

HELPFUL PHRASES WHEN OFFERING A MEANINGFUL APOLOGY

~By Linda J. MacDonald

When we have injured our partners by betraying them in some way, it is important to respond as soon as possible, humbly, without excuse, and with sincere remorse. With tears, if they are sincere. Here are some sample phrases that might soothe your traumatized spouse, if you speak them from a sincere heart:

- It was sooo wrong of me to do that to you!
- What I did was unbelievably hurtful to you. I am sooo sorry.
- I *wounded* you! (or) I *injured* you! (or) I *crushed* you!
- I am sooo sorry that I did _____ to you. I love you. Please give me another chance.
- I feel terrible about _____ and that I hurt you so badly.
- If I had it to do over again, I never would have _____.
- I agree with you. Keep talking. I don't blame you. Yes, you are right.
- Take as much time as you need.
- I was completely out of line. It was not about you. It was about my poor way of coping.
- I don't blame you for feeling (*betrayed, hurt, let down, wounded, injured, disappointed, unprotected, offended, etc*) by what I did.
- I might not be able to explain the "whys" behind my wrong actions right now, but I am committed to getting professional help to understand myself better.
- Of course you are angry / hurt / mad. You have every right to be.
- You did not deserve _____ [*my hurtful actions*].
- What I did was not your fault. And I will dig deeper into my personal hangups to resolve them and get healing for myself. I will also cooperate with therapy to improve how I relate to you.
- When I blamed you, it was out of my own guilt. I was the one who was in the wrong.
- Instead of _____ I should have _____.
- When I ... (*betrayed you, made you feel rejected, etc.*) ... I was completely *wrong*.
- It makes me feel *awful* that I hurt you so deeply.
- I feel *terrible* about what I did to you.
- I deeply regret _____. I can see why that shattered your trust in me.
- That was sooo stupid of me! I hate that I did that to you. You mean so much to me. I will do whatever it takes to repair the damage and regain your trust.
- I will NEVER do that again! You are too important to me. Here are all my passwords.
- I beg you to give me another chance, even though I don't deserve it.
- I don't want to jeopardize our relationship like that ever again.
- What I did was unconscionable! The worst!
- I was only thinking about my temporary emotions. Now, I feel like a fool.
- What do you need for me to do to rebuild your trust?
- I will do my best to honor your needs and boundaries.
- I hope someday you will forgive me.