



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

8 DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS: SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

Writing a Letter to Yourself with Jovan Mays

To me, the purpose of creating a 'letter to yourself' is to:

- Expand a sense of meaning and purpose in your life.
- Utilize the activity to re-center.
- Have an investigative tool when you feel lost.
- A reminder that you're on the right track.
- A reflection of where you have been to know where you're going.

ON CREATING SANCTUARY

Things to Consider:

WHAT IS YOUR ENVIRONMENT LIKE?

Home can be a challenge but putting on music that tames the noise and being in a space of stimulating comfort can help. I suggest finding good music to reflect with to companion you. I love the soundtracks to the films *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *The Last Black Man in San Francisco*, & *If Beale Street Could Talk*. Consider the indoors versus the outdoors or in a personal space or a public space.

WHAT ARE YOU WRITING ON? AND WHAT ARE YOU WORKING WITH?

Studies say that we have between 50,000-70,000 thoughts per day, this means between 35 and 48 thoughts per minute per person AKA as a writer I like to try my best to keep up with my 'hot' mind. Sometimes that means making choices that allow me to be in the moment, efficient, and as in tandem as I can be with my fast thinking. Consider keyboard, pen, laptop, notebook, or voice recognition; and figure out what works best for you.



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STRATEGIES FOR LETTER WRITING

1. Strategy 1: The Five Part Letter

I personally stick very close to this format because it works even when I'm writing letters to other people. In this activity, the biggest thing to keep in mind is that you are writing to yourself so make sure that your syntax stays congruent. Give yourself permission to be emotional, vulnerable, opinionated, reflective, creative, and more than anything, your authentic self.

Try to exhaust all that you have for each section. That could mean putting yourself on a 5 to 10 minute timer per section, or setting a volume expectation of five or more sentences/lines, or just writing until all of your ideas are gone.

Part 1: Questions

There are so many kinds of questions. Check out this document:

<https://www.typetalk.com/blog/the-8-essential-questioning-techniques-you-need-to-know/>

Part 2: A Remembrance of the Past

Do you remember? Have you seen that picture? I can still [5 senses]

Part 3: An Analysis of 'Society's Impact' on You and the Subject

This section analyzes what is pulling you apart from the relationship that you want to have with the subject.

Part 4: The Present

I sometimes like to go specifically to the moment that I am in, but this can also represent the time that you're in as well.

Part 5: The Future

Feel free to let your dreamer loose here. Reimagine what this ideal relationship would look like and include a plan.



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2. Strategy 2: Generate & Flow

Generation activity: Top 5's

- Successful moments in your life
- Difficult moments of your life
- Pieces of advice you have received
- Things you never want to forget
- Things to keep reminding yourself
- Things to let go of
- Things to keep

Now write a letter to your future self or your past self.

Use the things that you've put together in your generation activity to inform your letter.

Potential moments to consider

- An upcoming **OR** past life event.
- Numerical: To yourself -10 years ago or 10 years from now
- When you experienced / are experiencing / or are going to experience something difficult or successful.

3. Strategy 3: DYT [Do Yo Thang]

- Combine the two strategies.
- Do what feels effective for yourself.
- If you don't like writing, go on a walk with a version of yourself and have a conversation with that version of you.

WHAT TO DO WITH IT?

Keep this letter in the place where you can come back to it. For years, I kept my letter to myself 10 years from now in my wallet and my most recent letter to myself I make sure I have on hand with all of my digital spaces [phone, tablet, laptop, desktop, work computer, personal computer, and more]. Come to this document often, even in times when you may feel like you don't need it. Remember that these things are living and are always flexible to revision and re-creation. Best of luck to you.