

# WRITING A TEN-YEAR LETTER

BUSINESSMAN TOM CHAPPELL proposed this exercise in his book *Managing Upside Down*.<sup>1</sup> It can be a very productive exercise that can clarify where you want to go and help you develop a mission statement.

Write a letter to a close friend. Date it ten years from today.<sup>2</sup> Assume that everything has gone according to your dreams and wishes. Give a summary of the prior ten years going back to today. Be specific. Include promotions, achievements, accomplishments, areas of growth, and spiritual changes. Keep in mind your gifts, values, passion, and vision as you write.

To help you write a straightforward letter, you may want to write the letter before you continue reading.

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When you are finished writing, read this letter to another person, preferably the person to whom you wrote. Discuss:

- Your friend's reaction
- How you felt about sharing what you have written
- What seemed most important to you, judging from the letter
- What you like best about what you wrote
- What things disappointed you
- What the letter said about your relationship with God
- How the exercise helped clarify your future direction
- What you can do to make the letter's contents come true in reality
- What the letter says about your purpose for living