

After the reaction

The reaction already happened. This page is the part that matters — what to say, in what order, sized to what actually went on.

FIND WHAT HAPPENED, BORROW THE WORDS

I said something I didn't mean	“What I said wasn't okay, and I'm sorry. I was worked up, but that's not an excuse.” Own the words first, explain second — never the other way round.
I went silent or shut down	“I went quiet because I was overwhelmed, not to punish you. Sorry if that felt confusing.” Name the silence rather than resuming as if it didn't happen.
I walked away or hung up	“I walked away because I was too worked up to talk properly, not because I don't care. I'm ready now, if you are.” Leaving was often right. Coming back is the repair.
I snapped or raised my voice	“I'm sorry about earlier — that wasn't fair on you. Is there anything you need from me now?” Short, specific, and no over-explaining.

IF THIS KEEPS HAPPENING

Name the loop	“I know this isn't the first time. That's on me, not on you having to remind me.”
Attach a system	One concrete change beats another promise. Say the change, then stop.
Don't spiral	Self-criticism turns their repair into your comfort. Let it land and be quiet.

A repair is short, specific, and doesn't ask the other person to manage your guilt.

THE FOUR BEATS

1 Name what happened. 2 Own the impact, briefly. 3 Say the one change. 4 Stop talking.

No reason before the apology. No promise without a mechanism. No extra sentences of guilt.

Before you go back in

Four lines. Then say it out loud once before you say it to them.

01 What actually happened — plainly, no softening.

The specific thing you said or did. Not your whole character.

02 What was already loading before it?

Tired, hungry, noise, rushed, already corrected earlier. Context, not excuse.

03 The one concrete thing I'll do differently.

A change with a mechanism in it — an alarm, a note, a rule.

WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY

Then stop talking. The silence after a real repair is meant to be there.