

Shania Gordon

Professor Kathena H. DeGrassi

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Sorry Not Sorry

Sorry is often used as a staple word, employed to express sympathy for a situation, in hopes of repairing the relationship before it meets its damage. We the people have now hit a point where every imperfect action; even if miniature, is thought necessary to be begged pardoned for. Gradually sorry has become more of a robotic response than one that is genuine. The overuse of this word is not only detrimental to one's self-esteem but can also make one feel less than they are.

This all tackles the point of belonging. As humans, we all strive to have a place to call home. Not necessarily the physical home with planted tiles, roof, and a balcony, but a home with people you connect with and people that make you feel a part of something. This is why often when a bond is threatened to be broken, one might input their apology regardless of whether it is appropriate to. This ties into the evolutionary biology depiction of human behavior, "Reciprocal altruism is an apparent, superficial form of 'altruism' in which an individual will help another—but with the expectation of receiving help in return at a future point..."(Hitchings). Reciprocal altruism is basically a tool used by most to fill the craving of being wanted, feeding the knowledge of belonging in a social circle. Due to this desire to belong, sorry has become

more of a social obligation; apologizing for a mistake in hopes of bettering a relationship and minimizing the fear of lessening one's view of another.

That being said, apologizing is the proper way to attend to situations; situations that it is actually needed for. When this word is carelessly used it can easily diminish one's view of another, granting them that feeling of being the one in power, ultimately narrowing one's authority. According to the *European Journal of Psychology*, "Researchers found that participants who refused to express remorse showed signs of 'greater self-esteem, increased feelings of power(or control) and integrity'"(Hall). This ingrained habit indeed expresses the quality of remorse, care, and a genuine personality while at the same time offering others the opportunity to walk over them and take advantage of this instilled proper trait.

Although I have always been familiar with my overuse of the word, It never really registered to me what it could result in. First introduced to me on the On-Demand show *Liza*, the topic of the episode was the main character's habit of over apologizing. Throughout the scene, it shows the starting point where it was excessive and where she was walked over, frowned upon and her ideas were never taken seriously. Though further down when the word sorry was magically incapable of being said, she substituted it for other words; not apologies but reasonings. Slowly she transitioned out of this habit and gradually her co-workers started looking at her with respect, her voice was heard and her confidence was boosted in the process. This social priority is mostly seen amongst women, women who are known to pertain to this good norm and polite demeanor. "Women are biologically wired for harmony and nurturing. For most women, the apology is a way of keeping the peace," (Clements). A woman is expected to vocalize with a filtered vocabulary, one that is censored to signify their femininity. This attitude

is also an act that has been normalized throughout the years which is why when a woman accidentally bumps into a man who was clearly not looking where they were going and was the one at fault, that woman apologizes because they wish to keep composure of the situation. This empowerment can also be seen in professional areas such as schools and even workplaces. A woman is most likely to get walked over in a work field due to their gender, apologizing for merely existing and making a simple. A mistake is small as forgetting the ranch dressing on the manager's sandwich. Women and men express their remorse differently because when a man would simply nod and go to fix the issue, the female will apologize multiple times as if pleading for acceptance and to again, 'keep the peace'. The explanation is merely that women and men perceive social situations more differently and are aware of these words consequences, thus refusing to say it.

The word 'sorry' does not necessarily emphasize weakness and submission as a whole, but when overused it will eventually route to an opportunity for the one being begged for the acceptance of this forgiveness, to take advantage of it, thus granting them the idea that there is something that is owed to them. This horrid habit ruins opportunities one could take in the real world, limits boldness and courage to go on with life. Ingested with the thought that you owe the world, and not the notion that everybody makes mistake and that miniature incident will not determine a downfall. 'Sorry' should be used when the situation truly requires it, when made a habit it **becomes** nothing but a word. A meaningless and almost robotic, word.

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