

# “Unfinished Business” Letter

To help resolve any unfinished business that you have with another person, write a letter. This may be written to a person who has hurt or wronged you, and who is no longer a part of your life. **DO NOT ACTUALLY SEND THEM** (or anyone) **THIS LETTER**, this letter is for **YOU**. Keep it confidential.

I **STRONGLY** suggest doing this activity with a professional counselor and talking through the situation with them. They can support you.

## Writing this letter will help you to:

- Reflect and process
- Feel emotions
- Think more slowly
- Problem solve
- Maybe to forgive the wrong-doer
- Forgive yourself, if you need to
- Put your thoughts and emotions to paper
- Release pent up thoughts and strong emotions, like pain, sadness, and anger
- Find some peace, healing and resolution
- Empowerment and improve self-esteem
- Increase self-care and self-love

## Format:

There are no set rules for writing this letter. You may find it difficult to start this process, just dive right in. The letter can be edited and re-organized to how you would like. Start with the wrong-doer’s name, like you are writing a letter. If you’re unsure of how long your letter should be, try aiming to write one to three pages just to get an idea. Once you have that, you will better know if the letter should be any longer. The letter is to benefit you and to help resolve any unfinished business, the length of the letter doesn’t matter quite as much. End the letter with your name.

## Important things to think about including:

- Things that you want the wrong-doer to know.
- Anything that you want to say to them.
- Talk about what they did to you.
- Talk about how you feel.
- Talk about your reaction to what they did.



- Talk about the impact that it has had on yourself. What areas of your life have been impacted? How has it been changed?
- Write about what you wish went differently.
- Write about how you wish things ended with that person.
- Is there anything that you could have done differently?
- Allow yourself to be open to writing anything that comes up.

This is a challenging exercise, so take a break if you need to, re-visit it. \*Self-care is very important through this process.\* Work on acknowledging your thoughts and emotions, know that they are natural and occur for a reason, but let them roll away (not sticking in your mind) as you write. Utilize coping strategies to reduce intense stress, anxiety, emotions, etc. Try to make sure that you're in a good "mental space," not overly anxious or panic when you write this. It is helpful to be able to think clearly and be focused. After you finish writing this letter, read it out loud to yourself. Reading it to yourself might be emotional because your brain will be processing the information slightly differently, hearing your own voice read what you wrote is powerful. Read it to a counselor, they will listen and be able to guide you. If you think that it would be beneficial reading it a second or third time, then do so. Notice if your thoughts and emotions changed the next time through. Lastly, when you are ready, you completed the letter and read it out loud, destroy the letter for resolution (and confidentiality). There is symbolism in destroying the letter. It isn't returning. Allow yourself to be healed and empowered. Love yourself. Notice how you feel while destroying the letter and afterwards. Do you feel physically lighter, like a weight has been lifted off of your shoulders? Do you feel empowered? Did you sigh in relief or smile?

Once again, please talk with someone if you need to, don't hesitate to reach out. It is rewarding to speak with someone, brain imaging research shows that talk therapy (psychotherapy) can be impactful right away.

