

Keep an Open Heart

I have two older brothers, and the oldest one has always been good to me. My other brother was mean and beat up on me a lot growing up. But after he left home, he reached out to make amends. I was excited to create a new relationship with him. But when I decided to be true to myself and come out as non-binary, he stopped all communication. I want to write to him. It bothers me all the time. My girlfriend says I should just let him be. What do you think I should do?

Sibling relationships can be a rich source of life-long support. And when they are toxic, they can be devastating and destabilizing. The American Psychology Association states that siblings influence our mental health and well-being well into adulthood. It is understandable that it feels hard to accept it or simply let go.

What is your motivation in writing the letter? Is it to reestablish a relationship, vent your feelings or offer forgiveness? To get clear, write a stream of consciousness letter where you purge all your feelings without any editing, knowing it won't be sent. Explore why you want him in your life. Do you wish he would apologize and accept you? What are your true hopes and expectations?

Although you cannot control him, you can come from your heart and trust the outcome is for your highest good, even if it is not the one you want.

The cost of being true to ourselves can be high, but it is worth it. Ultimately, *you* are the one you'll be in relationship with your entire life. And staying in integrity — and in love — with yourself is top priority.

Once you send your letter, release the outcome to God and move forward, remembering to pray for your brother to experience what you seek: acceptance, peace, connection, healing, freedom.

He may come around in time. He may not. Choose to keep your heart open. In this way, the good of God that is your birthright will continually expand. ✿



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