

Components of an Apology

“Apology is more than an acknowledgement of an offense together with an expression of remorse. It is an ongoing commitment by the offending party to change his or her behavior... it is a method of social healing that has grown in importance as our way of living together on our planet as it undergoes radical change” - Aaron Lazare

David Karp, a sociology professor at Skidmore College and the co-founder of Campus PRISM (Promoting Restorative Initiatives for Sexual Misconduct), told Vox he evaluates celebrity apologies based on how well they fulfill the following five criteria:

- An apology should include an explanation of the harm done to the person or people receiving the apology.
- It should include an admission of the [perpetuator’s] role in causing that harm, an “acknowledgment of personal responsibility and avoidance of denials or minimizing.”
- Should express remorse.
- They should explain which behaviors they are committed to stopping now that they understand the harm they’ve caused.
- Finally, they should explain what they will do to make amends.

A witches apology - Breanna Suslovic

Tools: tarot and a candle

light your candle, observing the flame and its fragility. meditate on the ease with which it can be extinguished—a strong breath, a cover, or a splash of water could put out this heat and light in a heartbeat. hold the tarot deck in your hands, thinking of the one you have harmed. how has the harm you’ve inflicted impacted them? how has it impacted you? how has it impacted your relationship? pull one card for each of these questions. interpret. reflect. put away your cards and blow out your candle, holding in mind the meaning of your three-card pull.

consider the relationship you have to the one you have harmed. what boundaries exist? how do you (or did you) normally communicate? how might you start a conversation that respects boundaries and facilitates your apology? consider how vulnerable you are willing to be. reach out in the way that feels right. try to find a way to look each other in the eye. offer an apology that is specific. offer an apology that takes responsibility and holds yourself accountable. offer an apology that does not put onus on them to emotionally caretake for you. offer an expression of your remorse. offer a specific commitment to doing better. offer a specific commitment to stopping harmful behaviors, making amends, and hearing about the harm you’ve caused. do not expect an immediate expression of forgiveness. consider this the beginning of the healing.

