



*This content is summarized from Ken Sande's book
"The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict".*

The Seven A's of Confession

(see Matt. 7:3-5; 1 John 1:8-9; Prov. 28:13; see also pages 126-133 in Ken Sande's book, The Peacemaker)

1. Address everyone involved.

Is this situation just between 2 people? Only address them. Was it in front of your whole family, or a group? Then everyone should be addressed.

2. Avoid "if," "but" and "maybe."

Using these words will short-circuit and invalidate the apology by shifting blame or nullifying (via explanation) the apology.

3. Admit specifically.

Name what exactly it is that you have done wrong, avoiding general statements. The more specific, the better.

4. Acknowledge the hurt.

This takes humility, empathy and compassion to give words to the hurt you have caused - and it is a vital part of a real apology.

5. Accept the consequences.

A genuine confession accepts the real consequences that may follow it. This could include payment for property damage, repairing damaged trust, or a change to your reputation.

6. Alter your behavior.

Repentance is not simply feeling sorry and apologizing; true repentance involves a committed change in behavior, even if it is difficult.

7. Ask for forgiveness.

Asking for forgiveness demonstrates a humble attitude (instead of an entitled posture) and provides an opportunity for the other person to extend forgiveness. Receiving forgiveness may take some time.



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The Four Promises of Forgiveness

(see Matt. 6:12; 1 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 4:32; see also pages 208-209 in Ken Sande's book, *The Peacemaker*)

1. "I will not dwell on this incident."

Brooding on an injury or transgression and holding guilt over someone's head is not forgiveness.

2. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.

Forgiveness means letting go of the "right" to weaponize the offense in the future.

3. I will not talk to others about this incident.

Being wronged by someone does not validate committing gossip or slander against them, especially after confession and forgiveness have been shared.

4. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

Trust may take time to be repaired or rebuilt; as we travel through that process, we can look to the reconciliation we are given by the work of Jesus for strength and endurance to move forward.