

**Self-Care and Clarity of Mind...a weekly column
by Princess Lakshman (Sister Iqra)**



Welcome to my weekly column on **Self-Care and Clarity of Mind**. If you're taking time out to read this, pat yourself on the back because you have shown commitment to taking care of your mind and body.

Today, In Shaa ALLAH, we will explore the topic: The Art Of Saying Sorry

I often got into trouble when I was a little girl, all feisty and opinionated. Mother used to reprimand me with tight slaps. Dad, on the other hand, used to ask me to say sorry. I grew up saying "sorry" many times and soon it became a habit. Soon, I was saying sorry for things that weren't even my fault. Worst part about saying sorry out of habit was that I no longer attached meaning and value to my apology. It became a word which was convenient to use when trying to justify my behaviours.

Upon reflection, much later in life, I became aware of my habit of saying meaningless sorries to people and never really admitting responsibility for my actions. I dug deeper into my behaviour patterns and discovered that I actually was never taught the meaning of the word sorry and why it needed to be said. For years I believed in the misconception that when I'm bad, I can turn it into good by saying sorry.

And then one day, during my self-reflection, it dawned on me that it's not about me being good or bad. It's about the undeniable truth that my actions, my words, my behaviours have actually

caused hurt to another human being. Acknowledging that hurt and feeling genuine remorse is the only way to say sorry.

Saying sorry is actually about SEEKING FORGIVENESS.

Saying sorry is NOT ABOUT JUSTIFYING your actions.

Saying sorry is about forgiving yourself and seeking forgiveness from the one who was hurt by your words, actions and behaviours.

Have you ever received an apology which seemed more like a slap on the face than an actual sincere apology? Where you felt more hurt than when the person initially hurt you?

Have you ever said sorry to another and not really meant it?

Try practising the following steps to ensure that you are mindfully saying sorry and sincerely seeking forgiveness.

Seeking Forgiveness

1. Before approaching the person, pray your salah and ask ALLAH to give you clarity of speech and help you express a sincere apology. Ask ALLAH to help the other person with the act of forgiving you.
2. Express genuine remorse when you are talking to the person. A good way to start would be to say something along the lines of : I am genuinely sorry for causing you hurt. I feel terrible

about it. I seek your forgiveness. I promise to be mindful to never repeat this behaviour again, In Shaa ALLAH. Please forgive me.

3. Wait for the person to process your words. Even if there is silence, remain calm. The person may need time to think about your apology. He/she has a right to take this time. Do not pressure him/her to respond immediately. Respect their silence.
4. Tell the person that you respect the time needed to think about this. Leave the room to show that you genuinely respect the person's space during this time.
5. Sit somewhere in silence and make duaa and dhikr, express gratitude to ALLAH for giving you this opportunity to express your remorse. Ask ALLAH to forgive you for causing hurt to another.

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