

All text in "The Philosopher's Corner" © Rich Norman and any other text in this paper attributed to the same, used by permission of and sole property of the author Rich Norman.

On the returning of "gifts"

Enjoy this excerpt from my book, *This New Day: Self Creation—The Wisdom of an Idiot*.

I am a big believer in the returning of gifts. Many gifts can be returned in part or in full, and the receiver may be relieved of their injustice. I am using a pun here and teasing you, since I write in English but the definition of the word "gift" I take from German. In German "gift" means "poison." The Nazis killed millions in gas chambers using "gift" gas, no fine gift to be sure! Throughout life other people bestow a multitude of such emotional gifts, and leave one quite nauseous in the wake of their generosity. Hundreds of these gifts might be returned over the course of a lifetime. Bosses, teachers, friends and others who posed as one thing, but gave the gift of a lie or worse instead, may all have their portrait painted and their kindness returned in a letter. The method involves two fundamentals. First the gift must be understood both in how it worked to inflict its injury, and why it was given; i.e. the gift of a parent's neglect hurts for the absence of caring, and may have been inflicted because the parent was emotionally incomplete and unavailable, or perhaps just selfish and self-absorbed. Rather than carry your albatross and make its bed so it rests with you as the giver intended, place it in a letter and return it to them. It will be happiest sucking from the teat which gave it life, and its sharp little teeth may be removed from your breast and placed tenderly around the one who deserves them most. After having received the returned gift the original giver will feel a squirming within them as they lie to cover up and maneuver within their own thoughts to avoid the topic. Once they see their true face your gift will nest with them and you may be relieved of its effects. No one who returns a gift is helpless, they have helped themselves. Now the gift's toxic effects fade and another topic, the present, may be at hand, once resentment has been duly returned.

The second principle to which any good gift return should adhere is one of clinical accuracy. Never exaggerate. Your understanding must be thorough or you will compose a rant, a barrage of ugly unsubstantiated accusations. A gift properly returned should be highly emotive, but at its base is a litany of facts and effects which are wholly true, and will never fail to hit their mark. Anyone who is a pathological liar and can hear a fact one minute and deny it the next may appear to dodge the bullet, but will squirm in their dreams and as a result is likely to sleep little. Once the gift is returned and your letter of facts is read, you may chuckle knowing the thing now lives where it was born, so you have done a good deed in returning it. Remember: a good deed done for yourself is still a good deed. After returning your gift you may begin to live without it and no longer be its victim. The very best gift to return is your own self-pity.