

"Ouch!"

When you're hurting

I want to tell you something that's been bothering me. I felt bad when...

Use **facts only** to describe the situation. Fact: "you left." Spin: "you abandoned me."



It makes/made me think that...

- ☐ your anger is out of control.
- ☐ I'm with a bully.
- ☐ you don't respect me.
- ☐ you'll never stop.
- ☐ you aren't really sorry.
- ☐ I can't reason with you.
- ☐ you don't appreciate me.
- ☐ I can't count on you.
- ☐ I need to protect myself.
- ☐ your promises mean nothing.
- ☐ you mistake fear for respect.
- ☐ you lack compassion.
- ☐ you're lying to me.
- ☐ I can't trust you.
- ☐ you haven't changed at all.
- ☐ I have to walk on eggshells.

- ☐ you wanted to scare me.
- ☐ you think a quick "Sorry..." will
- ☐ make it all better.
- ☐ my needs don't matter.
- ☐ you can't admit you're wrong.
- ☐ you don't recognize
my right to...

Check any that
fit below.



- ☐ love who I love.
- ☐ believe what I believe.
- ☐ choose my own friends.
- ☐ own my own body.
- ☐ think what I think.
- ☐ do what I want.
- ☐ say "no" when I want.
- ☐ have my "no's" accepted.

(CONT'D ON NEXT PAGE)

It makes me think... (CONT'D)

- ☐ you don't care about me.
- ☐ your needs are all that matter.
- ☐ you only apologize to shut me up.
- ☐ you only want me around when there's something in it for you.
- ☐ the only feedback you can handle is praise.

- ☐ you don't listen.
- ☐ doing what's best for you isn't what's best for me.
- ☐ it's not safe to be honest with you.
- ☐ this relationship isn't good for me.
- ☐ other

When those thoughts come up, I feel...

- ☐ sad.
- ☐ mad.
- ☐ hurt.
- ☐ confused.
- ☐ misunderstood.
- ☐ disappointed.
- ☐ disconnected.
- ☐ disrespected.
- ☐ unappreciated.
- ☐ frustrated.
- ☐ resentful.
- ☐ lonely.
- ☐ abandoned.
- ☐ insecure.
- ☐ unsafe.

- ☐ invisible.
- ☐ rejected.
- ☐ insulted.
- ☐ controlled.
- ☐ guilt-tripped.
- ☐ manipulated.
- ☐ betrayed.
- ☐ unsupported.
- ☐ undermined.
- ☐ bullied.
- ☐ mistreated.
- ☐ blamed.
- ☐ attacked.
- ☐ defensive.
- ☐ fearful.

- ☐ smothered.
- ☐ jealous.
- ☐ helpless.
- ☐ empty.
- ☐ hopeless.
- ☐ like leaving for good.
- ☐ taken for granted.
- ☐ worthless
- ☐ used.
- ☐ disgusted.
- ☐ dirty.
- ☐ humiliated.
- ☐ inadequate.
- ☐ other

If I give you the benefit of the doubt, it's possible that...

- ☐ I overreacted.
- ☐ you understand now how crazy your reaction was.
- ☐ it was an accident.
- ☐ I am partly to blame.
- ☐ my request felt unreasonable.
- ☐ you lost track of time.
- ☐ your OCD took over.
- ☐ you did your best.
- ☐ you had no choice.
- ☐ you needed more time.
- ☐ we got our signals crossed.
- ☐ you honestly thought I'd think it was funny.
- ☐ you thought I'd love it.
- ☐ you didn't mean to hurt me.
- ☐ you thought you had it under control.
- ☐ you know you handled it poorly, but are ashamed to admit it.
- ☐ you were caught off-guard.
- ☐ you didn't know it was a big deal.
- ☐ you didn't have all the facts.
- ☐ you had a brain-fart.
- ☐ I should have trusted your instincts.
- ☐ it was an honest mistake.
- ☐ you thought I was joking.
- ☐ you chickened out.
- ☐ you were oblivious.
- ☐ I should have taken you seriously.
- ☐ you meant well but guessed wrong.
- ☐ you had to learn the hard way.
- ☐ you were too embarrassed to say anything.
- ☐ you felt attacked and reacted poorly.
- ☐ my instructions were confusing.
- ☐ you didn't notice my reaction.
- ☐ you were right—but I couldn't admit it until now.
- ☐ other

Looking back, I wish you had...

- ☐ been nicer.
- ☐ stayed calm.
- ☐ put me first.
- ☐ kept your promise.
- ☐ canceled your plans.
- ☐ told the truth.
- ☐ talked to me privately.
- ☐ made sure I was okay.
- ☐ said something right away.
- ☐ been more patient.
- ☐ been more flexible.
- ☐ given me your full attention.
- ☐ told me what happened.
- ☐ admitted your mistake.
- ☐ taken responsibility.
- ☐ backed me up.
- ☐ told me you were unhappy.
- ☐ been where you said you were.
- ☐ recognized you were dealing with a crazy person.

- ☐ given me a Sorry card.*
- ☐ called a Time Out.*
- ☐ warned me.
- ☐ spoken up.
- ☐ helped out.
- ☐ been a good sport.
- ☐ kept quiet.
- ☐ refused.
- ☐ taken no for an answer.
- ☐ respected my rights.
- ☐ protected me.
- ☐ stayed with me.
- ☐ talked to me sooner.
- ☐ not been drinking.
- ☐ stopped before it was too late.
- ☐ I should have asked for what I wanted.
- ☐ other

If something like this comes up again, I'd like you to...

Be specific.
Do what?



What you can do right now to help us get back on track...

- ☐ Admit your mistake.
- ☐ Follow through.
- ☐ Don't say "I'm sorry, but..."
- ☐ Turn off your phone at night.
- ☐ Fill out a Sorry card* so I get a meaningful apology.
- ☐ Don't argue about what happened.
- ☐ Don't tell me why "it wasn't that big a deal."
- ☐ Let your actions speak louder than your words.
- ☐ Tell me what you're going to do to fix this problem.
- ☐ Before giving advice, ask me what I'm looking for.
- ☐ Don't try to talk me out of my feelings.
- ☐ Don't explain, argue the facts, or defend your actions.
- ☐ Don't end your apology with, "Now can I tell how YOU hurt ME?"

- ☐ Remember I'm hurting.
- ☐ Ask me if I want a hug.
- ☐ Don't get mad if I say no.
- ☐ Accept that regaining trust will take time.
- ☐ Don't make me wait for a positive response.
- ☐ Approach me with kindness.
- ☐ If you have a complaint, choose another time.
- ☐ Do something right away to make things right.
- ☐ Use Changing Ourselves for the Better* and make an action plan.
- ☐ Don't expect an apology to make everything better.
- ☐ Apologize to anyone else you may have hurt.
- ☐ Other

Thank you for listening.

Signed: