

A simple line drawing of a house with a chimney on the right side of the roof.

Scribble House
Prompt Journals

Saved As Draft

A Journal in Unsent Letters

ABOUT SCRIBBLE HOUSE

Founded in 2022, the mission of Scribble House is to help writers hone their craft and connect with other creative folks for collaboration, motivation, feedback, and support. Based in Pittsburgh, PA, Scribble House hosts workshops, lectures, and other events in the city, along with online learning and resources for writers from anywhere in the world.

Learn more on their website:

<https://www.ScribbleHousePGH.com>.

In an age of telephone calls and zoom meetings, letter writing is often considered a lost art. Personal mail is rare, and anything more than a birthday care package or postcard is hard to come by. Why write out a long-form, time-consuming missive to arrive in two weeks when our loved ones are at our finger tips?

Communication is a funny thing. Tone can shift completely depending on form. We don't write the way we speak, and we don't text the way we write. We certainly don't think the way we do the rest—and the way we do think changes with the means of expression. Not only do we communicate differently, but we internalize differently, too.

Immediacy is useful and convenient, but it can take away the important step of sitting with your words, mulling them over, choosing them carefully. There is always a space between our emotions and our expressions, a gap we try to bridge every time we greet someone, spark a conversation, send a text. There are a thousand filters—linguistic, emotional, and professional—that separate what we mean

from what we say, who we are from who we present ourselves to be.

When we write diaries and journals, it is often a way to get in touch with that self we experience before all the filtering, to sort and sift through the landscape of our own minds and memories into the truth of who we are, of why we bother writing at all. Writing to a diary is a kind of letter, too, but I find that too often when we write to ourselves we lose focus on the thousands of other connections to this world that are worth nurturing with the same respect.

With this guided journal, I hope to share a bit of the peace letter-writing has brought me. Through writing letters, I've been able to explore my own past, reconstruct emotional truths I've ignored or set aside. I've found desperately needed outlets for unexpressed rage and for bottled-up loves, for secrets that have become too heavy and for grief that was too hard to bear alone.

If you're less into the self-exploration and more into fiction, I've also found these prompts useful for exploring your characters. Write from the perspective of

whoever's head you're trying to get into.
Put yourself in their place, find their
emotions, construct their world.

I've very rarely shared or sent these letters;
that was never the point. The point was the
writing of them, the sitting with them, the
slow and meticulous construction of the
words.

Hopefully, you also find something worth
writing in these pages. Maybe even
something worth sharing.

Tabula Rasa: An Introduction

One of the best ways to get back in touch with your inner voice is to start at the beginning; give yourself a blank slate.

Your first prompt is simple: introduce yourself. Write to a stranger.

You know nothing about them. They know nothing about you. Where do you start? What is important to know about you? What would you ask of someone you want to get to know? What does your world look like? What are your biggest bullet points?

Write your own character sketch. Your insecurities, your needs, your wants. What motivates you or drags you down? What are your first thoughts when you wake up, your last thoughts before you go to sleep?

Write to someone who won't judge you. To someone who wants to learn your most formative memories, your biggest regrets, the most personal parts of your daily routine.

Give yourself a penpal.

