



Letters never sent

Have you felt your emotions running high in times of great grief? It can feel easy to get triggered by something or someone. It's as if the emotional rollercoaster of grief is taking up the majority of our ability to cope with people and situations like we may have in the past.

This practice can be used to find release of emotions, recall feelings of comfort, or even just help work through something in life that might feel "stuck." The goal of this practice is to take time to write a letter you will never send. Maybe it won't get sent because you are writing to your person who has died. Possibly you are writing to your future or past self. Or perhaps you are writing to someone in your life who you are struggling with at the moment.

The idea is that these letters are a way for us to constructively express ourselves and help our brain process different thoughts and feelings, so we can keep a connection, find forgiveness, or start to harness whatever you might be looking for right now.

Do what feels right for you

Many times when we are asked to write in times of emotional stress we might feel as though there were a right or wrong way to go about it. Are there certain things that need to be said? Did I get everything out properly? Put those worries aside here - this is all about writing what feels right for you!

Do you need to process some difficult and uncomfortable feelings and topics? Is it just a letter to let someone know how much you miss them and love them? Whatever you need, is what you do. Think about someone who has been on your mind. Is there a topic that is weighing heavily on you?



Let us never underestimate the power of a well-written letter. - Jane Austin



There's science behind it all

We keep so many thoughts and feelings in our brain, that things can become jumbled when we look to express ourselves and what is going on for us emotionally and/or physically.

Putting pen to paper can help us slow down enough to process and as we write things out - even if it isn't perfectly in order - it can help our brain put the puzzle pieces together of what may be happening in the different aspects of our body: brain, body, and heart.

Lastly, when we are able to "store" these thoughts and feelings in another form, we don't have to make sure that they stay swimming around in our brains. It can be like a sigh of relief and a spring cleaning for the brain.

So what do I do now?

It's completely up to you in how you would like to handle your letters from here. Some people may rip, burn, or shred letters that have anger or hurtful words or topics in them. It can feel good to get rid of these things after writing them down. Others might keep letters to themselves or their person who died in a memory box to look through at a later time. It's also been popular to use eco-friendly dissolving paper to write your message and then release it into a body of water, or lay it in a garden and water the paper. It will dissolve in front of your eyes and may give the feeling of a weight being lifted as your words are taken away.

Please remember that this is all about doing what feels right for you and your grief experience. Allow yourself to do what feels comfortable and remember that it can change as you go. You might want to draw, jot down a bullet pointed list, or write in a way that might seem incoherent to another. All of that and more is okay! This isn't about other people's thoughts or experiences - this is just for you. These letters will never be sent, so feel free to be true to yourself and express honestly and openly.