.

To your colleague who lost his father.

And condolence letters don't only have to be for those who have lost someone through death. You can write a condolence letter to anyone who has experienced great sadness and pain:

Your neighbor whose husband left.

Your friend whose child was put in jail.

Your family member who lost their job.

So often we put off sending condolence letters because we don't know what to say.

But when someone is suffering, they just need to know that they are not alone.

All you really have to say is something that communicates:

I see you.

And I am here.

Here are few other ideas you can try:

If you're writing to someone who has lost a loved one and you also knew the loved one, you could say:

I'll always remember...

And then tell a story or write a short memory you have about their loved one. When people tell me stories about my grandmother, it's like they are handing me back her actual presence for just a moment. What a beautiful gift.

If you didn't know their loved one, you could recall their love for the person who has died.

I remember when you told me that...

When you share something they told you, you might be telling them something they have forgotten. You could be unearthing a treasured memory.

Your letter doesn't have to be long. The fact that you are sending it at all is accomplishing the intention of helping someone who is hurting to feel seen and loved.

You can just say that you are so sorry for their loss and that you are holding them in your thoughts and prayers.

It won't take away their pain, but it might lighten it for today.

So go ahead. Mail that small mercy in the mail today.

CHAPTER 5: A LETTER TO YOUR MOM

When my oldest son was four years old, he could sit for hours and talk to me about whatever he was interested in. Of course his primary interest back then was lawn equipment. We looked at the same books full of construction vehicles over and over again. Every day, we pored over the same Home Depot flyers filled with lawn mower advertisements.

Back when I was listening to him describe mowers and weed eaters to me, I never imagined how much I would one day wish he would talk to me this much about his interests.

In fact, now that my children are all older, I spend a lot of time wishing they would tell me more about their lives. There is nothing I would love more than to receive a letter from one of my kids.

And I have a hunch that I'm not the only mom who feels that way.

So today you're going to write a letter to your mama.

And even if your mom is no longer with you, maybe consider writing her a letter anyway.

That might sound crazy, but stay with me. It's possible that you might really enjoy the exercise of writing her a letter. Obviously, you don't have to send it to anyone, but:

If you could talk to her today, what would you tell her?

Maybe after you write it, you will want to share it with someone who shares your love for her and also misses her (a sibling or an aunt)? You can send it to someone or tuck it in a journal. Either way, the writing of it might be a healing or cathartic act in and of itself.

Or you could choose to write to someone who has "mothered" you recently.

Whoever you write today,

Give them the gift of knowing what's happening with you.

Moms are desperate to know how their kids are doing, how they are really doing.

So maybe try some of these prompts:

What's making you excited to get up in the morning?

What are you reading or playing or learning?

How has your life shifted or changed lately?

Can you think of something specific you can thank your mom for?

Something she taught you that you've used lately?

Something she gave you that reminds you of her? Something she does that you just love?

I promise you that your mom will appreciate getting a letter from you, even if you see her often.

She will cherish it always.

CHAPTER 6: A LETTER TO A FAVORITE PLACE

I know what you're thinking.

A letter to a place?

Alison, that's just weird.

But stay with me.

I feel like the best way to talk about this is to show not tell, so I have some examples. I once wrote [a love letter to Scotland](#). And I wrote [a love letter to a neighborhood lake](#).

I have also written a love letter to [an Arkansas campground](#) and to a favorite walking trail.

Here's the thing about writing a letter to a place you love.

It's kind of a backward way of unearthing some things inside yourself that you might not have access to if you're writing to a specific person.

But then, and this is totally optional, you can also share your letter with a person.

When you share your letter filled with love for a place with others, it accomplishes two things.

First, it is a way of sharing a piece of yourself with others. To show you how much I love Scotland is a way opening a part of my heart to you.

Second, reading your letter can be a beautiful experience for those who share your love of the place. If I send my [Letter to An Arkansas Campground](#) to those who have camped there with me, I might help them dig up their own memories from there, as well as remind them that part of the reason it's special to me is that they were there with me.

Also, if you want to share your letter publicly (again totally optional), it can help people you don't even know to discover the place and have their own encounter with its wonder.

So maybe make a list of places you love.

You can include spots you've vacationed, a house you lived in, a trail, a church, a restaurant, an ice cream stand, a coffee shop, a forest, a town or even a whole country.

Then choose one place off of your list and write straight to it.

Tell it why you love it. Thank it for the memories.

Then send it to someone else with a post-it note that says:

I wrote this letter to our favorite spot. Thought you might enjoy reading it!

Or don't. Keep it for yourself. Some letters aren't meant to be sent.

And that's ok.

CHAPTER 7: A TO SAY I'M SORRY

Is there an argument or a conflict that has been hurting your heart?

Keeping you up at night?

Maybe a letter could help.

For *I'm Sorry* letters, you might want to get a piece of notebook paper out and write a draft.

Since you know it's a draft, you can say literally anything.

Write out everything that happened and all the ways you are hurt or inflicted hurt or whatever you need to say.

Often after you write the draft, you might find that you don't need to actually send it.

Or maybe you will just want to send a shorter version, just a simple note saying,

I'm so sorry that I said hurtful things. I hope you can forgive me. And I want you to know that I love you.

For a little letter-writing inspiration, here's [a song about being sorry](#).

CHAPTER 8: A TO SAY CONGRATULATIONS

Did a graduation or a wedding pass you by and you forgot to send a gift? Write a letter and tuck a little gift card inside.

Even if the event was months ago, the recipient will be delighted to receive your gift. In fact, your gift will stand out! They will actually read your letter because it's not in a pile of cards.

Also, there are lots of things that happen in life that we don't ever bother acknowledging or celebrating.

Has someone in your life started a new job or gotten a promotion?

Bought a new house?

Moved to a new apartment?

Completed a new certification?

Maybe your niece beat her personal best running time or your nephew started a new business.

Anytime someone takes a new risk or does something out of their comfort zone, they would benefit from someone saying:

Hey! I saw that amazing thing you did! Congratulations! I'm super proud to know you!

In a world where we often only see or hear the negative, a little envelope full of positive energy can make someone's day!

Whose day are you making today? Get on it. :)

How about a little writing music?? Here's [a Celebration song](#). Just for inspiration.

POSTSCRIPT

I'm so delighted that you decided to download and read this little ebook. Thank you!

I hope that writing letters as you've gone through this book has brought you so much joy that you will want to keep writing them.

Every word you write is a vote for a more beautiful world.

Cheers to sealing our love up in envelopes and sending them to brighten someone's day!

XO

Alison