

Apologize sincerely

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"I messed that up. I'm sorry."

Those six words are powerful, aren't they?

Presumably, you've been both the victim and the perpetrator of a mistake or a slight in the past few weeks. It happens all the time yet we don't always know the best way to deal with it.

Here are some forms of apology that don't work for most people:

- "I'm sorry if you took offense to that." (This puts the blame on the victim.)
- "I didn't mean anything by it." (It's not about intent; it's about impact.)
- "I've been under a lot of pressure lately." (Excuses don't make someone feel better.)

Of course, apologies are not one-size-fits-all. If you're interested in learning more about this, consider [The 5 Languages of Apology](#). My husband and I both took the quiz and our primary languages of apology are Expressing Regret and Accepting Responsibility (which explains why "I messed that up. I'm sorry" resonates with me!). Other languages include Making Restitution, Genuinely Repenting, and Requesting Forgiveness.

I believe another component of apologizing sincerely is to make sure you only apologize when an apology is warranted! Some of us say "I'm sorry" so often it's as if we're apologizing for our presence on the planet. That makes our other apologies feel a little shallow. I've noticed that by not apologizing for stuff that doesn't deserve an apology, I've been better at apologizing for the stuff that truly does.

Years ago, the woman who was cleaning our house tripped when my daughter left one of her under-the-bed drawers open. Lily felt terribly when she found out what happened, and wrote a note to apologize to Rochelle. I think she included some important elements.

We all make mistakes. Apologize sincerely.