

EMOTIONAL RESTITUTION LETTER EXAMPLE 2

NAMES REDACTED AND PERSONAL INFORMATION CHANGED

I own all of the ways I have betrayed and harmed you and our relationship. I will continue to look for ways to show that I truly understand how badly I hurt you. I plan to support you and your healing in any way I can; hopefully leading to reearning your trust. I am committed to my recovery, to you, and to our marriage. I love you with all of my heart and I want to spend the rest of my life with you, building the best marriage we can. One filled with trust, commitment, love, happiness, and playfulness. One filled with the beauty that you deserve. I can't see myself in a world without you as my partner. This comes from the deepest depths of my heart and soul.

I feel it is important for me to once again acknowledge that I betrayed your trust, repeatedly lied to you, kept secrets from you, told you half truths, manipulated you, and blamed you for my actions. You did not deserve any of that and none of it is your fault. I brought those things to the relationship. I see more and more each day in recovery the impact of my actions and the tidal waves that I have sent deep into the fabric of our lives. Knowing that my behavior has affected not only our lives but our children's as well is almost unbearable for me; It must be so much more incredibly painful for you. I am starting to understand how much pain and damage I caused. I wish I had an opportunity to change the past and take it all away. I know now that I have a long journey back to earning your trust. I can start with holding space for you and your pain and working to change myself in a way that never allows any of these unspeakable acts to ever happen again.

I take our personal and relationship healing incredibly seriously and I intend for the betrayal to never happen again. I know I can not guarantee this but I am going to continue to take my recovery seriously to ensure that I am doing everything in my power to not betray or hurt you ever again.

What I heard you say in your impact letter was that your reality is that I did not ever regret what I was doing and I never had any intention of ending it or changing my ways. I deeply regret all of my acting out actions in my addiction. I regret how they have impacted you and our children each and every day. I never meant to hurt you, but I did very deeply and for that I am sorry. I know these are just words. I hope my actions will convey how much I do love and care for you. I want my movements in life to show you that I am here 100%. If I continue to show you my love, day in and day out, I hope that one day I can regain your trust.

You also spoke about gaslighting and how it has made you feel crazy for years. You are not crazy and your instincts were right about what I was doing. I was trying to protect my addict self by manipulating you. I am so sorry. I vow to never do this to you again. In my recovery work I have recognized gaslighting as one of my character faults that I need to address. It is my goal to be the partner you deserve and to be able to communicate with truth, love, and compassion. You are so beautiful and my actions made you feel less than. At your most vulnerable time during postpartum and breastfeeding, I was not there for you physically or mentally. This should have been the time for me to step up and be the husband you needed. I was not supportive in your time of need. I was incredibly irresponsible. That behavior is unacceptable. I promise to be there for you during thick and thin. I promise to be available and supportive in mind, body, and soul. I want to be the person you can turn to in your time of need and hope that can once again be part of our connection.

Friendship/ Relationship Consequences

I have caused so many rifts in your personal relationships with friends and your family. It seems that you feel withdrawn, unsure of yourself, guarded, embarrassed, ashamed, weak, and causing anxiety. These are all feelings that I caused because I was so deep in my addiction and unaware of my actions and the way I was perceived. I am sorry you had to feel these feelings because of my selfishness. I can't imagine how difficult this has been for you to navigate. Listening to you describe your first experience going into a public setting is absolutely gut wrenching. To think that I caused so much damage that to go out into public meant that you would shake uncontrollably is sickening. I keep reading that paragraph over and over and thinking about you trying to muster up enough courage to just go outside; I did that to you. I feel so terrible that I was so lost in myself that I didn't see the damage I was doing, only putting myself first, my needs, my wants, my, my, my. It is sickening to think how self-centered I was in my addiction. I know this character flaw is not going to be lifted overnight but service work and reaching out to other brothers in recovery teaches me to put others first. There are no other people on this earth that deserve to be put first more than you and our child. I hope to be able to help you to feel special, feel loved, and feel that I have your priorities in mind when making decisions. I have a lot of work to do and I am committed to being a better version of the person you fell in love with.

Validation

You are not to blame for my acting out. I brought this to the relationship. I told myself that I was the victim, not realizing the lies I was telling myself and telling you. I blamed you and made you think you did something to push me into doing these unthinkable acts. You are not to blame and did nothing to "push" me into my addiction. I know I have made you feel not attractive or sexy. You are so incredibly beautiful and it kills me to

think that I have made you feel so small. I was constantly shifting the blame to anyone but myself. I was afraid to actually look into the mirror because I would be the only one standing there and I might realize that I am the person to blame for all of this. I blamed you for my choices and this is extremely unfair. I am 100% responsible for the betrayal, the pain, and the fear, all leading to the betrayal trauma you are now living with. I know I need to work on healing that betrayal if our relationship is to survive. I have caused a lot of damage over the 15 years of acting out and realize that there is a long road of personal and relationship work ahead. Through my betrayal, I have damaged your sense of self and your sexuality. I have caused you to doubt yourself and our entire relationship. My actions have caused you massive PTSD and have caused you to feel insecure and scared. I am the root cause of this, not you or anyone else. I will give you the space you want or need and be supportive of your healing. I want to be trusted to carry some of the burden for you. I hope that through time you will begin to feel safe in our relationship. You have expressed a fear that people are judging you for staying with me or that they are making assumptions about our relationship based on the betrayal. I know that this type of public embarrassment is very upsetting to you, rightfully so. You should not have to deal with this. I regret the night when we saw a former acting out partner when out to dinner. I can not even imagine the pain you were experiencing and thoughts that were running through your head during that dinner. The feelings of deep depression, the anger, the sadness, the anxiety that was all brought on you because of my acting out, because of my complete lack of self awareness, because of my self centered attitude. I do not want to live like that anymore. I will put you first and help to build this relationship again to something so beautiful. I am so sorry for creating so much shame and embarrassment within our relationship. I am sorry for subjecting you to all of this pain, suffering, and hardship. I am committed to supporting you and us in any way that I can. I am open to taking direction from you. I have an open heart and open mind and will be as patient as possible. I will continue to work on myself so I can bring the best version of myself to this relationship. I see and understand that my past behaviors have destroyed the trust we once had and the safety we shared together. I know our old relationship is gone. I am saddened that my addiction led to that end. However, I am very hopeful for the future and the possibility of rebuilding a new relationship with a much more grounded sense of self. I am excited to build true intimacy with you and for our true authentic selves to fall in love with each other. I am very hopeful for the future. I know this is all new and that recovery has been for a short time so far. It is likely easy to doubt my honesty and commitment. By continuing to do the next right thing and making healthy choices, I am hoping to dispel all doubts. I know that since disclosure and finding about my lies and the extent of my betrayal that you do not feel safe in this relationship. It makes sense to feel the way you are feeling. I want to build trust so you can feel safe with me and in this relationship.

You wrote "While the connection between us was hurting before, now it sometimes feels like it is impossible to get back and view you in the positive light I once did." I am hoping that by continuing to show up for you and our child, that you will see me in a positive light again. I will continue to show up, be authentic, soft, kind, gentle, and bring love to you and our child. A recovery phrase says: "You can not give what you do not have" so I need to let my guard down and offer you the love and trust our marriage deserves in hopes you are able to return them. You also wrote that "it will take me a considerable amount of time for me to process the grief related to this" and "my timeline might take longer than what you would like it to be". When I said I will be supportive and give you space, I meant it. Whatever time it takes is what will be the timeline we are on. My past expectations of "where we should be" weren't productive or realistic and hurt our recovery together. For this I am sorry. I have begun to meditate on holding space for your pain and meeting you where you are. I can slow down, take things as they come, start to make the right decisions that will hopefully help to build back the trust that our marriage needs and deserves. I will keep my side of the street clean and not impose my thoughts on your processes in your recovery.

I want you to know that I am taking my addiction, my sobriety, and my process of recovery and healing seriously. I need this for myself as much as for you and our relationship and family. I do not like the man I became in my addiction., and I do not want to be that person any longer. My hope is to become my true self, which is the man I promised to be when we got married. This will not happen overnight. I will need to continually work on honesty and empathy, as well as on resolving my childhood trauma so it no longer drives my behaviors. My hope is that I will do these things a little bit better each day until I can finally look at myself in the mirror and be happy with the man looking back. I will be vigilant in my life and consistent in my recovery to achieve this. I am incredibly grateful that you have expressed a willingness to walk beside me while I do this work.

With all my love and deepest regret,