



*Good Ways
to Write*

**A Treasured Letter
To Your
PARENTS
When You Marry**

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A Note from the Author

Dear Bride- and Groom-to-Be,

When our son Byron married Rachael, instead of buying gifts for their parents, they created lasting memories that touched our hearts. They each wrote a loving letter to their own parents, describing not only their fondest childhood memories but also the values, life lessons, and ideals they would bring to their marriage.

At the wedding rehearsal dinner, the two of them formally presented these letters in beautiful frames to my husband and me, and to Rachael's parents. Everyone was deeply moved. We will always treasure these loving mementos because they're so much more meaningful than a purchased gift.

This made me realize that letter writing is fast becoming a lost art. That's a shame; thoughtfully written letters mean so much to those who receive them.

With a bit of reflection and planning, you too can bring your parents joy and validation for their parenting efforts. Inspired by the power of Byron and Rachael's letters, I have written this booklet to help you compose heartfelt letters to your own parents. Follow these five steps—Plan It!, Write It!, Package It!, Present It!, and Enhance It!—for your letter-writing success.

Enjoy the process and share the love.

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Plan It!

Write separate letters, each expressing your unique style. You'll each write a letter to your own parents to show appreciation from their own son or daughter.

Decide whether your letters will be short or long. If you think your parents will want to display your letters, keep them to one page each and frame them nicely. Otherwise, handwrite or print them on only one side of the paper and present them in one of the ways suggested in Package It! (later in this booklet).

Use nice stationery. If your letters will be framed, choose high-quality stationery in a neutral color that looks good in the frame. Otherwise, choose elegant stationery that harmonizes with your wedding colors. (Find creative stationery ideas at GoodWaysToWrite.com.)

Shop for the frames before you write, if you're writing one-page letters. That way, you'll know how much writing space is available. Purchase frames that can be hung on the wall or displayed on a shelf. (Find a variety of frame ideas at GoodWaysToWrite.com.)

Number the pages at the bottom, if you're writing multi-page letters. Since you won't be using staples or paper clips, page numbers will make the sequence clear.

Protect your letters from water damage or humidity. If you handwrite your letters, use permanent ink. If you compose your letters on a computer, print them on a laser printer if you can; otherwise, print your letters on plain white paper and then pay for a quality photocopy on the stationery of your choice.

Make your letters neat and easy to read. If you handwrite your letters, place a boldly lined piece

of paper beneath your stationery to keep your writing straight. If you compose on a computer, select an attractive, easy-to-read font and point size.

Dress up your handwriting with color and texture. Use colored or black ink that looks good on your stationery. Vary the thickness of your writing with either a felt-tip pen or a fountain pen.

Stay away from the edges of the paper or frame. Allow at least ¼" (0.25") of white space between your writing and the inside edge of the frame or mat board. If your letters won't be framed, allow at least ½" (0.5") margins on all edges. If you plan to bind your letters, decide the type of binding you'll use, so you can make the bound-edge margin wide enough that the writing will still be easy to read near the binding.



Write It!

Give yourself quality time in a quiet environment to get in touch with your feelings. Take slow, deep breaths to quiet your mind and tune in to your heart. Then start writing.

Choose a writing style. Will your letter be formal, informal, humorous, poetic, or a combination? You can each select different writing styles, whatever appeals naturally to you.

Choose a theme, if you wish. In this case, the two of you will probably want to select different themes. Some ideas would be Journey, Growth, Enrichment, or even a comical theme, such as "How did you ever survive my childhood?" Or maybe you just want your letters to read like an informal conversation. It's all good, as long as the letter is meaningful to your parents and resonates with you.