

Dear World,

There is no better day than today to take a pledge for peace. Peace bonds us together more than violence ever will and serves as a more virtuous and persuasive response to tragedy than vengeance and fear.

I know this because when bombs went off at the marathon in Boston in 2013, my wife and I became one of the countless families who were rocked by shattering experiences of terror. The blasts took my left leg below the knee and both of my wife's stunningly sculpted legs. In addition to the devastating toll it took on our psyches, months-old marriage, loving parents, siblings, and relatives, it threatened to take from Boston its standing as the original shining city on a hill. Instead, it made us recommit to unity and harmony with the eyes of the world upon us.

When terrorists strike around the globe, communities have the power to chase away their darkness. Some might say that we in Boston were victims of violence, but I see us as ambassadors for peace. With every handshake, hug, wink, smile and compassionate heart, we reject terrorism's attempt to morph us into hateful xenophobes. The smallest and largest signs of peace send a message that peaceful and caring societies will always triumph over those who attempt to break us apart. Hate will always fall victim to love. My town, family, wife and I choose love.

Peace,
Patrick

Can a simple sheet of paper renew your faith in humanity?

Putting thoughts on paper can be a powerful way to express feelings, heal and inspire. We asked five people whose lives have been touched by violence or cruelty to write Letters of Peace that reflect their enduring faith in humanity. Meet the authors, read their letters and learn more about the power of paper.

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