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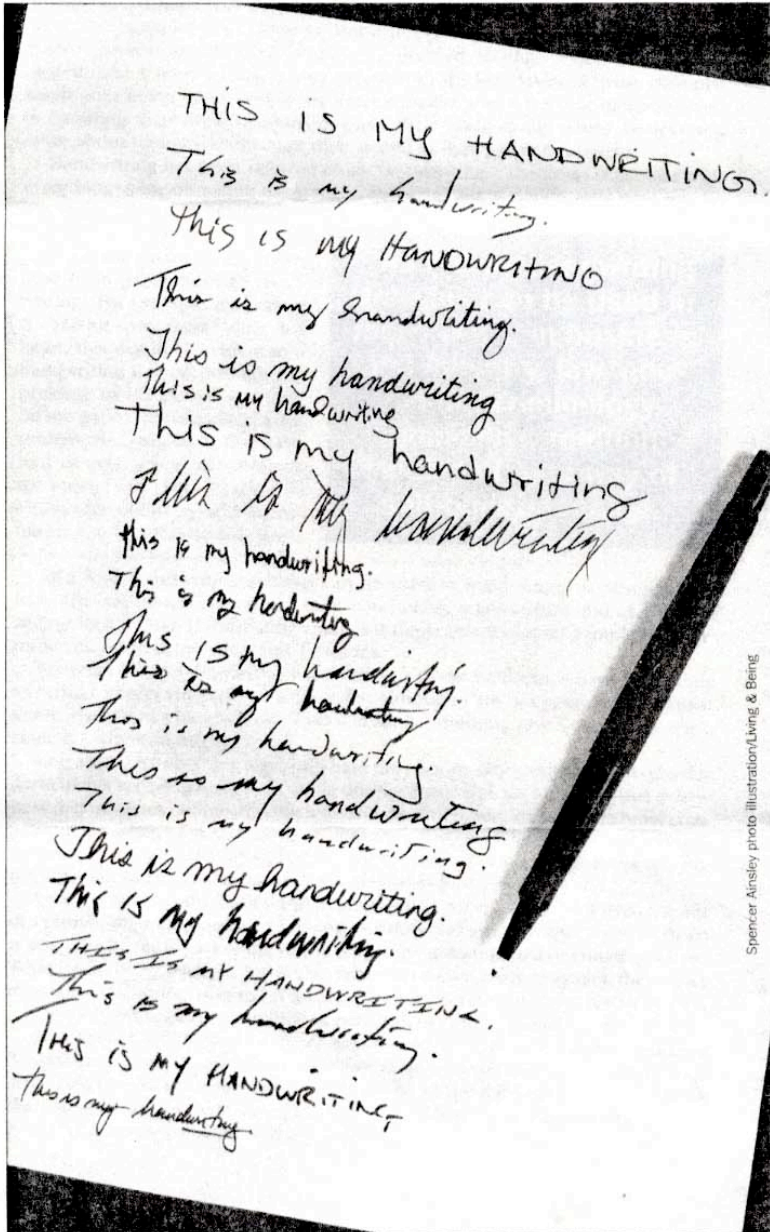
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HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

PENMANSHIP CAN BE A SELF-PORTRAIT OF THE SOUL ON PAPER



By Jo Coppola-Griffiths

For Living & Being

Many people have a fascination with handwriting analysis, also called graphology. Some are unsure if it is something of value or just a hokedy way of looking into a person's personality.

There is something real and dramatic about what is discovered in a sample of handwriting.

Any handwriting on paper, no matter the size, shape or content, will not only reveal a depiction of the personality behind the writing, but also facets about their health, mood, logic, talents, ambitions, spirit and desires. High-energy extroverts flash wildly and are hard to miss; intense and more private introverts illuminate with a depth of creativity.

I have been a student and teacher of the science of handwriting analysis for more than 20 years. It has been an interesting and evolving study.

Conscious writing is actually unconscious drawing — much like a self-portrait done on paper, in ink. Handwriting analysis is a way of using symbolism to portray a very accurate description of the writer's personality.

Our handwriting evolves as we do — and changes as we do. Some people can see the changes on a daily basis, even on the same day, depending on what and how they are feeling. Any changes that may elevate or bring down a person's spirit will clearly be identified in writing.

Handwriting is one of the most spontaneous expressions of the brain's activity. People who save letters, especially love letters, understand the thrill they feel when it is held in their hands, the emotional message is in the words that come alive on the paper. This passion is so alive and so magical that for many people, a love letter is a treasure they will never give up and, even after time, they can still recall the emotions they felt the day they received it.

Handwriting is a science, and the emphasis to the analyst is not look-

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ing at the written words or what is communicated, but the symbolism the writing represents. It is strictly the relationship the hand has to the brain. In fact, our handwriting is the most intimate connection we have with our brain. It matures with growth, evolves with age, and will change as a result of any mental, emotional or physical illness. It is an expression of drives, feelings, will and emotions.

It has been referred to as frozen movement or frozen emotions and as a permanent reminder of what was known of the person behind the pen at the exact time he or she was writing. The writer's essence of spirit is captured; the energy of soul and the dynamics of unconscious are a unique, living picture of the total personality presented on paper.

Many people journal as a way to keep in touch with themselves, and subsequently, their brain. They begin an intimate journey into the depths of their emotions, free to explore and discover. Many times it is in journaling that insights are made, concepts about relationships are processed, feelings of despair are investigated, and a sense of that reality is restored. It's like having a living therapist inside your being. More people are journaling as a way to become more involved in handling their lives, relationships and their place in the world, by learning more about themselves through their words as they put pen to paper.

Handwriting has been referred to as "brainwriting." The brain is familiar with everything going on within us. At times, there are things significantly troubling us we have yet to recognize or understand. But the brain can pinpoint the situation and transcribe it on paper through handwriting. For example, if a person is having problems with his heart, this would be evident to a handwriting analyst through the pressure of the person's writing on the paper. Trauma can also be evident in a sample; it is consistent despite a person's attempt to move on. The brain has knowledge of history, and its recollection is limitless despite time.

As a tool, handwriting analysis can be used in many ways: in business and industry, law, education, criminology, counseling, relationships and as a way of self-understanding.

As a tool, handwriting analysis can be used in many ways: in business and industry, law, education, criminology, counseling, relationships and as a way of self-understanding. Handwriting analysis is the evaluation of the sample to determine character, disposition and aptitudes.

My years of teaching various handwriting analysis workshops have helped me to further master my skills as a therapist. Although I am not prone to looking at a tentative client's handwriting, I value what handwriting reveals, in that it sets a stage for where to begin.

In teaching handwriting analysis, I have the opportunity and privilege to give my participants access to learn something unique about who they are. It is that awareness that intrigues people. It is not a psychic phenomenon; rather, it is the brain coming out, shedding its skin, making an appearance, without having any way to mask itself on the outside. It is a tool I don't take for granted; it is a valuable way of helping a person see more the positive qualities often forgotten.

Let's get back to the basics and begin writing. Send a letter to a friend, lover or relative. Begin a journal of self-appreciation and see how quickly your brain reacts. The paper is part of the joy, so forget the greeting card or e-mail quick fix. Write it out. Bring back the joy of the written word on paper, engaging the brain's most amazing connection to reveal joy, thoughts, sentiments, and certainly, love.

The only prerequisites are time, a pen and, of course, paper ... ♦

Jo Coppola-Griffiths is a graduate handwriting analyst and has been teaching handwriting analysis workshops for more than 20 years. She is a seasonal staff development instructor for Omega Institute in Rhinebeck and is writing a book that will explore love letters and healing. She holds a masters degree in psychology and is a licensed mental health counselor.

RESOURCES

■ American Handwriting Analysis Foundation:

www.handwritingfoundation.org

■ "Between the Lines: Understanding Yourself and Others Through Handwriting Analysis," by Reed Hayes (Destiny Books, 1993).

■ "Brainwriting: See Inside Your Own Mind and Others with Handwriting Analysis," by Irene B. Levitt (The Oaklea Press, 2004).

■ "You Are What You Write," by Huntington Hartford (Macmillan, 1973).

HOW IT'S USED

Handwriting analysis can be used for a variety of situations, including:

Personnel screening — An analyst is able to screen out potential employees, matching the job to the personality.

Personality profiling — An analyst is helpful understanding what the client may be experiencing in terms of their emotional development, helping through a particularly difficult area or time of life, and how they can understand themselves better when it comes to relationships.

Compatibility — This is used for helping a couple see how they can grow together when their strengths and weaknesses are viewed through handwriting analysis. However, it is to be used for the purpose of a positive assessment and not one to determine if a couple should or should not stay together. Analysis can never be done without consent from each party.

Career planning — An analyst is able to match a person's personality traits to a career that would complement that energy.

Questioned documents — An analyst can see forgery, or if a signature was written by the person who was supposed to write it.

Graphotherapy — An analyst would assist a person who is trying to change a part of their personality through their writing. An example would be a person who is very shy and timid would practice changing their small writing to larger writing. In time and with much practice, the personality would change.

Source: American Handwriting Analysis Foundation and Jo Coppola-Griffiths