Dear Cindy,

I want you to know that I take responsibility for all of my shortcomings and for all of my bad behavior in the past. I regret everything I have ever done to cause you pain or anger and I apologize for every bit of it. I want you to know that I have always loved you and never meant to hurt you ever. It may not seem that way to you, but it is the honest truth. Just as it seems inconceivable to me that you didn’t know that eating meals with the family holds great importance for me, I know it is inconceivable to you that I did not “know” various things. In fairness to you, maybe I never specifically told you how I felt about eating together as a family. Look at the way you blew up Sunday. I didn’t realize you were going to church alone except maybe on some rare occasion and also I don’t ever remember you asking me to go to church or telling me it was important to you for me to go. We are all imperfect, but always know if you communicate with me constructively, I will always try my best to make you happy. I know I had some demons to exorcise, but that had nothing to do with you and I will always be sorry that affected you negatively. I am human, I have erred, I am repentant; if you can look at your negative memories of us/me from this perspective, it would go a long way towards moving on from these memories.

If we get divorced, you cannot move forward with your life or another relationship until you put those memories in the proper perspective and move on from them. If we reconcile (believe it or not this is a possibility), we cannot move forward with our marriage until you put those memories in the proper perspective and move on from them. In the intervening time, it would help your state of mind and probably the atmosphere around here as well if you put those memories in the proper perspective and moved on from them. In other words, it will benefit you and possibly all four of us if you put those memories in the proper perspective and move on from them.

Please perform this exercise that psychologists recommend for giving closure to negative memories. Make a journal and take a week or a few weeks to catalog all of the negative memories of me/us. You must get rid of any memento of a negative memory such as tape recordings or anything else. Catalog those items in your journal as you get rid of them. When your journal is complete; go somewhere private and read through all of it with all of the emotion, anger, screaming, etc. that is associated with them. When you have finished; dig a small hole, burn the journal, and bury the ashes. This will give them a concrete sense of closure and is guaranteed to aid in the healing process.

I am asking you to try your best to look at negative memories of me/us from the proper perspective and perform the above exercise as a favor. I do a lot for you; I hope this is not too much to ask. It can only benefit you anyway.

Also try to remember that when the brain opens a file; the emotional component of that file will open after about 90 seconds. So if ever any negative memory comes into your mind, you can avoid any negative emotion associated with the memory if you close the memory file in under a minute. You can use that technique when you are depressed. Your brain will automatically open only negative files when you are depressed unless you stop it. Medication can stop it also because it is a chemical process, but you can also control it.

When negative emotional memories surface without an argument or some other obvious triggering event, (just like the way it went for us this summer), then that person is almost certainly suffering from depression. This is fact; I have researched all of this.

That is why you told me you wanted a divorce because you were “very unhappy”, but could not tell me anything specific that I was doing to make you unhappy. You were depressed! That is also why every negative memory of me/us came flooding into your mind; because that is what the brain does when a person is depressed. It automatically opens nothing but bad files unless you stop it (or medication does). Sometimes you are depressed and you turn it inward and every negative file about yourself is opened and you are inconsolable. You think you are the worst everything in the world. Sometimes your depression is turned outward onto me and I become the worst everything in the world. That is why our love suddenly sprang back to life in Bryson City; the depression was gone. In 2010, after months of trying, you told me on Thanksgiving Day that you still wanted a divorce. Then just a few weeks later we were blissful. You are an intelligent/educated woman; can you not see very clearly the processes at work here?

Our marriage is the second most valuable thing we have in this world, second only to our children (but our marriage is also very important to them). Our marriage does not have to end. NONE of those bad memories are worthy of destroying what we have. Don’t let depression take your marriage away from you or break up our kid’s home. Remember the wonderful feelings of love and contentment you felt at Peaceful Paradise. That is what our marriage is like without negative brain chemistry. That is how strong our love is; when the depression and negative thoughts went away, it immediately came right back to life. That is the marriage that you deserve and is waiting for you. I’m waiting for you and I’m not going to stop waiting for you because you are worth it and the special love (among other things) we have been blessed with can’t be replaced.

Your way of handling negative memories could not be unhealthier. You hold on to them and even keep mementoes of some of them! That can be marriage killer in itself and combined with depression is like a death sentence for any marriage. If our love wasn’t so strong, we would probably be divorced by now. Please change this. Every marriage has lots of bad memories, especially after 20 years, but none of ours are worth ending our marriage over. Put the past where it belongs; in the past.

Please use your intellect and education to examine this information objectively and use it to everyone’s benefit. Don’t allow negative emotion/depression prevent you from seeing what is real and what is not. If you look at the facts objectively it is plain to see our marriage can be saved and moreover would be a disgusting waste to let it go. We all have so much at stake. Can you tell me I’m wrong?

Hypothetically; if you did as I asked, we saved our marriage, and were blissfully moving forward with our marriage on solid ground, wouldn’t you be very thankful that you did? I mean, surely you know that scenario would be of immeasurable benefit to all of us. Knowing that; why wouldn’t you want to see if we could be saved? We have all of the ingredients to have the kind of marriage people dream of having. How tragic to throw such blessings away.

Love always, your husband