

## 9<sup>th</sup> Step Amends Suggestion

**Ask Them First** if they are willing to accept an amends. Usually a text.

EXAMPLE: [name], I believe I owe you an amends. Would you be willing to take a few minutes in person (or on the phone) so I can reveal a past harm?

Or

[name], I've been reviewing my life, and I'm not happy with how I've shown up in relationship with you. Would you be willing to take a few minutes in person to hear about it?

- Wait for a "Yes" or "No."

- -> If "No", we thank them and move on. Giving the amends spiritually with our sponsor.

By asking them first, we are living our amends by *letting them call the shots*. We are not forcing an amends on them for selfish reasons.

--> If "Yes" then we carefully gauge the conversation for what they are open to.

We read them the letter we have previously written and shared with our sponsor, omitting only what they do not want to hear or what may cause them harm.

We focus on the harms that they are most concerned with, not the ones we think are the worst.

While reading the amends, *Pause* after each sentence, looking them in the eyes.

Try not to speed through it. Wait for their response.

Some notes:

- Sometimes the person will say, "OK, if it will help you to tell me...."

This centers the conversation on us, and is not the purpose of an amends. If they do not feel harmed, then we do not make the amends to them. We can make it spiritually with our sponsor.

We politely say, "I am not here to unburden myself, but to repair the harms I've caused. Would it be beneficial to you if I share these harms?"

--> If "**No**", politely find a way to end the conversation. Wish them happiness and success in their future relationships and endeavors.

--> If "**Yes**", continue with the amends.

EXAMPLE AMEND:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I believe I mistreated you. (or- I believe I owe you an amend)

I was selfish. I was dishonest.

I thought only of myself- I didn't think of you.

(or- In my self focus, I didn't try to see your needs at all)

(or- I was arrogant and I denied how much my actions impacted you. I wasn't there when you needed me.)

(or- I violated your trust. I made agreements and then I broke them.)

(IN THIS PART we avoid bringing the focus back on ourselves. We are not rationalizing, justifying,

or telling our side of what happened. We are only here to consider the harm we caused them.

We might say a sentence about more specifically what we did to harm them, but we avoid

storytelling.

I (deeply) regret the harm I caused (or may have caused) you.

Is there anything you would like to add about how I affected you?

(Some suggest asking "what can I do to make this right?". I don't encourage this because it can

Take the focus back on US again. "What can "I" do?" There is time for this later, if the person

needs it. For now, the focus stays on them and the harm caused.

AFTER reading the amend, we PAUSE and give them some time for a response. We are prayerful in this process. We invite our Higher Power in. We are getting Honest, Willing, and Open-minded.

Whatever their response is- we *Listen*. We do not argue or tell our story here. We respectfully hear what they have to say. We agree to what they ask us to do unless it is illegal, unethical, or not what Higher Power would want for us. If in doubt, we say "thank you for your honesty. I will pray about it and talk about it with my sponsor. I will get back to you by [xyz date]."

If they ask why we are doing this, we can tell them it is for our spiritual program. Or we can say "Periodically I have decided to review my life to determine if I have harmed anyone. I feel I may have harmed you in these ways."

When the conversation is finished, we do not then transition to a different topic or go eat dinner, etc. The amends is a stand-alone conversation. Leaving it as is with a break afterward will give them time to let their own Higher Power work with them in the ways that is needed. We may want to make this clear ahead of time if it is our partner, etc.

We call/message our sponsor before and after each amend. Don't try to do this process alone. The Big Book reminds us that we need a witness. In the old days, the sponsor sometimes drove with the sponsee and waited in the car while they gave the amends. Bookending your amends with a text or call mimics this.

Notice what arises in you- emotions or fears or judgments. Do a Tenth Step Inventory if it is needed.

Once one amend is given face to face, we will move on to the tenth step. We need the Power that the tenth step brings. Let's get moving so we're not hanging out in the powerlessness, which is dangerous without any drug to numb the feeling of overwhelm. Keep going. The promised spiritual awakening is on the horizon.