

Life Legacy Letters: The Best Gift A Brief Introduction

Carolyn Wallace, Life Story Catcher
cwcrwallace@gmail.com 828 337 3738

Life legacy letters (*also called ethical wills*) are an ancient tradition. They have served many functions, written to family members and future generations, sometimes including close friends, and sometimes to faith communities. These letters often pass along some combination of the writer's...

- * beliefs and values
- * wonderings and wanderings, achievements, mistakes, life lessons,
- * requests for forgiveness and offering of forgiveness,
- * dreams and hopes for the world
- hopes and dreams for their loved ones' futures,
- * words of love and gratitude, blessings,
- * personal messages for particular individuals,
- * ways they would like to be remembered,
- * family stories, recipes, favorite jokes...
- * *whatever* messages the writer chooses to convey.

*I like to think of this letter as **our last love letter**, in our own words, to those dearest to us. This letter is a treasure that will provide **inspiration, comfort, support, and encouragement** for those we love, and in many cases, for generations to come. (What would it mean to you to have a letter like this from a beloved parent, grandparent, or aunt / uncle?)*

A life legacy letter can be a few paragraphs or many pages. There are no rules. It can be shared immediately, to mark a particular life event, or after the writer's death.

You can read my two-part article: <http://www.wncwoman.com>, Oct. and Nov. 2013 issues: *The Most Important Letter We Will Ever Write* and *Your Last Love Letter*. (Click on *Issues*.)

*Consider the insights into your life this reflection and writing process can provide **for you**, and the comfort and encouragement it will give to **those you love the most**, and possibly, for future generations of your family.*

Write your life legacy letter, in your own words, for those you love!

*As Thich Nhat Hanh asks about the really important things we want to do:
If not now, when?*