Listen,
By an anonymous writer.

When I ask you to listen to me, and you start giving advice, you have not done what I have asked.

When I ask you to listen to me, and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me, and you feel you have to do something to solve my problems, you have failed me — strange as that may feel.
Perhaps that's why prayer works for some people. Because God is wise, and He doesn't offer advice, or try to fix things. He just listens, and trusts you to work it out for yourself.

So please, just listen and hear me. And if you want to talk, wait a few minutes for your turn, and I promise I'll listen to you.

From Susi to Gretel, and vice versa,
With love from me,
on August 1, 1990.
Jan. 3, 1975

dear Switlrichen,
the package came today—thank you so much. You are the world’s best package packer! I am so glad to have all the things, especially the writing paper and the shower cap. And the "Mocca" as Beverly calls the Swiss Mocha!

Being back "home" is so darn ambivalent! I feel having to hyphenate "home" and wishing I could be with you and here!
But you and Richmond have performed a near-miracle; that’s as much better than I feel than before the vacation. After the weekend I’ll have one more day.

How was your visit with Shirley? I wish I had time to see her. I thought you might like to see this flower catalogue offer.

I had a very, very good time with you. And I was happy to meet the Caiman’s.

Give them my kind regards when you see them. How is Dr. Shutphin?

And how are you?

I love you very much.

Yours forever
Dear Susi,

I have just made a reservation on Eastern Airlines Flight # 577 for July 3rd, leaving Wash. 8:40 p.m. arriving Richmond 8:21 p.m.

It comes from New York (!) is that the right one? See you then! Try and arrange your seat neighbor so he'll trade seats with me! Love from.
October 1, 1964

Dearest Lulu,

Thank you for the lovely note. I'm glad you like the wooden things! They looked like they had your name on them then I first saw them.

I am keeping my fingers crossed for the stop-over in Cincinnati! Hope it'll include a night -- but if not, I'll take time off to meet you if I possibly can. I am going to Chicago for a Family Service Association Convention from Nov. 8-10, expenses paid by the agency, the first professional meeting out of the city in my professional life. It's coming if really is. By the way, the sessions I'll attend are: "Family Casework on Behalf of Children," and "Age States in the Aged." Both sound interesting and right out of what I'm doing every day.

Citizen still is a "major problem." -- so is my supervisor. But I'll like both of them (no, not like Wallenstein!)
Take good care of Sue.
I phoned Little last night. She sounded all right.
She is a marvel.

Today (Oct 1st) starts
my 3rd year in Cincinnati.
Can you believe it?
I'll be in Washington on the
morning of Dec. 24th (with reservation) I have no reservation to Richmond but think I'll take either train or bus immediately, then make some stops in Washington.
Oct. 11, 1964

Dear Gwendolyn,

I am so sorry this letter didn't reach you. I never write -- and then if I do!

Let me add to our phone talk on Friday: I found out there is only a 2:00 p.m. train from Indianapolis to Cincinnati, beside the late one that you were going to take. Plane might not be too practical, after all, and the airport is rather far out for night driving. However, there are buses every hour, I understand.

The train (10:55 in Cincinnati) might be the best after all, unless you prefer the bus. I can get to the bus as easy as to the train.
I hope your cold is much better by now, or even gone. I have been so very, very ill yesterday and to-day, never got out of my red-flannel pyjamas and feel much less stuffed up. Hope I can go to work tomorrow.

Oh, I enjoy my TV!! I can hardly wait for you to see all my earthly goods.

Take good care of yourself.

Love and viele freibe und Küssüe

Deine Gretel
zif heart left please return to:

Miss Susanne Hunt
The Sheraton Motor Inn
50th and Chestnut Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Oct. 1, 1964

One of many cards

letters, notes from
Marge to Sue
Susieinchen,

I know "miracles" don't happen but experiences pretty close to it do.
I must honestly say that I have not felt as relieved, as free, physically and emotionally as I did a little while after waking up this morning. Some "fog," heavy cloud or some burden has disappeared. I feel free than at any time since I came here—very likely for much longer than that.

It suddenly just about "hit" me that it was something that you said last night. That triggered or better: Initiated, began the relieving thoughts in my mind this morning. It was when you said: "something similar to:
"one person's feelings do affect the other one — you cannot deny that." As you mentioned, I did not deny, but was reluctant to admit that you were of course right. This morning I was asking myself why had such a hard time admitting such an
obvious fact, something I have thought, felt, said, and worked with in my life and my job: hundreds of times. This is the way the answer to that question evolved: if I admit that my sad face, my depression, my sluggishness, my feelings of uprootedness and insecurity affect yours—
I have to admit also, to myself and to you, that your feelings and actions affect me. And there a strange, very strong fear comes in. Why? Because, it suddenly strikes me this is my core bugaboo (spell: “problem”). I am terribly dependent, not on other people to help support me, make decisions for me, etc., but on other people’s feelings and mood. And I have made all my life allowed myself to be directed by other people’s feelings so as to avoid “catastrophe.” What catastrophe? I am not quite sure yet, but something close to killing (me); at least of the kind of disapproval that I thought I could not live with.
But it is probably more.

My thinking this morning then went back to what I have always felt: that Mutti's depression (probably that of almost all the adult family members while we were growing up) — to me (I know it affected you too, but in a different way) was contagious. Now I know that there were at least 2 alternatives: 1) to run away from it, which you did and I did until much later, when it was far worse; things too late and 2) to "catch the contagion" and "live with that infection." But what happened this morning as a result of what you said last night? I think (I hope!!) that occurred is that I now understand that there is no such "contagion" possible to an adult person (me) unless I want to use it as a "game" or a "cop-out" to gain something. That, by the way, is neurosis! And this morning, when suddenly
that burden lifted. I heard myself say loud and clear, (or, maybe, it happened the other way around) that I was dependent on Mutti's feelings (She to that extent I still don't believe); that I was probably 1 hour old when it all started; but — I am no longer a baby, not even a child anymore. Mutti no longer needs me — if she ever did, in the way I felt she did, which I can now begin to doubt. And not "better late than never" it becomes my responsibility to break the "vicious circle" to stop the projections by which you (and many others) always become "Mutti" or "family" or more specifically, places in my game of protection against "catastrophe" lurking monstrous punishers of unknown identity. Some material for those "catastrophes" that were realities in our childhood:

- mental illness (Seltel's Mutti, Tante)
- adultery — Papa + Mutti / Mianne
- divorce — papa
- Tuberculosis — one uncle.
- Various suicides (before Papa's even).
- Crime or implied crime — always.
- Outcasts in the family — Uncle Herman, Alex, and the uncle who "went to America".
- Great marriages — most of them!

- World War I.
- Depression.
- The coming of Nazis and Antisemitism.
- Revolution 1918.

Whatever family problems in their growing up Papa and Mutti did not resolve, and carried into ours.

Let's see, where we will go from here!

Did you know that I love you?

Gretel
To: Ms. Suzanne Hirt
From: M. H.
Dearest Eurel,

You've done it again!! Many, many thanks! Now I will really have a ball in New York.* The picture bill fold too is very lovely, and smells so good. I could use one too, because my few family pictures were getting yellow and frayed at the edges. I have already trimmed them and put them in their permanent place.

At last we have come real snow, looks pretty, and warm. I never glad I insisted on being very close to the hospital. Besides, I could not have found a nicer family to rent from, and they are pretty satisfied with their lodges too. Food in the cafeteria is not bad at all—a little monotonous but I get apples, cake, etc. free—never pay more than $1.50 per day (for all three meals!)

I had lots of Christmas mail (thanks for the forwarding.) I have only a very big gift (a little pocket flash light) for Sethel...
this year. I hope she won't mind. I'd rather start helping with essentials as soon as I can. Do you want to send me my hospital insurance bill that will be due in January? That's another $50.00 plus!

Have a real real peaceful New Christmas! We'll get a chance to roam around New York some year. And I'll call you Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Just found out that the one real friend I made in Milwaukee last year, Frieda Heilberg, a retired social worker from Breslau, is in New York for 3 weeks' vacation.

I am so glad you like the pink sweater - it just seemed 'your' sweater as soon as I saw the pattern and found the wool I liked.

See you! Take good care of yourself.

Mit vielen schönen und Küssen,

von Deiner Frendel
Miss Susanne Mint
7507 Three Chopt Road
Richmond 26, Virginia
October 31, 1962

Lissleichen,

just a few words—plus another check. You know, I want to feel I have no debts as soon as possible. Things are fine very well here.

Work is not busy yet, but it will be, just a slow start. People are nice—all sorts of them here, as everywhere.

I bought 2 (two) couches yesterday, one a Hollywood bed, the other a sofa; and a chair that need sawing. $35. – + 10. – moving for all of it! And a small chest and a table from Goodwill (nice things) for $15. – It’s fun.

I am thinking of getting an apartment in the spring. Not before, it makes it much easier in many ways. I am using my furniture, though.

I am sending Settel a check for $15. – for an extension phone for a year, as my 1962 Birthday and Christmas.
present for her. Would you please help her with the arrangements to get it. It should be very simple, since it needs no installing, just another phone to be plugged in.

I miss you.

I'll write again soon.

With lots of love

and kissen

von Feiner Frodel

P.S. The letter from Brita Bising which you forwarded to me earlier had the news that "Momi," Brita's mother, died on Sept. 28. She was 87, I believe. I am glad I saw her in June. She was an old friend of mine.

P.S. (2) Thanks for sending me the payment book. And Blue Cross Notice. Has the 2nd one come yet? Please send it too. I have both my Ohio license plate & driver license. I do have Blue Cross, as well as Med. insurance from the agency.
Dear Sesel,

I want to owe you:
- starting: my graduation on August 28, 1962
- what actual cash expenses you had for me — not counting the birthday, graduation, "just-because" you're nice," etc. things:
  - Cash ticket to Cincinnati: $185.
  - for car insurance: $50.
  - for car payment Oct 26: $67.
  - Miscellaneous: $48.
  - Phone calls, etc., and gas: $350.

P.T.O.
I will send you $35.00 a month, starting October, and I will take care of the November car payment (please!). Give me the address to send it to. *

\[
\text{So} - \quad \frac{350.00}{35.00} = \frac{315.00}{35.00}
\]

* I have it — it's the Associates Discount in Cincinnati.
Miss Suzanne Hirt
7507 Three Chopt Road
Richmond 26, Virginia