

SEVERE TRAUMA & STRESS RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

7. THE RAINY-DAY LETTER

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While some of life's difficult passages are impossible to anticipate, thankfully, they are not impossible to prepare for; that is the purpose of the 'rainy day letter'. It can function as a bridge over life's chasms, not in the sense of providing numbing or 'faking' the experience, but rather as a way to help transform difficult moments into experiences of mastery and hope. It is ironic that the very times when one most needs to remember strengths and resources are often those occasions when it is easiest to forget about them. The Rainy-Day Letter, or if you prefer, 'Rainy-Day Postcards', are a way to remind yourself of strengths and resources at those very times, when they are most needed.

How to make your own 'Rainy-Day Letter':

This is a letter from you to you. It should be written not in a moment of despair, but in a moment of relative calm and well-being. It is an emotional insurance policy against the inevitability of those darker moments that come at various times in life, a sort of "emergency road side repair kit" for the spirit. The letter should contain, but is not limited to the following:

- A list of nurturing activities to do
- A list of nurturing people to call
- Reminders of your positive character traits
- Reminders of spiritual or philosophical beliefs that strengthen you
- Reminders of some of your dreams and hopes for the future
- Special advice or other reminders important to you
- A reminder of the tools & techniques that you have found helpful so far

Once completed, put the Rainy-Day Letter in a place where you can easily find it whenever needed. Some people like to make several copies so that they can carry one in a briefcase or purse, leave one in a special drawer or car glove compartment, etc.