

Letters That Heal

The following exercises can be done over time - quickly or take your time. The important thing is that you use these letters to gain perspective, not to judge or belittle yourself or your efforts. Life, parenting, your childhood - these are journeys and as such we do the best we can as we learn more information. Use these letters to gather that information that gives you knowledge and helps you steer yourself in the direction you want to land.

On separate sheets of paper...

Imagine that you have the ability to say anything you want to a person who affected you (positively or negatively or both) in your youth. Who would that person be? Write a letter **from** that person **to** you, in their voice, telling you what you would have wanted to hear at that time in your life ... and now. What messages did their discipline/punishments/interventions send you?

Now, write a letter **back** to that person after you have "heard them out" and find some resolution or peace in "having your say" as best you can. Write fully and unplanned; don't be guarded. It's not your intention to give them this in reality. You are simply trying to unravel deep feelings/hurts/triumphs. You are trying to understand your present mentality for your own family.

Imagine your **child** is writing a letter to you now, in their voice. What do you think they would tell you that they hear from you? What do they see on a daily basis? How is love sent to them? What is their understanding of your discipline? How do they receive your messages?

Imagine **you** are now writing to your child. Even if they are toddlers, what message do you **want** them to get from you - what do you want them to understand about you as a mom or dad or caregiver?

Imagine **you** are writing to your child when they are 25 years old. What do you hope that they feel from you? How do you want to feel about them? What do you want them to remember about you and about their childhood?

