

Mothers Day, 1999

My Dearest Chris,

I'm including this letter because I needed more space and time to think about the things I wanted to say than the normal greeting card affords. Perhaps there is no way to redeem what should be, for you, a day of honor, of tribute, of gratitude from you husband and family for all that you do, but most importantly, who you are: Mother and Wife without peer. But at least I can write some of the things I don't say, or say badly, or too infrequently.

I found this card in Charlotte and at the time it seemed to be the perfect way to say, "I'm missing you, you are important to me, I want more time with you. Now I am afraid that you will read it, roll your eyes, and say, "Right, like you really are interested in spending time with me." But, whatever you might think, and, I guess, however I seem to behave, that is who I think I am, that is who I want to be: the man who cherishes you and wants to spend time with you. I cannot stop you from believing that this is an illusion on my part, but if so, I cannot live with any other reality: take it away, or force me to abandon it and I will have little reason to live. If I am a failure doing this, then I am mostly a failure. But, I am sure I give you so many reasons not to believe it.

For that, I am sorry. Would to God that I was different, better, more thoughtful, more sensitive, more able to know what you need. After almost 34 years being married to me I doubt that I can say anything new. I have disappointed you too often for me to make empty promises, but I am sure of this: if I can be the man that at heart I want to be, I will be a man after your own heart. Please don't give up on me. I am still trying.

Your grateful husband,

Allan