

Shannon

I love you. I am writing this letter to sincerely apologize and take ownership of the things that I have done to hurt you and damage our marriage. Through a lot of reflection and truly being honest with myself I have become very aware of the things I have done to hurt you, creating resentments that cause you to close your heart to me and disconnection between me and the person I love most in this world. You.

I have no expectation of an apology from you. This letter is about me acknowledging my shortcomings with you and our relationship and what I am doing to address them. You have been telling me in so many ways and until recently I have been completely unaware and, in many ways, taken your feelings for granted.

I now understand when you tearfully tell me "If you really knew me, I am afraid you would not love me," that I have created that feeling in you because of my constant micro criticisms. Criticisms of how you do this at work or how you do that with the kids, etc. Worse it has accelerated the last few years at a time when you are searching for freedom to be yourself after years of focusing on being my wife and a mother. I recognize how the accumulation of this over time can cause you to believe I don't think you are a good wife, mother, or business partner.

It saddens me deeply to hear you ask me the question, "have you ever been truly happy?" When you ask me that question it is a reflection of my behavior towards you.

I now understand the effects of my overbearing self-righteousness. How I can quickly turn a disagreement of opinions into a question of character. Just to prove my point from a moral high ground. I now understand how it is not our difference of opinions that create the rifts between us, it's the way I debate them. It is belittling.

Now I understand the hurt in your eyes and your voice when you tell me "You make it fun for everybody else, but you are so damn hard on me." Now I am becoming aware of how it hurts you when you see how I give my best to everybody else and then at the same time will turn around and give you, my worst.

Often, I have ignored and dismissed your desires without fully listening to you because of my own insecurities and fears.

Collectively these things and others that I am now becoming aware of are a byproduct of my irritable discontent. Something you know all too well. It is something you constantly dance around; will Chris be ok if I do this? Will Chris be mad if I do this? What will Chris think of this? Over time this saps your energy, creates doubt in your mind of how I value you and who you are. It fuels resentment and bitterness towards me and ultimately causes you to close your heart to me because you cannot trust me with your feelings.

Today, I am ashamed because despite all of this you see through my worst behaviors because you know and believe my motives and intentions are in the right place. Today, I see how you often unselfishly put your feelings aside and continue to focus on building a better life for us despite my failure to fully support your feelings. Today, I am acknowledging all of it, I am owning it. I am so sorry.

Moving forward I am going to work hard to put those shortcomings in my past. I will no longer treat the most beautiful and amazing women I have ever met anything less than the promise I made to myself of how I would treat that Women if I was fortunate enough to find her.

I spent many years working on myself to get sober. I did good, hard work that many will not or cannot do. I am so proud of that. I painted a vision of myself and in many ways I have lived up to and exceeded that vision. But there was one area I did not appropriately address and left on the table. My irritable discontent. In my youth I didn't fully understand it and it was a part of me that fueled my angst and sometimes rage. I chose to drown it in alcohol or drugs. It seemed to subside when I quit the alcohol and the drugs. But, as I worked hard to reach the goals and vision I set for myself I allowed very little excuses and was hyper critical of my work. On the surface it produced wonderful accomplishments and I was able set higher goals and standards narrowing my focus and becoming more critical and exacting of myself and the world around me. What I was not aware of was how this was feeding my irritable discontent which was feeding my desire for better and more and they cycle it produced. The fear of not being able to control it is or turn it off is very real.

Through my recent work I have learned how this has hurt me. How this is the path of force and not of power. I am learning how to turn it off and break this cycle. I was not fully honoring the vision I have set for myself and that is changing.

I was also not honoring the vision of the husband I would be. I generally reserved the hypercriticism and exacting behavior for myself until I met you.

I will never forget that day I met you. You first caught my attention because of your stunning beauty and that gorgeous red dress. I will never forget following you into your office. It was easy to see you were confident and smart. You were elegant, open and truly feminine. As we dated, I admired how hard you worked and how surprisingly tough you could be. I admired all of these things and never thought I would find a woman with the right balance of these things for me (plus you loved sports, bonus 😊). But there you were, and I fell in love with you. I knew you would make an incredible wife and mother. I was not wrong.

We have done so much together we have two fantastic children have built businesses and have a wonderful home. We have done some many other things for other people. We have weathered so many storms together, yet each time come out of it better and generally because of you, you amaze me.

I am very protective of our life. Like a wolf I have teeth. As I have demonstrated in the past, I will fiercely defend you, our family and our life. But unfortunately, too often I have turned those teeth on you the one I love the most. As, I have fed the cycle of irritable discontent my own anxieties and insecurities have built up. I have unfairly viewed you as an extension of me, possibly a source and looked at you to solve them.

I am now understanding how to best use the wisdom that I've gained through an extraordinary life. The application of that wisdom will now be based out of love, not fear to better serve me, you our family and our life together. To honor myself, I will be more open about my desires and respectful in communicating them. To honor my commitment to the giving person I want to be I will be more be open to the desires of others, especially those of you, my wife. I will love myself by honoring my desires and taking care of myself. I will love you fully because I will be here to listen, not to solve your challenges or

problems but to support you so you can freely live your life to the fullest of your own desires. Most importantly live your life free of my most critical judgements real or perceived. I love you for who you are.

I now understand how my actions have contributed to you closing your heart to me. My sincerest hope is that you will choose to trust me with your emotions and feelings and fully let me back into your heart again.

I am passionate about this new path and will be vigilant in my work to truly become my best self for me, for you and those around us. I will be a source of energy, love and joy.

Shannon, you are my love. The love of my life. You are an amazing woman that deserves nothing less than the man described above. My promise is that I will put that man in front of you every day because that is who I am becoming, who I am.

All of my love,

Chris