

# Legacy Tips & Tools

## Ways to Continue your Legacy Writing in the new year

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Dear legacy writers,

**May the year 2008 bring you fulfillment, and be a year of writing legacies as if your life depends upon it (because in some ways it does).**

Rather than add complexity by providing yet another new topic at the new year, I thought it would be helpful to share a general guide to potential content so you can continue, add to, or finish legacy letters you started in 2007.

Remember that this writing links us to generations past and future, is a gift of wisdom and love that will nourish the souls of those you love, and as Andrew Weil, MD says, "The ethical will is a wonderful gift to leave to your family at the end of your life, but I think its main importance is what it can give you in the midst of life." So what does this writing give us? Try writing, and see if you experience being more connected, better known, being blessed and blessing others, that your writing makes a difference in how you accept and feel grateful for your life, that this is a way to celebrate life, and that you've made an impact on how you'll be remembered.

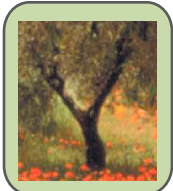
Read the list below, and enjoy adding to your legacy writing as you begin 2008, and happy new year.

*Rachael Freed*

### 12 content areas to guide your legacy writing

1. Transmit your values: (values...legacy...instruction...blessing) –Ellen Frankel suggests that women's values have been passed on through songs, lullabies, folk stories, superstitions, home rituals, crafts, recipes, notes in family Bibles and cookbook margins
2. Tell your story: —personal stories as part of the larger, universal human story  
—to provide personal, family, tribal, ethnic and human continuity
3. Discover and articulate your spiritual journey, your relationship with the Divine (example: holy experiences —birthing, in nature, during life cycle events)
4. Family stories, history, special sayings/traditions/rituals: connection to past and future
5. Express gratitude for blessings of your life (abundance/personal gifts and talents)
6. Request forgiveness, make amends
7. Pass on life-lessons / your formative life transitions and events
8. Burial and mourning preferences - how you want to be cared for and remembered
9. Explanation / stories about "precious possessions" being passed down: to whom and why
10. Explanation / stories about your life passions/interests/achievements/goals/purpose
11. Tell family how and why you've made decisions about your charitable gifts and financial inheritance
12. Message/letter to family —updated regularly, as preparation for holidays and Holy Days, as a gift on your birthday, loved ones' birthdays or anniversaries, Thanksgiving, during major life transitions

These 12 topics may feel overwhelming. If you contain your writing time to 15 minutes each time you write, and use the format of legacy letter writing, you will find this manageable. You may want to write on all of these topics or but a few – they are presented to offer you possibilities. For many, the support of writing and sharing in a legacy circle can enhance motivation, and appreciation for the importance and urgency of this writing.



Register for a winter 2008 retreat - in Temecula, California  
Advanced Legacy Writing Retreat to continue your legacy writing, February 3 - 8, 2008  
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