

THE MIGRAINE RELIEF SERIES · ANGER, GRIEF & LETTING GO
Book 56 of 58

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Letting People Be People

*On the characters we quietly build for the people we
love, and the disappointment that follows*

ROD GABRIEL ZR

Author of Living with Visual Aura Migraine



THE MIGRAINE RELIEF SERIES · ANGER, GRIEF &
LETTING GO · BOOK 56 OF 58

Letting People Be People

*On the characters we quietly build for the people we
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Designed with spacious type, warm colors, and generous white space for visual comfort — especially for readers navigating aura, light sensitivity, or neurological strain.

A note on care. This mini-book shares one person's lived experience and general wellness practices. It is not medical advice, and it is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment by a qualified healthcare professional. Migraine has many forms and causes. Always consult your doctor about your symptoms, your triggers, and any medication or treatment decisions.

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

A letter to you

How much of our suffering comes from the event itself, and how much comes from our fight against the fact that it doesn't match what we expected?

Here's a version of that question that surprised me: how much of my disappointment in the people I love actually came from them, and how much came from a character I'd quietly built in their place, and then felt betrayed when the real person didn't match it?

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The experience: when someone doesn't play their part

A friend forgets to check in during a hard week. A partner responds to an episode with less patience than the moment seemed to call for. The disappointment that follows often feels enormous, out of proportion to the specific, human, understandable lapse that actually happened.

The automatic thought: 'they should know better'

Underneath that disproportionate disappointment usually sits a quiet character I'd built for the person without ever telling them: the endlessly patient friend, the perfectly attuned partner, the family member who always says exactly the right thing. *They should know better* often really means *they didn't play the part I'd assigned them*.

*We build characters for the people we
love, quietly, without ever handing
them the script. Then we feel betrayed
when the real person doesn't perform a
role they never auditioned for.*

The emotion and the reaction

The feeling is real disappointment, sometimes real hurt. The reaction often includes withdrawing slightly, testing the relationship for further proof of the character's failure, or nursing a quiet resentment the other person may not even know exists.

The chain of the imagined character

□ The character chain

Experience: someone falls short of an unspoken expectation.

↓ Automatic thought: *'they should know better.'*

↓ Emotion: disappointment, hurt, quiet resentment.

↓ Reaction: withdrawal, silent testing, unspoken grievance.

↓ Observation: *'I was disappointed in a character. This person never agreed to play that role.'*

↓ Possibility: meeting the real person instead of grieving the imagined one.

PAUSE & REFLECT

Your own imagined characters

*Someone I love who recently disappointed me —
what character had I quietly built for them in that
moment?*

*What would it look like to let that person simply be
who they actually are, imperfections included?*

The observation: the character was never them

This isn't about lowering standards or excusing genuine harm. It's about noticing how much of our disappointment targets a fictional, idealized version of someone, rather than the real, limited, doing-their-best person actually in front of us.

The possibility of letting go

Letting go here means releasing the character, not the relationship. You can still ask for what you need, still hold real boundaries, still name real hurt — while letting the actual person, imperfect and human, replace the role you'd quietly assigned them.

Let people be people. Not because they don't matter enough to expect things of, but because the real ones are so much more worth loving than the characters we build instead.

YOUR SPACE

My notes

[illegible]



CLOSING

Keep going, gently

So much relationship pain comes from grieving a character instead of meeting the real, human, imperfect person standing in front of us.

How much of our suffering comes from the event itself, and how much comes from our fight against the fact that it doesn't match what we expected?

*Next in the series: **Letting Myself Be Me** — the mirror of this same question, turned toward yourself.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ROD GABRIEL ZR

This closing collection returns once more to the voice at the heart of *Living with Visual Aura Migraine* — not to explain another symptom, but to sit with the feelings that so often ride alongside one: anger that things aren't as they should be, and grief for the versions of days, people, and himself that pain quietly rewrote.

One question runs underneath every book here: how much of our suffering comes from the event itself, and how much comes from our fight against the fact that the event doesn't match what we expected? He doesn't have a tidy answer. He has ten honest attempts at sitting with the question anyway.

Want the whole journey?

This guide is adapted from the complete book, *Living with Visual Aura Migraine: Finding Relief Through the Rough Times* — the full story, with every practice, every episode, and every lesson in one place.

The Migraine Relief Series

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The Identity Series — on reclaiming yourself from the condition:

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