

ANATOMY OF AN APOLOGY

“SHOOT I MISSED CLASS” NOTES

The text on these slides are for your future self.

Times when you want to refresh your memory on specific talking points, or go on a rabbit hole of links researching the opinions of people on the internet about apologies. People on the internet have a lot of opinions about apologies.

During the webinar, consider these slides a tangible structure of points for my visual learners, and pleasant looking pre-made notes for my auditory learners. (Please also feel free to take your own notes!)



Outline

WHEN DO I NEED TO APOLOGIZE?

What isn't an apology

WHAT IS AN APOLOGY?

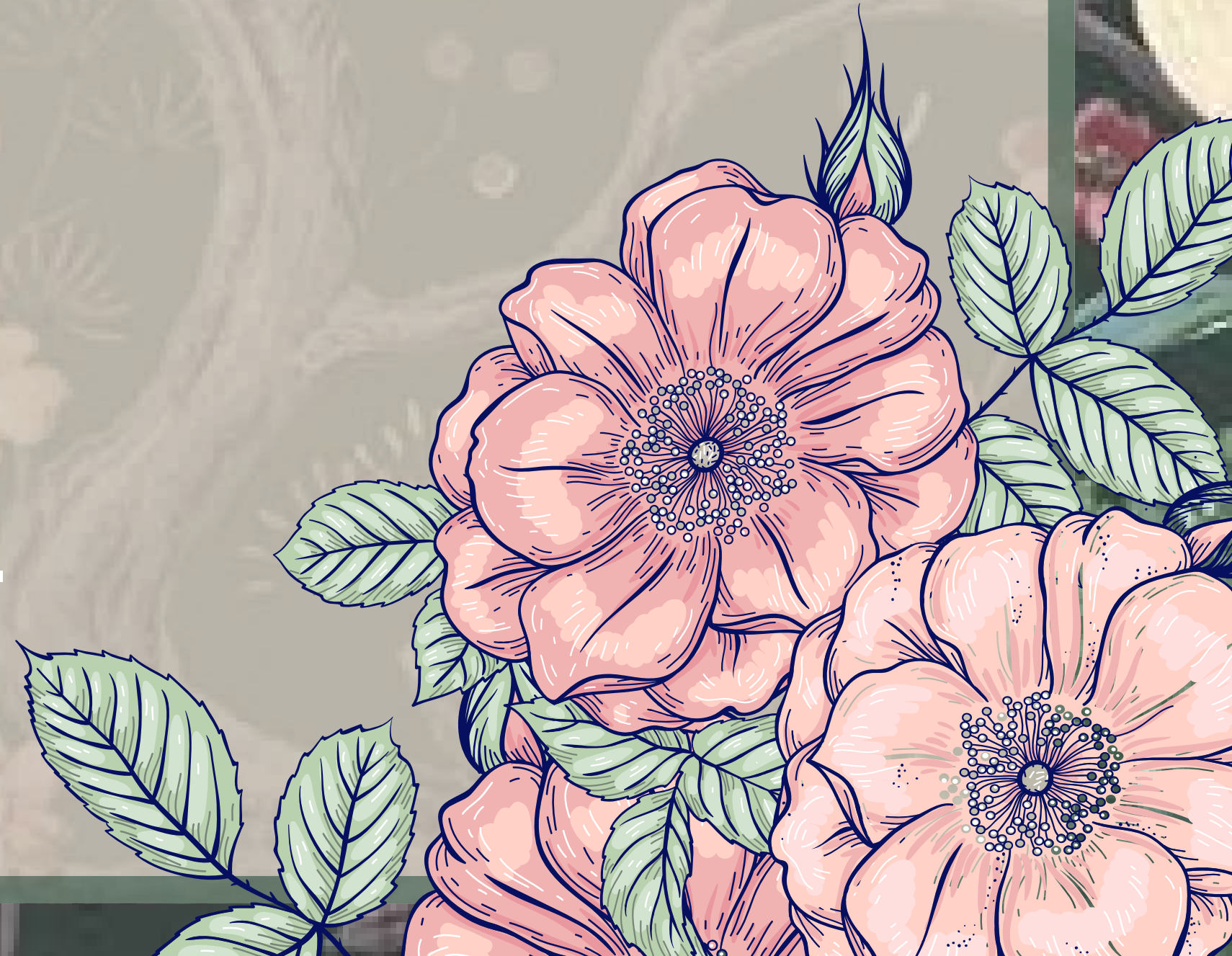
Anatomy of an apology

Example: ACT Method

WHAT ABOUT MY FEELINGS?

The addressing of guilt

Over apologizing



WHEN DO I NEED TO APOLOGIZE?

When you become aware your
behavior has hurt someone.

(You don't get to decide if someone else is hurt.)



WHAT ISN'T AN APOLOGY

A transaction made in exchange for absolution or forgiveness.

"I said I'm sorry, so we're good right?"

An excuse / statement that doesn't include personal accountability.


An explanation of the situation or self that does not include personal responsibility.

"I'm just like that." "I didn't know, it's not my fault."

'Apologizing' for the other person's emotions.

"I'm sorry you feel that way."





WHAT IS AN APOLOGY?



ANATOMY OF AN APOLOGY

Acknowledge the hurt. "I recognize my behavior made you feel _____"

Take responsibility. "I recognize my behavior...."

Actually apologize for your behavior, not the other person's reaction.

"I'm sorry I _____"

Accept that the you do not get to decide how your apology is received
(do not expect or demand forgiveness)

A change in behavior with follow through. "Moving forward I will _____"



ACKNOWLEDGING HURT

Apologies center on the hurt of the person being apologized to, not our own feelings of guilt, annoyance, shame etc.

Apologies require us to see and listen to the other person. We must be open to listening to their experience, even if we do not like how we are reflected by their experience.

Be specific.



ACCEPTING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

While a number of factors may contribute to the situation, accept your personal contribution, whether or not it was intentional.

Be open to condemning your own behavior / admitting you violated your personal moral code.

"What I did was racist." / "I was being hypocritical."

Self-blame and/or martyrdom are not the same as accepting responsibility.

BE SPECIFIC.





ACTUALLY APOLOGIZING

"I'm sorry" is not a bridge over pain, but it is a necessary support beam.



CHANGING BEHAVIOR

"You can't talk your way out of problems you behaved yourself into."

Stephen Covey





ACT for accidental misgendering
METHOD

A

ACCEPT

ACCEPT PEOPLE ARE FULLY AWARE OF THEIR OWN GENDER IDENTITY WHEN CORRECTED AND **APOLOGIZE**.

"I went to the library with him-sorry, them."

C

CORRECT

CORRECT THE SENTENCE WITH THE PROPER PRONOUN.

"They showed me the library is a great free resource!"

T

TIME TO MOVE ON

REMEMBER HOW TO **ACT** SO MISGENDERING WON'T BE A STICKING POINT!





WHAT

ABOUT

MY

FEELINGS?



GUILT

An apology is not something given in exchange for forgiveness.
(Because apologies focus on the hurt within the situation.)

Guilt is an uncomfortable opportunity for introspection, not a
burden to be lifted by someone else.

Because guilt is a knot we have tied in our own stomach, it is our
work to unknot.



OVER APOLOGIZING

Over apologizing is a manipulative tactic.

It is seeking comfort / absolution from the person you just hurt, asking them to say "it's okay", whether or not it is actually okay.

While apologies are proportional to the situation, over apologies are more about our own feelings of shame, guilt, and embarrassment.



FURTHER READING

- [Xploring Gender](#)
- [Anatomy of An Apology \(A letter response\)](#)
- [8 Tips for Apologies](#)
- [5 Ways to Ruin and Apology](#)
- [Apologies and Attachment Theory](#)
- [15 Myths About Apologies](#)
- [Reasons We Apologize \(From Interpersonal to Institutional\)](#)
- [The Violence of White Apologies](#)
- [Exhausting Apologies For Racism- Just Do Better](#)
- [Key & Peele "Awkward Apologies from White People"](#)
- [How Do I React After Misgendering?](#)
- [What Do I Do When I Misgender a Trans Person?](#)

