



## What is "Repair?"

Repair is the act of going back to the moment of disconnection, taking responsibility for your behavior and acknowledging the impact it had on another.

## Why does it matter?

Repair is the single most powerful relationship strategy we have. It allows us to, essentially, change the past — because now, instead of the moment being stored in our bodies with discomfort, aloneness, and fear, the moment becomes surrounded by connection, understanding, coherence, and warmth. Repair is one of the most potent relationship builders we have.

## How do you make a repair?

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**STEP 1: Mess up.**

We **all** mess up. What defines us is not whether we mess up, it's what happens after.

**STEP 2: Repair with yourself.**

You can't offer compassion, groundedness, or understanding to someone else before you access those qualities within yourself.

Self-repair means separating your identity - who you are - from your behavior - what you did. Remember: you are a good person (identity) who was having a hard time (behavior).

Self-repair may sound like telling yourself: "Two things are true: I'm not proud of my latest behavior and my latest behavior doesn't define me. Even as I struggle on the outside, I remain good inside."

Replacing that spiral of guilt and shame with groundedness is what allows us to use our energy to think about what we want to do differently the next time.

**STEP 3: Repair with the other person.**

1. Name what happened.
2. Take responsibility.
3. State what you would do differently the next time.

## Examples of repairs:

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### WITH KID

- “I’m sorry. I’m sure that felt scary to you. I’m working on staying calm when I have big feelings. I love you.”
- “I yelled at you before. It’s never your fault when I yell. I wish I had stayed calmer and used a quieter, slower voice. I love you.”
- “I keep thinking about earlier today when I called you a spoiled brat. You didn’t deserve that, and I’m working on using kinder respectful words even when I’m upset. I know we can figure out our tricky moments together in a better way. You’re a good kid and I love you.”
- “Yesterday, I didn’t give you an opportunity to explain your side of the story, and I’m sure that felt really frustrating. I’m sorry I wasn’t able to do that yesterday, and I’m working on slowing things down instead of reacting. I’d love to listen, now, if you’re willing to share with me. I want to better understand what was happening for you.”

### WITH FRIEND

- “I realized I was defensive yesterday when you were talking to me. I wasn’t really listening to you - I was just trying to prove a point. I’m sorry. I’m ready to listen now - not to refute what you’re saying but to better understand.”
- “I’ve been thinking about something that happened between us the other day. You were telling me something that was upsetting to you and my response was invalidating and minimizing. I’m sure that felt bad. I’m sorry and if you’re willing to talk about it with me again, I know I’ll respond differently.”
- “I want to own something that I’ve been thinking about but haven’t said to you. I’m sorry I didn’t include you in that lunch. I know you know about it and I’m sure that felt bad and I just wanted to name it and tell you I’m sorry. I wasn’t thinking through it in the way I wish I did, and I know I would have been upset too. I care about you and our friendship and rather than avoiding this topic, I wanted to come to you about it.”

## WITH PARTNER

- “I want to talk about our latest argument - not to re-litigate it, but just to own my part in it. I had a hard time hearing your point because I was so focused on proving my point. I know we both deserve to feel heard and understood, and I know I can do more on my side to do that for you.”
- “When you were trying to talk to me yesterday, I didn’t show up in the way I wanted to. You were upset and you probably just wanted me to listen and be there for you and instead I minimized what you were saying. I’m sorry. I think it’s hard for me to see you upset and I just try to solve it in some way - but I know that’s not what you need and I know I need to work on this.”
- “I’m sorry I yelled. I’m sure that felt really bad and you deserve better. I’m working on managing my reactions - I really am.”

## WITH COLLEAGUE

- “I wanted to apologize for what I said to you yesterday. I was frustrated, and instead of managing that frustration and talking to you respectfully, it just took over me and came out in those words. That’s not okay, you deserve better, and I can do better - and I will.”
- “I want to apologize to you about the way I kept cutting you off in the meeting yesterday. I was stressed and overwhelmed about a bunch of things, and rather than realizing that and managing it, it just came out in being very short with you. I want you to know that was really a me thing and not a you thing, and I’m sorry.”
- “I’ve been thinking about our conversation, when you came to me with something that was upsetting you. I responded with invalidation and I’m sure that felt bad. I’d love to return to that conversation, if you’re willing, because I’m more able now to listen so I can understand what’s happening for you.”

And in case you have a lingering worry, let me remind you: it’s not too late. It is never ever too late to reconnect and repair.

And if you’re wondering, “Okay, well what comes after repair? I love knowing that I can repair and I want to take the next steps so I am not in this position as often!” - well now you’re really speaking my language. Come join us in membership; this is where the Good Inside movement is happening, it’s full of adults looking to raise the bar on how we raise our kids and how we raise ourselves along the way. I promise it’s nothing short of life changing.

I can’t wait to see you inside.

