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Dear Kelly,

I know that in the weeks leading up to our final session, I've told you many times how grateful I am for your kindness and patience over the past few years. But I want to put it on paper, to express myself in a medium where I am (usually) more articulate. Words on a page are more permanent, and have a greater chance of lasting—even if not as long as the feelings I'm trying to convey with them.

You have made a tremendous impact on me. You've said I've been brave at times, but if I have—and you know I find that hard to accept—whatever small courage I've shown in baring my soul to you was shored up by the months and years of your constant understanding, safety, encouragement and acceptance.

When I've been driven by fear, you gave me asylum. Where my acidic self-loathing has eaten away at my soul, your gentle compassion was a balm that soothed me. Where my mind has been trapped in the mire of doubt, your intelligence and insight cast new light to help me consider new paths.

Obviously...*obviously*...I am far from where I wish I could be. But that's due to my own recalcitrance and, yes, my depression's jealous hold on me. It seems it's not yet ready to let me go. But without you, I would never have achieved whatever I have... in fact, I doubt I'd have ever dared to include the word "yet" in that last sentence. That "yet" implies hope. Hope terrifies me. You helped me allow just a little of it into my life.

Maybe somehow we will connect again, if only for the reason I've mentioned in our sessions: to share something I've accomplished, because even though I'm not exactly sure just what that is, I know the seeds will have been sown due to your presence as my therapist. That presence isn't ending; the guidance, the humor, the warmth—the *Kellyness*, so to speak—won't be erased from my memory just because you're no longer here. Though I can't lie and say I'm not bereft now, I promise that the truth of *Sondheim's* words on this card will get me through; "no one leaves for good." I am not alone. I have my family... and I have what you've taught me.

For that, and for everything else, please accept my affection and deepest thanks. And know that I wish you the best, as you deserve; all the joy, fulfillment, excitement, dedication and discovery of your new life.