



Therapy for Inner Well-Being
and Interpersonal Success

The Power of Apologies

What is an apology?

An apology is an expression of regret for saying or doing something that offended someone personally or created problems for another person.

Why apologize?

We apologize to acknowledge recognition of our own behavior when it isn't consistent with how we want to be and to repair a rupture in a relationship.

How does one apologize?

A true, heartfelt apology involves more than simply saying, "I'm sorry" and letting it go. More depth is required.

A powerful apology needs the following components:

1. A description of the offense.

"I am sorry I continued to interrupt and cut you off when we were out to dinner last night."

2. Acknowledge the distress to the other person.

"I took advantage of your politeness and ignored you being upset by me dominating the conversation. I did not take into account the negative effect my disregard has on you."

3. Explain why it happened.

"It is hard for me to restrain my impulses and sometimes I like to feel like a big shot and be the center of attention."

4. Make reparation, if needed

I really want to be respectful of you.

5. Make a statement of your future intention or plan.

"In the future I will be more mindful of what you are expressing and allow you to finish before expressing my ideas. If I interrupt you, please gently put your hand on my shoulder as a cue that you were not finished speaking."

Excerpted from the work of E. Bader and P. Pearson, co-authors of [In Quest of the Mythical Mate](#).