

# THE HAND WRITTEN LETTER PROJECT

MAKE SOMEONE'S DAY!

by Melani Dizon

Hello there!

I'm so glad you're interested in doing a **Hand Written Letter Project** of your own.

Writing 30 letters in 30 days to the people you care about most will result in feelings and experiences you can't even predict.

That's because it's nearly impossible to spend focused time each day calling people out for being awesome and not feel pure joy {and a whole lot more} from doing so.

When you call someone out for being awesome, you have the power to make their day.

**Better than that, you have the power to change who they are.**

Imagine becoming a hero to someone when they need it most.

When they're doubting themselves. When they're wondering if anyone notices them. When they're dealing with intense feelings of loss and sadness. When they're lonely, unsure of themselves, and feel certain that they aren't making a difference.

Imagine what you could do if you told them for certain that they are.

That they've made a difference to YOU.

You can be that hero. And you can be it every day by simply putting pen to paper.

Yes. Profound and meaningful change (in yourself and others) can happen with just the swipe of a pen.

So strongly do I believe in the power of these hand written letters to heal and to make the world a better place, that I've made it my mission to put more hand written letters of goodness into mailboxes all over the world. And I'm not stopping until The Hand Written Letter Project becomes a household name.

I'm so grateful that you're helping to spread the word.

## How Does This Work?

This project is plain and simple.

Tell people how you feel in hand written letters. Actually, tell A LOT of people how you feel.

And do it more often than you think.

Shower them with love, gratitude and appreciation.

They won't expect it.

They'll smile from ear to ear.

They'll walk taller, feel better, and then they'll show up in a different way to all of the people they come in contact with.

With each letter you send, you get to make someone's day.

And as a result, you'll make yours as well.

So pick a month, any month, and make it the month of your Hand Written Letter Project. Then when you're done, I'll feel good knowing that you won't be able to stop. Seriously, you won't.

## Here's How to Do It

To make your 30 days of letter writing super easy, prepare by following these 5 simple steps. If you do this, with a lot of joy and excitement in your heart, it will make the journey of writing 30+ letters a lot more fun.

1. Go to your favorite stationary store and **pick out 30 notecards or long form letter pages and envelopes**. I usually buy a few extra just in case.
2. **Buy a pen that will make you feel smarter, funnier, and more brilliant** each time you touch it to the page. Yes, there are pens like these out there. And you should have some.
3. Sit down in your favorite chair with your dashing new pen and a piece of paper and **write down the names of the first 30 people that come to your mind**. Don't overthink it. The first time I did this, someone I had not talked to in 10 years came to my mind. When she received my letter she called me immediately and told me that receiving my letter was one of the best moments of her entire year. Just go with whomever comes to your

mind in that moment. There's a reason they will.

4. **Address all of your envelopes.** I recommend doing this a few days before the start date because inevitably you'll be missing some addresses and you'll need time to track them down, send emails, ask friends and family, etc. **Then put a cool stamp on each one.**
5. Now, take all of your envelopes, **shuffle them, and place them face down** on your desk or wherever you plan to write your letters.

Okay. Now you're ready. On your start date your job is a simple one. Pick up an envelope, write your letter, and pop it in the mailbox. If you easily get stuck on what to say, feel free to use any of the letter prompts I've shared below.

One of my favorite parts of my letter writing months is not knowing whose name I'm going to get when I turn over my envelope. But every single time, the envelope I turn over is exactly who I need to be writing to that day.

Every time.

As usual, the Universe is smarter than we are and that person will need that letter exactly when it shows up.

## The Prompts (30 Days of Writing Goodness)

What follows are 30 prompts I used during one of my 30-day letter writing fests. Some people have told me they've used them exactly as they are. Others have used them as letter starters to get their ideas flowing.

The goal of each of my prompts, or triggers as I like to call them, is to get the writing juices flowing and make writing these letters easy as pie.

Don't worry about crafting the perfect sentences or making your letters ready for prime time. The only thing that matters is that you say how you feel. The gift comes not from how you said something, but rather THAT you said something.

These are notes of gratitude, thankfulness and appreciation. You can't get this wrong.

### Day 1

This is a very exciting day. A full pile of envelopes and 30 unsuspecting friends, family, acquaintances, and others who have no idea that something fabulous is going to land in their mailbox one day very soon.

*“There is no surprise more magical than the surprise of being loved.”*  
- Charles Morgan

And to get you in the mood and excited to write your first letter, [take a few minutes to watch this](#).

Now, let's start this off short and sweet...

Grab the envelope on the top of your facedown pile, or grab one from anywhere in the pile (as long as you don't peek) and turn it over.

Smile at the name staring back at you.

Close your eyes and take 10 slow breaths, picturing that person in your mind's eye and bringing them so close to the forefront that it's like they're sitting right beside you.

Begin to write.

**Prompt:**

You've been on my mind a lot lately. In fact, just the other day I came across \_\_\_\_\_ and I thought about the time you/we \_\_\_\_\_. It warmed my heart and made me feel so \_\_\_\_\_. So, I wanted to let you know how grateful I am to you for \_\_\_\_\_.

Use that as your starting point and add whatever feels good to you. Then, seal it up and drop it in the mailbox.

You feel good don't you? Almost too good to stop at just one letter, right? But please do. There is something magical about doing just 1 a day for 30 days.

See you tomorrow!

## Day 2

No matter whose name you pluck from your pile today, there is something about them you adore. It's the thing that makes them unique, the quality or essence that makes knowing them and being with them - even if it has been years - an absolute gift. Today you're going to tell them how much you love them for it.

**Prompt:**

I just wanted to send you a quick note to let you know that the world, more specifically my world, is better with your \_\_\_\_\_ in it. I am so grateful that \_\_\_\_\_ and your \_\_\_\_\_ has made a big impact on my life. Here's to your fabulousness!

### Day 3

Let's start the day with a simple act of gratitude. We all know the power and overwhelming joy that comes from taking a moment to be grateful for the world around us. Today declare your specific gratitude to the remarkable person who graces the front of your envelope today.

**Prompt:**

I thought of you today - because you are so worth thinking about - and I wanted to thank you for \_\_\_\_\_. Oh, and one more thing. I think you \_\_\_\_\_.

### Day 4

I received an email from someone yesterday who said this, "I have only written 3 letters but I already feel the joy of writing 100. I can't believe I did not do this sooner. Thank you! P.S. I wanted to send this to you in a hand-written letter but I couldn't wait for you to get it:)"

That's pretty awesome.

Let's get a little creative today. One of the things I love to do with my daughter is use her name to tell her how awesome I think she is. You know, D is for dynamic, Y is for the yummy hugs, etc. But what I have started to do lately is hide her name in a memory or a story I want to hold onto.

Here's one I wrote this week - she's 8 so keep that in mind:)

It was the most **Deliciously** sweet morning as we sat on the porch and watched the **Yummy** yellow sun lift over the trees. **Laughter** filled the yard as we remembered the time our **Adventurous** adopted doggie kept escaping through the slats in the fence every time we left the house. Always the **Nurturer**, you'd give her lots of love and hugs every time we captured her on the street. I love how you always have so much love to give and I'm grateful for each and every moment we spend together.

**Prompt:**

Take your person's name and craft a story using words that not only describe a moment that means something to you but that describe what you love about the person. I use [this site](#) a lot when fabulous adjectives don't just pop into my mind.

**Day 5**

This one is easy peasy mac and cheesy.

**Prompt:**

In case it's been a while since I told you, you're one of the coolest chicks I know. I love the way you \_\_\_\_\_ and how you always \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for being the \_\_\_\_\_ to my \_\_\_\_\_.

**Day 6**

One of my top 5 favorite books of all time is [How Will You Measure Your Life](#). I have gotten into the habit of reading it once a year because it's such a powerful reminder to be present to your life and to be deliberate in the choices you make and the action you take. Reading that book was life changing for me in a way no other book ever has been.

So, today, in honor of that book, let's imagine it's your job to take a tiny measurement of your person's life.

**Prompt:**

My life is better because you are in it. I have come to count on you for \_\_\_\_\_ and I know that \_\_\_\_\_ will always be \_\_\_\_\_ because of you. I have always admired the way you \_\_\_\_\_ and how you always do it with a \_\_\_\_\_. Your \_\_\_\_\_ has made a difference in my life and I know that life would be a lot less \_\_\_\_\_ without you in it. Thank you for sharing your gift of \_\_\_\_\_ with me, and with the world.

## Day 7

One day my girlfriend and I came up with this idea to get pretty notecards and write one of our friend's names at the top of each card. We then passed the notecards around to all of our friends (except the one whose name was on the card) and had each person write the one word that came to mind when they thought of that person. At the end, everyone had a card with their name on it and 8 glorious adjectives that described them.

I still have mine.

There's something really special about knowing how your friends, family, neighbors and coworkers see you.

Most of the time we think people see us in a certain way but as that activity showed us, most of the time we get it wrong. So today, give your person the gift of telling them how you see them in the world. In other words, surprise and delight them and make them thank their lucky stars they have you in their life to remind them of how awesome they are.

### **Prompt:**

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. I thought about you today and all of the goodness you bring to my life and I couldn't let the day go by without reminding you of your fabulousness. Here's to you for being \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ I  
know, you're pretty damn special. I'm happy to count you as my friend.

## Day 8

One of my favorite jobs of all time was teaching at a private school in Virginia. One of my co-workers and I hit it off immediately and even though we haven't worked together in 10 years, we still keep in touch.

During my time there she lost an insane amount of weight, started exercising every day, and began eating in a much healthier way than she ever had.

I just thought she decided one day that she wanted to do it. However, one day while we were watching the kids play "smear the pants off each other" on the playground, she made a comment about how good she felt. I told her how much I admired how hard she was working to get healthy.

Then she surprised the hell out of me.



She said, “You inspired me to care about my health and to live a better life. I did this because I want to be more like you.”

I’m not telling you this so you’ll think I’m awesome. I’m telling you this because I had no idea this woman saw me this way. I didn’t lose a bunch of weight and I didn’t start telling her how to eat and I never “shoulded” her about exercise. I just did my life and that was what made a difference to her.

My point is that sometimes just being who you are is inspiring to people. It’s not about the advice you give or information you share. It’s just you being you. And sometimes there are people in our lives who inspire us to do something or make an important change just by being who they are.

Today is the day to surprise the hell out of them.

**Prompt:**

You may not know this but the reason I \_\_\_\_\_ was because I have been so inspired by you. The way that you \_\_\_\_\_ has taught me that \_\_\_\_\_ and that \_\_\_\_\_. I owe a lot of my \_\_\_\_\_ to your \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you.

**Day 9**

Today’s prompt is one of my favorites. Here’s why.

During one of my previous letter writing extravaganzas, I picked up an envelope and as soon as I saw the person’s name, a word literally appeared in front of me on a bright, sky blue background.

I see words in the air a lot. It’s kind of weird, I’ve been told.

Anyway, I decided that word was going to be the only thing I wrote in the note. So, I wrote the word in giant letters and sent it off. I got an email a few days later that said, “Thank you - one of the best notes I’ve ever gotten.” I forgot about it soon after that but then nearly a year or so later I was at her house and there, on her desk in her office, was the notecard I sent her. Just one word reminding her of how fabulous she is.

**Prompt:**

Turn over your envelope and write down the first (wonderful) word that comes to mind when you think of that person. That’s it.

## Day 10

Dang, you're a third of the way through your pile. How are you feeling?

Everyone should have a day named after them, don't you think?

A day that celebrates their magnificence.

Okay, I guess that day is your birthday, but since we only get one day, I move to do away with birthday presents in exchange for notes from people telling you why they want to celebrate you.

Sure, a shirt from Title 9 is awesome, but I'd take a note of effusive praise and adoration any day.

### **Prompt:**

I hereby declare that today is (insert person's name) Day. It is on this day that we celebrate your \_\_\_\_\_, your \_\_\_\_\_, and your \_\_\_\_\_. I heretofore promise that I will observe this day every year for decades to come. Your amazingness will be forever celebrated. Thank you for being awesome enough to warrant another holiday.

## Day 11

One of my least favorite quotes of all time is this: Those who cannot do, teach.

Here's why.

Number one: People who say that are just angry on some level. Angry or resentful or something.

Number two: It profoundly undervalues the importance of teaching and being taught on every level.

Personally I can think of no greater compliment than being called a great teacher.

Number three: I was a teacher. I am a teacher. And I can DO just fine. (So, you know, this isn't personal or anything.)

Essentially I just never understood how that saying became so popular as to be something that everyone just knows to say as soon as they see someone teaching something they think they have no business teaching.

But that's a different issue, isn't it? There's a difference between thinking someone is a bad writing teacher and thinking someone shouldn't teach writing because they don't have 5 NYT bestsellers.

Anyway, I was a history teacher. I studied history like crazy. I went to the Civil War and WWII battlefields and I slowly strolled through every history museum from the Carolinas to New Hampshire. I read about everything else I could not see or visit.

So what then would it mean to DO history? Would that mean that I should have become a full time re-enactor? Well, that was never going to happen. First of all, almost nobody does that full time. Unless they live in Williamsburg. And second of all, "the heat - my God the heat." And all that laying around in the muddy grass.

So I'm not really sure how else I could actually DO history.

Again, beside the point. This love letter is about honoring a great teacher in your life and delivering to them one of the very best and most sincere compliments you could pay anyone.

**Prompt:**

I want to thank you for everything you've taught me. Because of your \_\_\_\_\_ and your \_\_\_\_\_, I learned that \_\_\_\_\_. I have been blessed by many great teachers in my life, and you are truly one of the best. I am so grateful to you for \_\_\_\_\_. Go to bed tonight knowing that I'm thinking about you and what a big difference you've made in my life.

## Day 12

A quick little love note, short and sweet.

**Prompt:**

Sometimes life feels hard and chaotic and I lose myself a bit. That's when I call you because I know that no matter how I feel when I dial your number, by the time we get off the phone I'll feel deliciously full. I'll be reminded of what really matters and I'll be filled with gratitude for being the lucky duck that gets to call you my friend. Thank you for being my person. Life is 1000x better with you in it.

## Day 13

My sister died on the 13<sup>th</sup> of the month so I always do something in honor of her on that day.

So today I am writing a letter to her. And instead of my usual prompt, I'm sharing a little true story I wrote in honor of her. I have no idea what it might bring up for you or how it will impact the letter you write today. Whenever I read it, it reminds me that even in the worst of situations, there are gifts to be found. And that just because we may not be physically with the people we love all of the time, their presence is still meaningful. And maybe that's all we need to share with them - gratitude for how just knowing them and thinking about them makes us feel.

### Butterflies

Many years ago during my yearlong counseling internship, I was called in to speak to a young girl, a 4th grader, who had a younger brother who was dying of leukemia. My supervisor thought that because my sister died of the same disease when we were kids, that I was uniquely qualified to give this young girl the support she needed.

The girl, daughter of two highly successful neuroscientists and sister to a very sick brother was struggling more than usual that day. She needed to talk, to get out of the classroom, and to be free to let it all go without worrying about upsetting the people who were knee deep in this nightmare with her.

So, we walked around the empty schoolyard and around the field over and over in the muggy and heavy heat of a southern spring day while she talked about her favorite sport, the book she was reading, her brother, her parents, and how it felt to be at home with the fear of death looming heavy in the air.

There was a sadness in her voice, a nervousness and loneliness that felt all too familiar. Serious illness and extreme parental stress is not something kids talk about with each other - they shouldn't have to - but keeping it in is painful and confusing and often only serves to separate you more from the people you need the most.

When we reached the front door of the school and it was time for her to step back into reality, we hesitated for a moment - she wanted more time.

Then, all of sudden, as we stood face to face on the sidewalk, we looked down and between our feet was the most beautiful, most vibrant and most colorful butterfly I have ever seen in my life. It looked like it came out of a fairy tale.

The butterfly just rested there, inviting us to come closer. We knelt down and I gently brushed its delicate wing. It didn't flinch. It didn't move. I fought to hold back the tears. Butterflies were my sister's favorite thing in the world and from the moment she died of Leukemia at the age of eight she has been showing up in my life as one of these beautiful creatures when I need her strength, when I am confused or sad, or when she needs to remind me that she left me then so she can be with me now.

The next day the girl came up to me and said, "Thank you. I felt so much better after our walk. I drew you this picture of that butterfly. I can't get *her* out of my head."

My heart skipped a beat when she said "her". How did she know, I thought. As I put my arm around her shoulder I replied, "Me neither."

Six months later I was married in a beautiful outdoor wedding at my uncle's horse farm in Virginia. As I was saying my vows, in the presence of my family and a few close friends, there were tears and whispers coming from those watching from behind. I thought they were sounds of joy over the celebration. I learned later that throughout the entire ceremony there was something far more powerful captivating their hearts - hovering over me, taking in every sight, smell, and sound was a lone, magnificently colored butterfly.

## Day 14

Today my hope is that you approach your letter with love. That it is not just another item "to do" but something you can't wait to attend to. And that you take a moment to detach from the chaos and the busyness of life to thank a friend, be a friend, and give your time to someone who needs it most. This is the thought I had today and this is the poem it reminded me of. I read it several times this morning and then wrote my letter. The perfect marriage of being and doing.

### **A Time to Talk by Robert Frost**

When a friend calls to me from the road  
And slows his horse to a meaning walk,  
I don't stand still and look around  
On all the hills I haven't hoed,  
And shout from where I am, 'What is it?'  
No, not as there is a time to talk.  
I thrust my hoe in the mellow ground,  
Blade-end up and five feet tall,  
And plod: I go up to the stone wall  
For a friendly visit.

## **Prompt:**

Write whatever comes to mind after reading that poem.

## **Day 15**

Today marks the halfway point of 30 letters of love. That's a mighty good day.

I'm not a big fan of quotes. Well, that's probably not accurate. I used to love them. My dad used to give them to me on tiny little notecards and I used to think they were little presents. As if in possessing them on these little cards I had some secret access to their truth.

Now, they somehow feel lazy to me. Not because the quotes in and of themselves are lazy expressions, but because people "use" quotes all of the time in what I consider profoundly lazy ways.

My favorite way, and by that I mean my least favorite way in the whole world, is to use them as tweets or Facebook posts. I do not understand that. What are we supposed to do with that? Say, "Oh yes. I so agree with the OTHER person who wrote that."

Do they think that by tweeting out a favorite quote that we will somehow believe they embody that quote? Are they hoping we will now know more about who they are? Meaning, if you tweet this quote, you must be pretty awesome because the quote is so true and so profound and original and you would only tweet it if you were also in fact all of those things?

I am fascinated by this and I yet I cringe every time I see someone doing this. And much to my dismay, there are MANY MANY someones who do this.

I wish posting quotes was illegal. Like putting protected music on your own YouTube videos. I wish I never had to see a stream of quotes again. Oh right. I don't have to. Cool. That's one less thing I have to do. If you're wondering where this is going and what it has to do with your writing prompt for today, you're right.

Well, you're right if you think I'm about to use a quote for my prompt.

This is my little experiment for the day. Clearly I woke up on the wrong side of the bed this morning. Who the heck gets this bent out of shape about quotes? So I decided to see if I could find a quote that actually inspired me to write something fabulous and to express freely how grateful I am for my "person" of the day.

I found out that yes, in fact, a quote did inspire me. And there is actually some value in looking at a page full of quotes. But no, I have not changed my mind. I still think posting quotes on social networks is all sorts of weird and lazy.

**Prompt:**

"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." - Albert Schweitzer

## Day 16

While I was walking home from school with my daughter today, she asked me a question about my work. She's always asking me questions about my work. Mostly because I think she is confused about it - she doesn't quite understand how working is me sitting at the kitchen table or on the couch with my laptop...even though this is what I have been doing since the day she was born.

In any case, she asked me if I was always going to do this, which got me thinking about that - if I was okay with that idea, what that would mean, and if I would be okay with that at the end of my life. Is this what I want to be known for, forever?

I have not come up with an answer yet. But it reminded me of a question I used to ask my clients. "If for some fabulous reason you were invited to Oprah's stage, or a Ted event with tens of thousands of people, or insert your own dream stage, and the host asked you how you would like to be introduced, what would you want them to say? What would you like everyone in the room to know about you?"

That's a fun question to think about, right?

But back here on Earth, here's a more **creative** odd yet playful spin on a letter writing prompt: How about giving the most genuine, specific and dream worthy introduction you possibly can to your person today.

**Prompt:**

I thought about you today. I smiled. And then for some reason I imagined what it would be like if I was invited to introduce you to an audience of tens of thousands of people. I know. My mind sometimes goes to strange places. But in any case, here's what I would say.

\_\_\_\_\_ is one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ people I know. She is committed to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and her \_\_\_\_\_ has always been an inspiration to me. Whenever \_\_\_\_\_, she is always the first person I call. I am so excited that she will be speaking to you today about \_\_\_\_\_ because she \_\_\_\_\_. She is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and I am honored and grateful to call her my \_\_\_\_\_.

## Day 17

Today's letter prompt is simply one of gratitude.

### **Prompt:**

I just wanted to send you a quick note to tell you how grateful I am to have you in my life. Thank you for always \_\_\_\_\_ and for showing me that \_\_\_\_\_. My life is better because you're in it.

## Day 18

This idea is great when you have limited writing space or you're off on an exotic vacation and you only have a postcard.

### **Prompt:**

In case you were wondering, here are 5 reasons you're awesome:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## Day 19

These days one of my favorite (and most entertaining) things to do is watch my 8 year-old daughter with her friends. It reminds me of that safe, comfortable and fabulous feeling you get when you hang out with your best girlfriends. I miss the



days of 48-hour friend fests and sleep overs and feeling like 10 minutes is a long time to go without seeing each other.

Watching them always reminds me of how lucky I am to have such incredible women in my life - those who I've known for 40 years and some I met just a few years ago. As I was watching them today, I thought of this poem.

### **Friendship IXX by Kahlil Gilbran**

And a youth said, "Speak to us of Friendship."

Your friend is your needs answered.

He is your field which you sow with love and reap with thanksgiving.

And he is your board and your fireside.

For you come to him with your hunger, and you seek him for peace.

When your friend speaks his mind you fear not the "nay" in your own mind, nor do you withhold the "ay."

And when he is silent your heart ceases not to listen to his heart;

For without words, in friendship, all thoughts, all desires, all expectations are born and shared, with joy that is unacclaimed.

When you part from your friend, you grieve not;

For that which you love most in him may be clearer in his absence, as the mountain to the climber is clearer from the plain.

And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit.

For love that seeks aught but the disclosure of its own mystery is not love but a net cast forth: and only the unprofitable is caught.

And let your best be for your friend.

If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its flood also.

For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill?

Seek him always with hours to live.

For it is his to fill your need, but not your emptiness.

And in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.

For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.

**Prompt:**

Life isn't always easy but with friends like you, all of my days are better. Thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ and for \_\_\_\_\_ and for always \_\_\_\_\_. Remember the time we \_\_\_\_\_? I can't have that memory without also having a giant smile on my face. I am so grateful for the times we've spent together and I look forward to more in the future. Thank you for being the person I can always count on to \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you, actually, is barely enough.

## Day 20

For my 17th birthday one of my best friends sent me a singing telegram to our junior prom. The guy was dressed in a giant banana costume and he came running up to me with balloons singing happy birthday.

It was one of the coolest surprises I've ever received.

Sending a telegram to your person of the day may be a little strange or over the top or maybe, do they even do those anymore? But you can pretend that if you could send them one, you would know exactly what you'd want to say.

**Prompt:**

I thought about sending you a singing telegram today. But I couldn't decide between the clown or the banana. So instead, imagine there is a giant cartoon-esque character standing outside your door right now. Here's what he would say: Here's to you for being \_\_\_\_\_. Here's to you for being \_\_\_\_\_. And here's to you for being \_\_\_\_\_. My world is a better place because of your \_\_\_\_\_. And if I didn't have you to \_\_\_\_\_ with, I would be a seriously lost soul. Thank you for your thoughtfulness, awesomeness and every other "ness" you possess. YOU are the peanut butter to my jelly.

## Day 21

### Prompt:

[Go here.](#)

Write something that comes to mind when you find your favorite picture.

## Day 22

*Time passes swiftly, but is it not joyous to see how great and growing is the treasure we have gathered together, amid the storms and stresses of so many eventful and, to millions, tragic and terrible years?*

- Winston Churchill to his wife Clementine

*You don't realize of course, E.B., how fascinatingly beautiful you have always been, and how strangely you have acquired an added and special and dangerous loveliness.*

- Richard Burton to Elizabeth Taylor

### Prompt:

Pen the world's shortest love letter to your friend, colleague, or whoseever name shows up when you turn your envelope over today. Or, [write a long one.](#)

## Day 23

I can't believe I've waited 23 days for the all important Haiku letter. Here's a [quick tutorial](#) and some examples on how to write one. And here's another nice little [tool](#).

### Prompt:

Turn over your envelope of the day and haiku it up.

## Day 24

I used to be a high school tennis coach and one year at the end of the season banquet one of the parents said, "You can always tell how much the kids like the coach by how many nicknames they give her/him."

Seeing as I had managed to rack a slew of them up that year, that made me feel pretty good.

I love looking back on all of my nicknames: Little D (my brother was big D), Little Dilo, Lani, Coach D, Coach Dorito, Ms. D, Bruiser, Smelani, Rooster, goat, Mel, melons....

A short name or nickname is a sign of intimacy, trust, connection, and friendship. I love it when people call me by my nicknames - even Smelani, which one of my best friends has been calling me for over 20 years.

When we give someone a nickname, we're expressing our affection for that person.

Aside from my daughter, who has 5 nicknames that I use on a daily basis, it's been a long time since I've given someone a nickname. And I kind of miss it. So I thought it would be fun and hugely complimentary to bestow a perfectly positive nickname on our person of the day.

### **Prompt:**

Have I ever told you how \_\_\_\_\_ you are? And how much I value your \_\_\_\_\_. The way you \_\_\_\_\_ is so unique and you will always hold a special place in my heart because of it. Every time I think of you I think about \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, I thought it only fitting that you be officially crowned with the following name: \_\_\_\_\_. They say that you can tell how much someone is liked by the number of nicknames they've been given. Well, you can count yourself one nickname richer.

## Day 25

Here are some of my favorite comments from emails I have received from people doing the Hand Written Letter Project:

*"I can't believe I didn't do this sooner! "*

*"This project is helping me repair a relationship that means a lot to me. When I did the pre-work of coming up with 30 names, the name of someone who I have had a strained relationship for years came up. I almost didn't listen, but as you said, there*

*will be a reason that name will show up. I just went with it, sort of nervous every day when I flipped over the envelope. On the 8th day her name floated to the top. I stared at her name for a minute and somehow I knew exactly what to say. She called me once she received the letter and we talked for over an hour. We aren't back to where we were, but the door is open. I can't even tell you how lighter I feel."*

*"My favorite prompt so far was the one about the singing telegram. (Do you have a picture of that banana man?:)) It made me laugh the whole time I was writing the letter to imagine some crazy cartoon guy standing at my former boss's door."*

*"Thank you for doing this. It has only been 21 days but I feel like a new person and I have experienced so many connections and re-connections because of this... P.S. I'm not stopping at 30 days!"*

Pitter pitter pat pat go the little butterflies on my heart. Life is good. Words matter. Let's write some more.

### **Prompt:**

This is super weird but just like the names on the envelope, I have to go with what comes to my mind in the moment.

This is an homage to Rod Stewart, though this is not my favorite song of his. I don't even really like most of his songs, but the extent to which I love and adore the song [Young Turks](#) is so great that I consider him a favorite.

This is the song that just came to mind and luckily for me it makes a perfect Mad Lib type of template.

Have some fun with it!

Have I told you lately that \_\_\_\_\_? Have I told you \_\_\_\_\_? Fill my heart with \_\_\_\_\_, take away all my \_\_\_\_\_, that's what you do.

## **Day 26**

I started making my list of hand written letter recipients for next month yesterday. I decided to make it a month of thanking people I don't know and who have never heard of me before, but who have impacted me in some way.

Whether it was a guest I heard on my **favorite podcast** or the guys from the firehouse down the street, prepping my envelopes for each person gave me a

sweet shot of adrenaline. Maybe that's because I know how good it feels to get notes and emails from people I've never met but who follow me online.

Now that you've almost finished your first month, have you thought about who is up next on your list? For today's prompt I'm repeating one of my faves.

**Prompt:**

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. I thought about you today and all of the goodness you bring to my life and I couldn't let the day go by without reminding you of your fabulousness. Here's to you for being \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. See, you're really special. I'm happy to count you as my friend.

**Day 27**

One of the most surprising benefits I've received from writing more hand written letters and making a habit out of thanking people is that doing so has made me more comfortable with who I am, faults and all.

Gratitude about and towards others is not just an act, it's a way of being and once you start focusing on all of the other people in your life who are doing impactful, important and inspiring work, you start to see people for who they really are - brilliant and powerful in some respects but also totally flawed and human. Once you can see that in others, you begin to accept that in yourself.

At least that has been my experience.

I shared my experience about this with a friend once and I told her how grateful I was to her for helping me become a better person just by doing her life in the way she was. She said it was the best compliment she had ever received.

So, in honor of that, here's your prompt for the day.

**Prompt:**

I just wanted to send a quick note to say thank you for \_\_\_\_\_. You may not know this but I \_\_\_\_\_. Because of what you do and the person you are, I \_\_\_\_\_. I am so grateful to you for helping me to see that \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you just isn't enough.

## Day 28

Today's prompt is my go to - I consider it like the base of my scone recipes. It's just a lot of butter and flour and then depending on who I'm writing to, I add berries or currants or brown sugar or for my husband, maybe even some bacon. Sweeten it or spice it up in whatever way works for you.

### Prompt:

My life is better because you are in it. I have come to count on you for \_\_\_\_\_ and I know that \_\_\_\_\_ will always be \_\_\_\_\_ because of you. I have always admired the way you \_\_\_\_\_ and how you always do it with a \_\_\_\_\_. Your \_\_\_\_\_ has made a difference in my life and I know that life would be a lot less \_\_\_\_\_ without you in it. Thank you for sharing your gift of \_\_\_\_\_ with me, and with the world.

## Day 29

On the eve of your last letter writing day (this month), let's just dish out some straight up gratitude.

### Prompt:

I thought of you today – because you are so worth thinking about – and I wanted to thank you for \_\_\_\_\_. Oh, and one more thing. I think you \_\_\_\_\_. You are simply fabulous. I'm lucky to call you my friend.

## Day 30

Woohoo! Day 30. And just so you know, I saved the best one for last.

I'm a sucker for [odes](#).

I love writing them, reading them, and all of the memories I have to sift through to bring them to life.

But what I love the most is the look on my friends, family and loved ones faces when I write one in honor of their awesomeness.

So, in order to celebrate our 30th day of writing goodness, I'm pulling out the big guns.

Most people get a little intimidated at the prospect of writing an ode. That's why I'm going to share the first few stanzas of one that I wrote very early on in my relationship with my now husband. (The full ode was 38 stanzas and nobody wants to read something that long.)

The easiest way to write one yourself if you've never done it, and you're stuck on what to write, is to make this like a fill in the blank exercise. Just take what I did and replace the stanzas with your own details. The only part that really matters anyway is that it rhymes.

It's a little sappy and silly, but what the hell - [it's an ode](#).

As I sit down and construct this lengthy but scattered ode  
I happily settle down to my trite and sappy mode.

My words are true testimony but the presentation light  
So read what is given and laugh you just might.

I smile at the thought of what has happened 'til now  
And forever laughing at our beginnings, I purposely vow.

It was a hot July night the first time we met  
You were eating dinner in your shammy, nicely coated with sweat.

We talked about Michigan, Catholic Central and Brother Rice  
Mel Far Ford, Pine Knob, and a trip "Up North" sure would be nice.

We graduated to drinking and finished many bottles of wine  
Leg wrestling and music, 70s and 80s all the time.

(The ode went on for another 32 stanzas and I ended on this note...)

So as this ode fades out and slowly reaches its end  
I thank you for being my partner in crime and especially my friend.

A quick caveat for this prompt. It's very possible that the last name in your stack is a co-worker or an old boss or maybe even a nurse who took care of a sick family member, in which case an ode might not be the most appropriate letter. If that's the case, just save this for someone else on a special occasion. And end your streak with a simple note of gratitude.



I hope you've enjoyed the journey and the love you sent out has returned to you 10 fold. And maybe even more so, that you feel so good at this very moment that you're already ready for the next go around.

## Your Hand Writing Letter Center (Or, Tools of the Trade)

In case you're interested in beefing up your "hand writing letter center", here are some of my favorite items. They make writing even more fun. (I do not get commissions from any of the items mentioned here.)

**Stamps** – These are my favorite stamps. They're colorful, bright, personal, and everyone always comments on them. Nothing against the American flag but it's so nice to see a stamp like this on a hand written letter. Plus, they come with other little stickers too that you can use to decorate your envelopes or stuff in your kids' sticker boxes.

**Return Address Personal Stamp** – This is my new favorite item. It comes from the [Letter Girl's shop](#) and you can pick from a variety of different fonts and designs. It saves time and adds even more personality to your letters.

**Make things Pretty** – There's a difference between letters and LETTERS and Gina Sekelsky totally gets it. She's been teaching hand writing workshops for years and now she's put together a great at home workshop to help you craft beautiful letters at the drop of a hat. I'm not an artist and have never been thrilled with my handwriting. This changed everything.

**Tree Note Cards** – I love these. They're inexpensive, but they don't look like it. And it's a great pack to get when you know you have a thousand letters to write.

**Address Books** – I am a pen and paper kind of girl so I still keep all of my addresses in an old school book. Etsy has some great ones.

If you have some favorites of your own, I'd love to hear about them. If you want, you can email them to me at [writermelani@gmail.com](mailto:writermelani@gmail.com) so I can share them here as well.

## What's Next?

I hope that what's next for you is a whole lot more letter writing. Aside from that, I hope you'll keep in touch.

I know that we live in a strange world so my request might be odd; however, if you've done The Hand Written Letter Project, I'd love to hear about it... in a hand written note of course.

Melani Dizon  
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If your hand is just too damn tired from writing letters to a crazy number of awesome people, then perhaps you can just [email me](#) your snail mail address so I can write a note to you. Also, if you tell me your birthdate I'll even send you a birthday card with your numerological forecast. (I know, I'm a numerologist too. Well, I practice it. That's a little weird. Maybe. But, everyone on my birthday list still LOVES getting a card from me every year☺)

That is all.

Thank you for being awesome. For sharing your love, gratitude and appreciation to the people in your life you care about the most, and maybe even people you've never even met before.

And I can promise you this...

I have no idea what will happen for YOU when you take part in the Hand Written Letter Project.

I just know something will.

xoxo,

Melani