

The Pathetic Story of 'Sorry'

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Prelude

'Sorry' is one of the most misused words these days. When it comes to the true meaning of apologizing, the word 'Sorry' loses its meaning as it is used without much thought and deliberation. Apologizing just for the sake of apologizing is meaningless. People cannot truly say 'Sorry' if they can't admit to themselves that they have made a mistake. The meaning of the word 'Sorry' gets diluted when it is used without a true resolve to change something, do better next time and admit oneself for a mistake. It can reflect regret that something happened, without actual remorse. The time has come to give the word 'Sorry' back its power. This story is a modest attempt to enlighten the society regarding the misuse of the word 'Sorry'. The paper deals with the story told by the word 'Sorry' personifying itself. The word 'Sorry' narrates its origin and different usages followed by a few instances on how its status got deteriorated. Finally, it leaves the readers to choose between two options which definitely will enable the reader to introspect. Through the story the paper tries to bring change in the reader at the personal level and the society at the general level.

Story

For the clarity of readers:

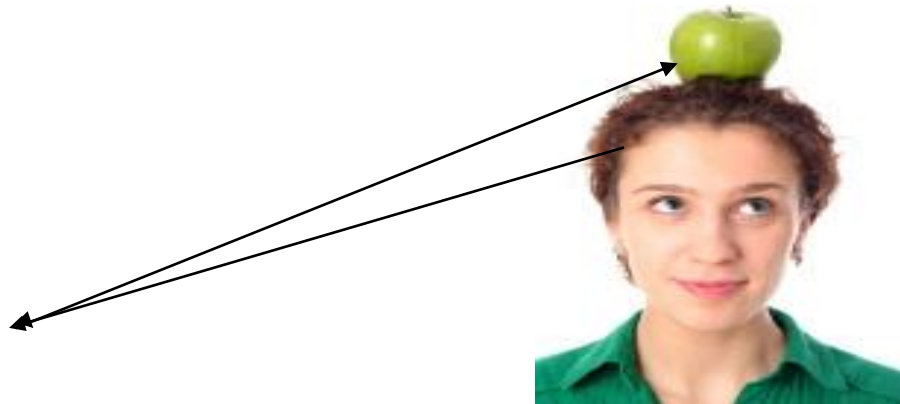
- 1) 'I' and 'ME' = The word 'Sorry' personified
- 2) Phrases use ME, uses ME, using ME=saying sorry
- 3) To avoid confusion the words **I** and **ME** are given in bold letters.

The task of writing one's story is a difficult one. It is with a kind of guilt and fear **I** began to write my story. **I** have, as all have, a hesitation in unfolding the events of my life. A few impressions, both good and bad, in my life stand out vividly from the time of my origin. Many incidents of vital importance in my life have been forgotten in the excitement of watching my usage for different purposes. Therefore, not to be tedious, **I** shall try to present in a series of sketches only the episodes that seem to me to be useful for the benefit of the society.

I do not remember exactly but history says that **I** originated before 900 B.C. from old English Sarig which means 'painted, distressed', of West Germanic Origin, from the base of the

noun ‘Sore’. They say that the shortening of the root vowel has given me an apparent connection with the unrelated ‘sorrow’. As given in various dictionaries, **I** mean assumption of guilt, admittance of wrong doing and apologizing. Besides, **I** am employed for a wide range of circumstances, even those for which we are not to blame like condolences over a death (I’m sorry for your loss), to asking a speaker to repeat a sentence (sorrywhat did you say?) and so on. **I** almost lost my meaning when people used me for apologizing for a mistake because **I** was used without much thought and deliberation. **I** mean little when people use **ME** without true resolve to change something or to do better next time. Out of the numerous episodes that I’ve undergone, I’d like to mention a few which **I** feel will enlighten the people regarding my usage. (For the convenience of the reader **I** will directly appear with my true name - ‘Sorry’ in the below example.)

Sorry for what? And Sorry to whom?



Oh! Just miss! ‘Sorry’.

To whom do you say sorry in this case?

As APJ Kalam has said ‘The cost of perfection is too high’. In order to attain perfection in any work a person needs a single-minded devotion, responsibility, commitment, hard work, much time, efforts and dedication. Simply completing a task for name sake without attaining perfection and desired output is of no use. When the work a person has done doesn’t yield any results and when he is questioned, can he simply escape the situation by simply using **ME** by saying ‘sorry’? Can he bore the loss by simply using **ME**? When he is unable to bore the loss, he should not use **ME** because the mistakes he had committed are irreparable.

Rescue / Ruin / Rectify

I would like to give another instance where **I**’ve been deliberately used as a sort of escape by the students. Students who get attendance percentage less than 75% are detained according to the detention system of some of the universities in India. In almost all the colleges the attendance of all the students is taken every month and the list of students who get attendance percentage less than 65% & 75% is sorted. Parents are intimidated about this. Principal, HODs & Proctors

counsel the student by explaining the consequences. Each time the student uses **ME** to escape the situation. This continues for the whole semester and finally when the student gets detained who is blamed?

The management? For the impeccable plans

The Principal? For the responsibility

The HOD? For effective monitoring

The Proctor? For Personal counseling

The Student? For escaping the situation each time using **ME** and repeating the same

Or

Is it my mistake for rescuing the student each time? In the above case when **I** am used from the heart, the student sees that he doesn't repeat the mistake. But by repeating the mistake isn't he putting himself into a dungeon ruining his future? In such a case **I** become a source of situation escape in fact a sorry escape where the mistake can be repeated again and again. Instead of rectifying his mistake isn't the student rescuing himself each time using **ME** ultimately ruining his future?

Saying sorry or being sorry

Two students have completed fabricating the prototype of a flying robot as a part of their project. They come close to the deadline. One of their friends comes to watch it and in the process he unintentionally breaks the prototype.

In this episode if the student would have used **ME** it wouldn't have helped his friends. Had he used me the responsibility would have been on my shoulders. Instead if the friend sits and talks to them by saying how he would help them out in rebuilding the robot it would definitely make the situation better. This shows how the person had taken the full weight of blame and responsibility on his shoulders. This develops empathy in the friends which later leads to forgiveness. This act here is more helpful than using **ME**.

Think!

“To err is human
To admit is super human
To rectify is Divinity”

Mistakes are inevitable. A Person who does a mistake and realizes it will have true guilt which is not negative because this guilt leads him to correct his mistake. In Such a case when a person uses **ME** he tries to be specific about what he is using **ME** for and what made him do so. This enables the person to know that he is using **ME** not just to smother for coziness, but that he understands his mistakes and never repeats them. If the person doesn't realize his mistake, the guilt that develops in him doesn't allow him to act positively. Then using **ME** just turns to be a

powerful form of emotional distortion ultimately making **ME** lose my meaning. When a positive guilt is not developed it becomes easy to use **ME** forgetting what they have done, thinking, they are forgiven. Immediately the next day they start doing the same thing repeatedly. Then what they have done is not forgotten and they are not forgiven. In that case why use **ME**?

People developed the habit of misusing **ME** from childhood when they are forcibly asked to use **ME** to someone when they really didn't want to, didn't mean it and when it really didn't come from their heart. This is deeply rooted in the children in such a way that using **ME** becomes a natural involuntary and subconscious reaction for doing something wrong. This makes the children reckon that they used **ME** many times and they have seen many people using **ME**, then, what if they continue with **ME**?

Using **ME** in this way acts as a cover-up to the mistakes done. **I** have no magical powers to erase mistakes and wipe off bad actions. **I** become magical only when good actions occupy bad actions.

What **I** want all the people to remember is that lot of sincerity is required to use **ME**. Sincerity makes the people to feel to use **ME**. Without feel if anyone uses **ME**, the only benefit they have is escape. The choice is left to the readers. Commit mistakes because you can escape by using **ME** (or) Avoid repeating mistakes because you sincerely feel to use **ME**.

Please think of this!

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