



PSYCH 490/800: THE ART OF APOLOGY

FALL 2011

Salazar Hall, Room 2013

Saturdays 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

November 12 & 19, 2011

Course website: <http://www.erisweaver.info/apology.html>

Instructor contact information: apology@erisweaver.info or 707-338-8589

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Work, family, and community interactions provide us with multiple opportunities for misunderstandings, conflicts, and hurt feelings. A well-done apology can go a long way toward healing a strained relationship, while a poor one can create even more disconnection and distress. Apology is intimately intertwined with forgiveness. For addicts in recovery, making appropriate amends for past behaviors may be an especially important part of rebuilding their lives and relationships. Artful apologies have other applications in customer service, medical malpractice, politics, and during the end of life. In this experiential workshop, participants will learn how to craft an Artful Apology; have an opportunity to practice in a supportive environment; and discuss how to implement this knowledge in other aspects of their work and personal lives.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

When a student completes this course, he/she will be able to:

- Understand the role of apology in resolving conflict & healing damaged relationships
- Understand the difference between making an apology and giving feedback
- Gain an appreciation of appropriate contextual factors influencing effective apologies
- Recognize the components of an Artful Apology
- Know how to use the Apology Planning Template
- Have had a chance to practice an Artful Apology
- Discuss the correlation between apology and forgiveness
- Apply the concepts learned in a variety of settings such as business, public affairs, customer service, medical practice, international relations, etc.

COURSE OUTLINE

Session #1	Session #2
Introductions & definitions Role of apology in society & relationships: models Research on apology Components of an Artful Apology Restitution/reparations Planning an Artful Apology How to receive an apology Practice & critique	The role of apology in public settings <ul style="list-style-type: none">Business (customer service)Business (management)Medical malpracticeRestorative justiceAddiction & recoveryPublic affairs & politics The relationship between apology & forgiveness

READING LIST

Three books have been made available in the campus bookstore.

REQUIRED:

Engel, Beverly. *The Power of Apology: Healing Steps to Transform All Your Relationships*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2001.

OR

Lazare, Aaron. *On Apology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

RECOMMENDED:

Chapman, Gary D. and Jennifer Thomas. *The Five Languages of Apology: How to Experience Healing in All Your Relationships*. Chicago: Northfield Publishers, 2006.

Additional readings will be available online and/or on reserve in the Schultz Library. You will need your SSU ID OR a photo ID to check materials out of the Library.

BOOKSTORE HOURS	LIBRARY HOURS
Monday - Thursday 7:30 AM - 6:30 PM Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM Saturday 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Monday - Thursday 7:30 AM - midnight Friday 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM Saturday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM Sunday Noon – 9:00 PM

ASSIGNMENTS

Week One Assignment (Due November 19)

Read either Engel's *The Power of Apology: Healing Steps to Transform All Your Relationships* or Lazare's *On Apology* and be prepared to discuss. (Of course, you are welcome to read both if you like!)

Keep an Apology Journal. Throughout the week, notice apologies when and where they occur: at work; at home; in the media; at school; etc. Note the date, location, context, the content, whether the apology seems to have been accepted, etc. These entries can be brief! Handwritten is acceptable if it is legible.

Week Two Assignment (Due Monday, December 5, 9:00 am via email)

Write a short (3-5 page) paper on one of the following topics. I encourage you to choose a topic that is related to your existing field of work or study! The paper should include academically appropriate references. (If you would like to use a different topic, you must get it approved by me beforehand.) Turn the paper in via email to apology@erisweaver.info by Monday, December 5 at 9:00 am. I will acknowledge receipt within 24 hours. Acceptable formats include Microsoft Word, PDF, RFT and Open Office. I will return papers to you with grades and comments by December 16.

Topics:

1. Choose a recent public apology (politician, entertainer, etc.) and analyze its effectiveness using the models we've discussed. Include suggestions for improvement.
2. Analyze an apology found within a work of literature, film, television, or music using the models we've discussed.
3. Investigate the concepts of apology and forgiveness from the point of view of another (specific) culture.
4. Offenders in a restorative justice setting, particularly juveniles, are sometimes ordered to write letters of apology. Can an involuntary apology ever be effective? Cite examples.
5. How can we best teach apology, in a developmentally appropriate way, within the K-12 educational system?
6. Discuss the use of apology in recovery from addiction. Does the 12-step model of making amends focus too much on the benefit to the giver, rather than the recipient, of the apology?
7. How might you implement your learnings about apology within your business or professional practice? Be specific!
8. What might be appropriate and relevant reparations to heal a specific historic injustice?
9. Design a research study to investigate a specific aspect of apology and forgiveness.