

Restorative Responses to Harms You've Caused

ACCOUNTABILITY TOOLS

Listen & Make Space

- Pause, breathe, and resist the urge to defend
- Make space for their emotional response
- Let them share the impact without the burden of having to explain

Express Gratitude for Shared Vulnerability

- Their feedback is a gift
- Acknowledge the risk they take in giving feedback

Acknowledge the Harm You Caused

- Identify your role in the harm
- Name the impact of your wrongdoing
- Focus on the framework that allowed the harm
"I realize my fear of conflict made me overlook that racist comment."

Identify a Plan to Repair & Prevent Further Harm

- "I understand how I messed up and I will _____ to address these issues."
- "Moving forward, I will change _____ and educate myself on _____."

Consult Allies

- Don't put more labor on those harmed
- Research to better understand the issues
- Examine the issues that allowed the harm
Self-reflect and take responsibility for change
- Work through your guilt, shame, or resistance to the feedback

Revisit the Issues

- Repairing the harm often requires multiple attempts to build trust over time
- Check in with others, not just those who identified the harm
- Ask "While I work on addressing the issues, would you like to revisit this?"

Do NOT

- Name your proximity to the harmed
"But I have Black friends!"
- Center your feelings
Cries "I'm so hurt you think I could do this."
- Name all you've done so far
"I'm the first person to..."
- Focus on intent
"That's not what I meant!"
- Focus on your character or evade your (in)action
"I'm not the type of person who..."
- Qualify your apology with "BUT" or "IF"
"I'm sorry if you feel offended."
"Sorry BUT..."
- Critique their reaction to the harm you caused
"If you calm down, I could better understand you..."
"I feel attacked!"



BELLEVUE
COLLEGE

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, language, ethnicity, religion, veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, disability, or age in its programs and activities. Please see policy 4150 at bellevuecollege.edu/policies.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Title IX Coordinator, 425-564-2641, Office C227, and EEOC/504 Compliance Officer, 425-564-2178, Office B126.

CREATED BY

Michelle Strange
Director of Restorative Practices
m.strange@bellevuecollege.edu