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Letter Writing Journaling

By Catherine Franz

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When you read a letter from someone, we are immediately transferred into their world, experience, and physical reality. You can capture the same feeling by writing letters to yourself or about other people in your journal. Letter writing is the easiest form to use in journaling. On occasion, you might have already dabbled in writing letters in your journal.

There are three major benefits to journaling with letters. First, the experience helps organize the event more clearly in our mind. Second, letter writing makes it easier to see cause and affect sequences of our actions. And third, because of its intimacy, it loosens up our writing style.

Whether you have or haven't experienced letter writing previously, here are a few ways you can expand the experience.

Step 1: Compile a list of people who you want to write a letter to. You can do this as a journal entry and mark the page with a post–it note.

Step 2: Select a letter style, purpose, before you begin writing. Since there are various types of letter writing styles, let me present four types that I have found most helpful and have received the most positive feedback in my workshops.

Letter Writing Journaling

Style 1: Milestone letters. Writing about milestones is about picking an event that changed your life. Whether the milestone was minor one or one that turned you around 360 degrees does not matter. Even the smallest ones have truth to be released. The milestone will have either altered your way of thinking, change your relationship with yourself or others, or even shaken your physical or spiritual beingness.

By writing about a milestone, you weed through and determine what is important in your life. Additionally, the exercise helps you understand what formed the person you are today

and explains what shifted that path.

Style 2: Release letters. Release letters allow you to vent and express your deepest emotions. This style frees buried energy, in turn, allowing you to think and feel through things, rather than keeping it corked. Please note that your experience may not always lead to a resolution, however, it does lead to change. You can't help but clean house of those leftovers.

Here are a few examples on how you can use release letters.

Example: Have you ever finished a conversation with someone that ruffled your feathers or left you still hearing their words like sounds of chalk going backwards across a blackboard? The conversation tumbles repeatedly in your mind for hours, even days. This is a perfect time to write a release letter. Set a timer for 10 minutes and let it rip across the page.

What you do with the release letter afterwards isn't important. If you feel comfortable leaving it in your journal, do so. If you prefer to use separate paper and burn it, do so. If you prefer to tear it out of your journal later, do so.

Example: You can use this same exercise to curb over spending. This process came to me years ago when I was an accountant giving advice on how to curb over spending.

Have you ever been in the position of feeling you just "gotta buy" something. Let's say you are watching television and you see something you "gotta have." Or maybe

a friend recommends a book and you still have 10 others to read but the recommendation is haunting you. How about seeing something, someone else has that you just "gotta have." The urge, just doesn't want to relinquish its grip even with conscious "fighting it" thoughts. By writing a release letter, you can release this urge at least the majority of the time.

You can also use release letters to move you past the urge to eat something that isn't on your food plan.

After several release letters you can even see what need is expressing itself and triggering these reactions. Once you identify the trigger, the process need usually subsides. There is no guarantee that this will work all the time, however, you will probably find it provides the release the

majority of the time.

Style 3: Wisdom letters. A wisdom letter is writing to your wisdom self. A wisdom letter works well after a release letter because it enables the process of moving on. The experience allows the wisdom transition into learning and usually into a more positive light.

Adding dialogue, either in part or as the whole letter, is an excellent way to enhance the experience. Initials will help you transition between wisdom self to other self.

Style 4: Thank you letters. Since my parents passed, I'm always coming across things I want to thank them for. Even the small things seemed important to share. Now, in hindsight and wisdom, I can see how even the small things rippled through my life. These letters are also a special way for keeping their memory alive.

We both know that an attitude of gratitude is a peaceful place to be and thank you letters is one avenue you can use to be on that path. Our gratitude feelings fuel our spiritual connections with the universe and with all living things. Peacefulness is also very attractive to others and what we want to manifest in life.

You can also use one of these letter styles to let go of the "wish I had said that instead" thoughts and feelings or to

share unfulfilled wishes and dreams that no longer fit but can't seem to move on.

Letter writing is an excellent way to find closure or complete unfinished business in order to heal or learn. Whether you have or haven't already been using letter writing in your journal, dedicate a whole week or two to the exercise. You might think that when you finish one letter, there isn't another reason to write another. Be patient, another will probably appear because you have uncovered what was on top. When you get tired of the exercise, stop, and switch to another technique.

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Catherine Franz is a life and business coach living in Northern Virginia. She has presented journaling workshop over 20 years. Catherine has authored two great books on tips and techniques of journaling. Copies available at: <http://www.abundancecenter.com/Store/main.htm>

Stress-Free Scrapbook Journaling Ideas

By Elaine Clay

Do you find it intimidating when you come to journal your scrapbook pages?

You are not alone! Many scrapbookers find it hard to get started when it comes to adding journaling to their scrapbooking layouts.

If you are one of those people who go blank at the thought of having to journal, don't worry. Here are some stress-free scrapbooking journaling ideas to help you write the right words whatever your page theme.

Make a list.

This is a fairly simple journaling technique that is suitable for use with any type of page theme, for example:

Doing a friendship page – list how you met, where you met, how long you have known each other, include what you like about your friend and why you are both pals.

Doing a recipe scrapbook page – then make a personal top 10 list of reasons why you like Grandma's chocolate cake so much.

Doing a baby layout – do a list of baby's favorite foods, you can even do one for the foods they don't like!

Letter Writing Journaling

A variation of this technique is to use bullet points to mark each line on your list, giving you an opportunity to empathise each item of your journaling: Anguilla April 2004 My first trip to the Caribbean This is the view from my hotel balcony overlooking the cove - I can't wait to go swimming the sea looks so nice!

Make sure you have fun experimenting with all the different kinds of embellishments that you can use as your bullet points!

Another bonus with using the list technique is that you do not need to worry about the structure of your sentences or that your journaling makes sense because the list breaks down what you want to say into it's basic readable form.

Write a Letter.

This is one of those great scrapbook journaling ideas that's fairly simple to do and it's also a lovely, personal way to journal your layouts too.

All you have to do is pretend you're writing to a friend telling them what is happening in your

photographs and including the "Dear" at the beginning of your writing will give your journaling an intimate feel.

Sent any emails lately? Like letters, emails are also a good source of journaling material that you can use for your layouts.

If you are unsure of your own journaling then doing it in a letter format could help your writing flow more easily, as you describe the people and the events taking place, letting you tell the story naturally and in your own words.

Ask a question.

If you are completely stuck and cannot think of anything to write this can be a good quick fix technique to use. Just ask some simple questions like, "What was your favorite part of..?" or "Did anything funny or embarrassing happen?".

This technique can be very effective when used for a special occasion layout, like a bridal shower, where you can ask each of the guests to tell you about their favorite memory of the bride-to-be.

Why not take it a stage further? Give each shower guest some suitable decorative paper and let them write down their own memories rather than journal all of them yourself.

For an extra special touch, you could get the guests to bring with them their favorite photo of the bride-to-be. Ask them to journal why they picked that particular picture and then do a separate layout for each individual photo.

Letter Writing Journaling

This is an effective way to make a wonderful and unique scrapbook that is quick, simple and full of memorable pieces of journaling that add a very personal feel to the album.

If you are one of those people who find it difficult to begin the journaling process these fun scrapbook journaling ideas will provide you with some basic tips and techniques to help make it easier.

So go on, try out the scrapbook journaling ideas above for yourself and add some stress-free journaling to your pages... Once you've finished you'll see that it's been well worth the effort.

Elaine Clay is the owner of

:: your one-stop online scrapbooking

resource. Find inspiration, increase your creativity and have fun with our helpful tips, ideas, articles and much more.

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Stress-Free Scrapbook Journaling Ideas

Four Keys to Successful Journaling

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How Journaling Can Positively Impact Your Physical Health

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