Inquiring Minds

Freedom Letter Overview

There is a saying, “Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die.” What might be possible if you could let go of anger, resentment, hurt, and disappointment? Imagine the freedom you could feel if only you get rid of the poison on your side and find compassion instead. It’s important to note that finding compassion does not mean “forgive and forget” nor are you condoning their actions or words. Compassion means recognizing and accepting your shared humanity, the light and the dark, in order to treat ourselves and others with loving-kindness.

The Freedom letter technique was originally described by Barbara De Angelis https://barbaradeangelis.com With these letters, there is an opportunity to heal six levels of emotion in sequence: anger, hurt, fear, regret, intention and compassion.

Instructions

- Begin with: “Dear _____”
- Write at least two sentences for each emotion until you are all out of words related to that feeling. Only when you are completely out of things to say should you move onto the next emotion.
- Feel free to swear, exaggerate, and say things that you would never ever say aloud. What you write should come from the heart, and your heart can be a messy, illogical, contradictory place. Allowing your heart free rein, without censorship from your brain will give you the fullest experience of this technique.
- Write by hand, not typed out on a computer. This too helps you connect to your heart, not your head.
- Do not try to do this in one sitting. Now and then, go back and reread what you wrote and add anything else that comes up for you.
- And most importantly, this letter should ***never*** be shown to anyone. The purpose of the letter is to put anger and disappointment behind you and work through ***your*** feelings. It’s not about communicating anything to anyone else. This is about ***you*** having the comfort and safety to fully let go.
- If and when you are feeling complete, try a simple release ritual: burn the letter somewhere safe, and fully, truly, let go.

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Here are the emotions in order and a few sentence starters to choose from should you wish:

01
ANGER

“I am angry that...”
“I blame you for...”
“I resent you for...”

02
HURT

“I was hurt when...”
“I am sad that you...”
“I am disappointed by your...”

03
FEAR

“I am afraid because...”
“I feel insecure when...”
“I feel threatened by...”

04
REGRET

“I regret that...”
“I understand the situation now as...”
“I feel responsible for...”

05
INTENTION

“I wish...”
“In the future I want...”
“I feel a solution might be...”

06
COMPASSION

“I love that...”
“I forgive you for...”
“I appreciate you for...”

Going Further

It’s easiest to start with a letter to someone else. Once you’ve cleared the emotions around others, many people discover that it is really helpful to write a freedom letter to yourself.

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Dear _____,

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