



LEGACY LETTERS

Passing on values, not just valuables.

Leah Dobkin's Tips on How To Write Your Amazing Legacy Letter

- The toughest part you'll face is the blank page, and how to begin. Start small. Ask yourself why are you writing a Legacy Letter and to whom. What do you hope to accomplish? Your answer will help you write your first sentence. For example, "I am writing this Legacy Letter to all of you to let you know more about our family, what is important to me, and wishes for your future."
- Procrastination is a big obstacle to completing your letter. Make an appointment with yourself. Put it on your "to-do" list. Give yourself a deadline, and honor that deadline.
- Find a quiet place and surround yourself with special things. Items that trigger memories, like photos, keepsakes, music, and smells from old family recipes help you reminisce so you are successful at extracting important stories and insights.
- Take on an "eternity perspective." What would the world be like without you in it? It provides a useful vantage point to be more objective about your life and past experiences with others.
- There are different ways to organize your Legacy Letter. Some prefer creating an outline. Others prefer process writing, were you just sit down and write, and see what appears on the page, then edit. If you feel more comfortable with a structured approach, you can create lists and then flesh the lists out i.e. three things I want you to remember, or the five things I learned the hard way. Others prefer creating a timeline of significant events and people in their lives. Some people organize material into past, present and future.
- Ask loved ones if there is a time, event, relative or subject they would like included in your letter.
- After you draft your letter read it through to make sure it is positive, not negative; that it is instructive and constructive, not destructive. Ask a trusted friend to review it too, and provide feedback.

- Start a Legacy Letter Writing Circle to gain the support from others to complete the letter.
- Expect this process to stimulate strong emotions, tears, as well as new insights, clarity, connections, patterns and perspectives. Keep a box of tissues handy.
- Don't expect that everyone will be interested in your letter now. In particular, younger people may not recognize the letter's value until some later time in their lives. I can assure you that someday, if not now, your letter will be cherished.
- You do not need to be a great writer, thinker or adventuresome to craft an amazing Legacy Letter. Everyone has something important to share. Even expressions of gratitude, or what you admire about your loved one will be treasured forever.
- Above all, let who you are, and what matters most to you shine through every word you select, every sentence you craft and every letter you complete. If it comes from the heart, it will enter the heart of those you love.

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