



# KULLMAN

Intervention & Coaching

Writing an impact letter properly allows the family members to express their inner self. This gives the family time to process what they feel and how they want to write in a way to be heard.

The letter you're writing should be loving and supportive. There are effective ways to get your feelings across without putting any blame on the addict. Here are some of the things to keep in mind as you write.

- Write with love and kindness
- Speak from your heart more than your mind
- Focus one section of the letter at a time
- Keep letters short and direct (1 or 2 Pages)
- Focus any anger on the disease itself, rather than the addict or alcoholic
- Present the idea of help/treatment as a “gift,” rather than a task
- Keep in mind, one of the main points of the letter is to show how severe their situation is.

**What to avoid:**

- Writing in one sitting
- Anger or resentment
- Language that feels judgmental
- Emotionally loaded statements
- Blame
- Shaming
- Guilt driven statements
- Poor financial decisions
- Prior or current unhealthy relationships





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Letters work best when written in this order:

1. Loving memory; short, sweet and to the point
2. Address the issue of addiction or alcoholism and its impact on personal relationship directly
3. Defining and/or explaining the significance of your personal relationship in a loving way

This brings us to the most important portion- the ending, which will be your **bottom line**. A bottom line is not a punishment, rather an effective and loving way to communicate to the alcoholic/addict that if he or she refuses treatment, what is stated will be the family's actions. Bottom lines are not required to be drastic ie: "We are kicking you out of the family, forever!" Bottom lines are typically the first form of healthy boundaries a family sets while trying to recover.

#### 4. Bottom Line

- Define it
- Agree on it
- Stick to it

When writing your bottom line, ask yourself these two questions – How have I enabled in the past and am I ready to stop that behavior? Secondly, am I going to begin to take care of myself?

Example of bottom lines:

If you chose to not accept help and change your life ...

- You are no longer invited around my children
- We will no longer involve you with family gatherings (birthdays, parties)





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- I will no longer lend you money
- You cannot stay at my house any longer
- If you are kicked out of your apartment you cannot stay with us

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