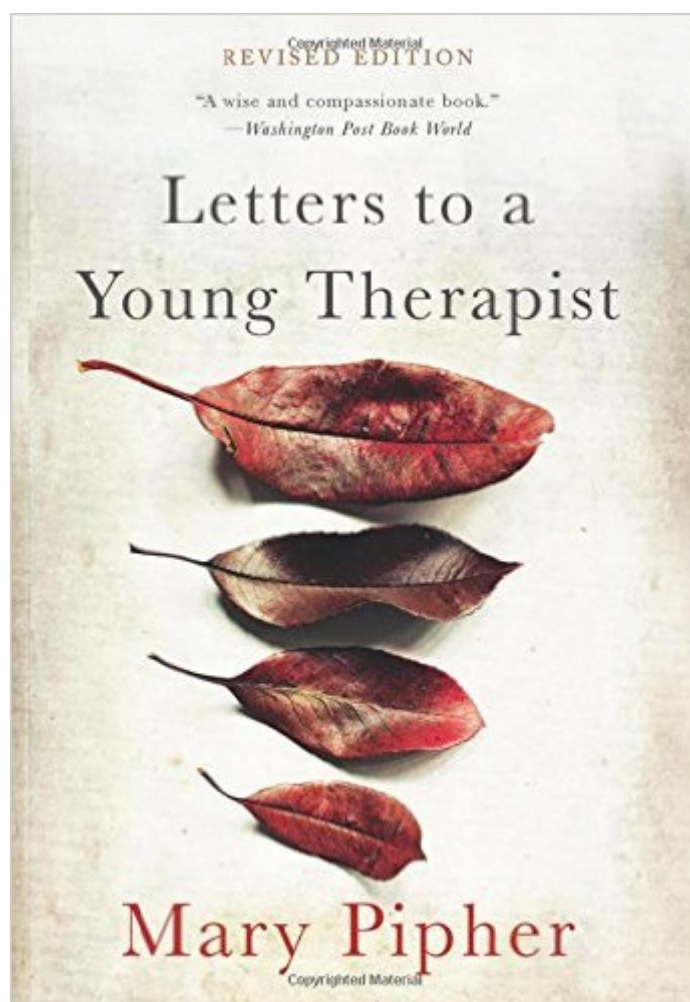


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# Letters To A Young Therapist



## Synopsis

Mary Pipher's groundbreaking investigation of America's girl-poisoning culture, *Reviving Ophelia*, established its author as one of the nation's foremost authorities on family issues. In *Letters to a Young Therapist*, Pipher shares what she has learned in thirty years of clinical practice, helping warring families, alienated adolescents, and harried professionals restore peace and beauty to their lives. Through an exhilarating mix of storytelling and sharp-eyed observation, Pipher reveals her refreshingly inventive approach to therapy—fiercely optimistic, free of dogma or psychobabble, and laced with generous warmth and practical common sense. Whether she's recommending daily swims for a sluggish teenager, encouraging a timid husband to become bolder, or simply bearing witness to a bereaved parent's sorrow, Pipher's compassion and insight shine from every page. Newly updated with a preface by the author addressing the changes in therapy over the last decade and the surprising challenges of the digital age, *Letters to a Young Therapist* is a powerfully engaging guide to living a healthy life.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Basic Books; Reprint edition (February 9, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0465039685

ISBN-13: 978-0465039685

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.7 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (61 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #14,743 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) [#7 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Letters](#) [#28 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > Psychotherapy, TA & NLP](#) [#40 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Psychotherapy, TA & NLP](#)

## Customer Reviews

Like JB Pontalis's *WINDOWS* (with which this book makes an interesting comparison in cultural styles), *LETTERS TO A YOUNG THERAPIST* is an engaging and lucid look at one clinical psychologist's beliefs, both idiosyncratic and professional. More mature than self-help, less obscure than psychological theory, this one-day-read is ennobling and charming. Pipher writes with dignity about her profession's limitations and how an awareness of those limitations opens up vital

possibilities. The format -- brief letters to a therapist-in-training, focused on a specific theme -- is lovely, and the insights, while not revelatory, are deftly articulated. In fact, that the book's insights are not revelatory is in a way its overall theme, and its pleasure. This is a humble, humane, and helpful book.

In her magical new book, "Letters to a Young Therapist," Mary Pipher uses enchanting and lyrical prose to express her feelings not only about therapy, but also about such topics as nature, marriage, ethics, and happiness. This book is a compilation of letters that Pipher wrote to a graduate student in psychology. Pipher's letters are filled with gentle humor and a profound understanding of human nature. Since Pipher began her career as a therapist in 1972, she has learned a great deal about her clients and herself, and this book is the fruit of all that she has learned. She emphasizes that therapy is more of an art than a science, and that therapists bear an enormous responsibility to treat their clients with great care. Pipher's ideas are a breath of fresh air in a society that is quick to bash easy targets. For instance, it is fashionable for people to blame their parents and other family members for their problems, but Pipher believes that individuals must ultimately take responsibility for their own choices in life. She also believes that the family unit is so important that we should do everything in our power to support and strengthen it rather than undermine it. Pipher waxes poetic when she speaks of the power of metaphor and storytelling to enhance people's lives and imbue their experiences with greater meaning. Pipher is not only a gifted therapist. She is also a talented writer who understands the power of language to change lives. I recommend this book highly for its warmth, wisdom, compassion, and insight into what makes life worth living.

As a grad student in a counseling program, I picked up this book after hearing a portion of Ms. Pipher's interview with Diane Reams on NPR. I read this book in two evenings. It has a lot of good advice, not just for therapists, but also for clients. She has a very soft, nurturing way of writing which I found delightful. I would highly recommend this book.

As a Social Worker in private psychotherapy practice, I find that sometimes the work can be isolating and at times I question whether I should make more of an effort to consider the latest trends in psychotherapy. Mary Pipher affirms that the classic skills that make a good therapist such as compassion, empathy, listening skills, reframing and the ability to induce a sense of calm are timeless. Furthermore, even if I wasn't a therapist I think I would still devour this book because her

writing is a pleasure to read. I highly recommend it for anyone just starting their career in therapy or those who have been in the field for decades. This book is bound to become a classic!

This little treasure is loaded with wisdom and insights one might expect to find in a much larger tome. Dr. Pipher shares her personal and clinical stories in a gentle friendly way that makes you nod your head, and say "aha". What makes this book so remarkable is that, whether one is a therapist or not, the words spill over and warm you like a down comforter. Pour yourself some hot cocoa, take a deep breath, and read this one slowly. You'll be glad you did. -Terry Matlen, ACSW

When you read a book like this, usually the first thought is "I wish I'd read this years ago!" I'm a very fortunate graduate student, having stumbled across this book in another article. I've read this new before I even start practicing--and I fully expect to reread it once a year, at least, from now on. What an ideal image of mentorship! What an example I hope to follow in the future! What a lovely, comfortable, narrative of advice and assurance!

I am currently training to be a licensed professional counselor, and find this book to be refreshing on those days where I question what I am doing. Pipher has a way of dissecting the job and focusing on how to make the best out of the hard parts of counseling, and how to enjoy the best parts through active reflection. It always reaffirms why I have chosen this career, and I sincerely appreciate Pipher's realness. A must read for anyone thinking about becoming a counselor, attending counseling sessions, or just interested in the process.

This was a lovely read. More a seasoned professional's musings on what matters and does not, both in therapy and in life, than a how-to book. Still, it was interspersed with thought-provoking suggestions and cautions. I found myself thinking it would be nice to be in supervision with the author, as much for her gentle and encouraging spirit as for her practical advice.

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