

The Unsent Apology

Some apologies can't be delivered. They still need to be written.

Sometimes contacting the person would be wrong — unsafe, unwanted, reopening what they've closed, or mostly about relieving your own guilt. That doesn't cancel the debt of honesty. So write the apology that will never be sent. It has only four parts, and none of them is an excuse.

Two phrases are banned in this room, because they aren't apologies: *"I'm sorry you felt..."* and anything containing *"but."*

ONE

What did I do?

Plainly, in the active voice. "I said." "I didn't show up." "I let them believe." Not "mistakes were made."

TWO

What impact might it have had?

You may never fully know — write what you can honestly imagine it cost them, and let it be uncomfortable to write.

THREE

What do I understand now that I didn't then?

About them, about the situation — or about you. This is where the apology becomes true instead of performed.

FOUR · THE ENTIRE POINT

What will I do differently because of it?

An apology that changes nothing is a performance, even unsent. Name the change — specific, small enough to be real, starting now.

Now choose what happens to it

Keep it — it's saved on this device only, and it will be here when you return.

Download it — a copy that's yours for good, using the button above.

Release it — use *Clear everything* above. The apology was written; the change it named is what continues. The words don't need to live anywhere anymore.

And if working through this makes you realize contact *would* genuinely help them, walk back through The Repair Room's last question first, and draft carefully in Before You Send It.

IF IT STIRRED SOMETHING UP

Coming back down

Breathe in through your nose for four, out through your mouth for eight — longer out than in — for a few minutes. Then name five things you can see, four you can hear, three you can touch. Stirred-up feelings after writing like this are common and tend to pass; if they don't, that's information that this deserves more support than a page can give.

If you're in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, please don't work through it alone here. In the US, call or text 988 (the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), or chat at 988lifeline.org — available 24/7. Outside the US, findahelpline.com lists helplines around the world.

A BLESSING ON THIS WORK

This work is a gift. Share it freely with anyone who needs it — print it, copy it, pass it on whole. It is not for sale, by us or by anyone, and it shouldn't be changed. Above all, keep the crisis lines and the words about seeking professional help exactly as they are — for someone, those may be the lines that matter most. It exists to help people heal, and to raise the vibration of the world. That will never cost anything here.

— Aether & Root · aetherandroot.com/inner-work