

Dear(est) [name],

1. Establish Intention

This is where you want to explain a couple of things.

1. That you want her back, but more than that want her to have a life filled with love, happiness, respect, joy and fulfillment
2. That you are committed to becoming a man that she, your kids and you can be proud of, whether that ends up being as her husband or not
3. That you were terribly hurt, but also grateful that she decided to leave (or threatened divorce, etc.) so that you could recognize your need to become a better man
4. That you are writing this letter to apologize for the many ways and times that you were not loving, respectful, or someone she could be proud of as part of your process to become that better man

And you will make one brief request: To read the whole letter.

Example:

I have not been the type of husband that you deserve or need. I have not shown you the respect, love, honor and cherishing that you hoped for, wanted and needed.

The greatest desire of my heart is to share my life with you as my wife.

But more than that, I want you to have a life that is full of love, happiness, respect, joy and fulfillment.

If being married to me means that you will not be able to have that kind of life, then I understand and respect your decision to leave.

Your leaving was the hardest thing that has ever happened to me.

But, I am grateful that you decided to do it.

I have started to see that I have not been the kind of man that I want to be. That I can be.

Your leaving helped me commit to becoming the type of man that you, the kids, and I can be proud of. Someone who is strong, loving and respectful. Someone who loves and respects himself and gives that love and respect freely to others.

I am committed to becoming that kind of man. My greatest hope is that I will be able to do that as your husband. But if not, I am still committed to becoming that kind of man.

Even if it's not as your husband, I want to be a man that you and the kids can be proud of. No matter what, married or not, I will help provide for you and the children and give you the love and respect that you deserve.

As I've had the chance to reflect on the many ways I have not been the type of man I want to be, I have started to see the many ways that I have hurt you over the years.

I would like in this letter to apologize for some of those things. I am sure that these are not all the ways that I have hurt you.

I would ask that you please read the whole letter.

2. Talk about how you were seeing and treating her as an object to serve you instead of a person to serve and love. Use specific examples.

For each example, make sure that you really try to get into her shoes. Explain how you think your actions probably made her feel. When she reads this, you want her to say "that's exactly how I felt when you did that."

This could easily go on for several pages.

Questions to consider?

- When did I show she couldn't count on me?
- When did I fail to respond?
- When did I show her she didn't matter?
- When did I show I didn't value or accept her?
- When did I fail to share important parts of myself with her, my hopes, dreams, fears, desires?
- When did I fail to learn the most important parts of her, her hopes, dreams, fears, desires?
- When did I fail to learn and help her reach her dreams?
- When did I fail to show understanding? Or that I didn't even care to understand?
- How did I see her as an object to serve me instead of a person to serve?

Example:

Sarah, there are so many times when I was not the partner at home that you deserve.

I basically thought that it was your responsibility to clean every dish, make every meal, and change every diaper.

I remember one specific time when I had come home late from work. The kids were sick and the house was a mess. No dinner was made. You looked tired and like you needed help.

But, instead of helping you, I just walked upstairs and shut the door.

I'm sure this made you very mad. But, more than that, I know that I hurt you deeply. In that moment I was telling you "you're not important. I won't help you when you need it. What I do is more important than what you do."

I'm so sorry that I did that to you. You deserve a better man than that. And I want to be that better man.

3. Apologize

- Apologize deeply for these things. You should be crying or close to it by now.
- **If you're not feeling it, she's not feeling it**
- Let her know that you love her, choose her, and want to be with her
- You understand if she doesn't want to choose you, but you hope she will
- Thank her for the wake up call
- Tell her you want to become a strong and loving man and are going to be working very hard on that not just for her, but for yourself and for God.
- Hopefully you will get to become that as her husband, but if not, at least you will be more of a strong and loving man at the end

Example:

Sarah, as I write this, I can't believe how much I hurt you. I'm amazed that you put up with this as long as you did.

I was nowhere near the man that you deserved and I am so, so, sorry.

I understand if you don't want to be with me after all I've done to you.

I'm grateful that you decided to move out. It was the wake up call that I needed to become the type of man that you deserve, and more importantly, the type of man I want to be for myself and for God.

I hope I get the chance to continue to grow into that man as your husband. But if not, I do understand and I will continue to develop myself as a man either way.

4. Let her know you're getting mentoring

You want to let her know that you're getting some help to make these changes.

This will show her that you are serious about changing. You are getting an outside view on your thoughts and behaviors so that you can change them. And you are getting accountability for making those changes.

Example:

I want to let you know that I am getting some mentoring to help me make the changes that I want to make.

I have realized that I can't make those changes alone. And if I want a chance at sharing my life with you, I have to change.

Over the next eight weeks I will be looking intensely at my priorities, thoughts, feelings and behaviors with my mentor to see where I need to make the changes that will help me become a man that you, the kids and I can be proud of.

Mentoring will help me see where I need to change, and give me an extra piece of accountability to make those changes.

4. Request

- Ask for 8 weeks to delay final action (leaving, finalizing divorce), if applicable
- She knows you best and can help you see where to improve better than anyone
- Tell her you understand you have to show her you have changed
- You behaved your way into this problem and lost her trust
- Now you want the chance to behave your way out of it
- Willing to show her for as long as it takes
- Just asking the 8 weeks before immediate action. Please respond via text, call, email

Example:

Sarah, I know I don't really deserve this, but I am going to ask you for something.

I would ask you to wait 8 weeks before filing for divorce.

The reason why is that as I work intensively with my mentor to make these changes, having your help to see where I can change would be incredibly valuable.

You know me better than anyone else. You know my strengths. You know my weaknesses.

As I strive to become a better man, your help would mean the world to me and, I believe, really accelerate the process of my changing.

I know that you need much more than just this letter or 8 weeks to make you think I've changed into the type of man you deserve, and the type of man that I want to be for myself and for God.

I behaved my way into this separation, and I need to behave my way out of it.

I am willing to show you for as long as it takes, and hopefully for the rest of my life.

But for now, are you willing to postpone final action for the next 8 weeks, as I work with my mentor?

I just don't know how much correspondence we will have if the divorce/separation is final, and I'd like to have at least that time to get your feedback as I try to become a better man.

Please let me know by any means you would like. Text, email, phone, carrier pigeon.

I await your response.

Love,

John

5. P.S.

This is where you answer the big question she's thinking right now. Why now? Why did I have to leave or threaten to leave/divorce him to have him finally do this?

- "You're probably thinking, why did I have to leave (threaten divorce, etc.) before you made these changes?"
- Proudful, stupid, thought she wouldn't actually leave
- Didn't really understand her or her pain
- Thank her again for the wake up call and for her courage
- Remind her of your desire to be with her, but more to her happiness, and your commitment to become a strong, loving man whether she takes you back or not
- Commitment to God, kids, yourself, the universe

Example:

I imagine you're thinking right now "well, this is nice, but why didn't he do this years ago?"

I can't give you a good answer to that. I was foolish. Prideful. Blind. I probably somewhere in my mind thought that things weren't that bad. Or even if they were that bad, you wouldn't leave.

The bottom line is, I spent years not really understanding you or your pain. So I didn't know, or maybe even care, how much I was hurting you.

I am sorry that it had to come to this. To you leaving for me to finally wake up to the changes I want to make. I thank you for and respect your courage to do this. I imagine that it wasn't easy for you to take this stand.

More than anything I want to be with you as husband and wife. Sharing our lives together. But more than that, I want you to have a life of joy, peace and fulfillment. If I will keep you from those things, then I respect your decision to leave.

But, I want to help you have those things in your life. I want to be the man that helps you get those things. I want to improve myself. And I will continue on that path, even if you do decide to leave. Because I want to be a man that you, the kids and I can be proud of. Even if that's not as your husband.