



Discussion Guide for S1 E3 – Nailing the Apology

Guests: Rabbi Felicia Sol, Scott Siff

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1. 6:16 - Megan Ganz:

“Redemption follows allocution.” [allocution = a full verbal admission of wrongdoing.]

- a. Why might Megan believe that admission of wrongdoing needs to precede healing?
- b. What internal work must a person have to do in order to admit their wrongdoing? How does that work (or lack thereof) affect the person seeking forgiveness as well as the person asked to forgive?
- c. What is the relationship in your mind between redemption and allocution? Do you agree with the concept that redemption can only follow allocution?

2. 7:38 - Megan Ganz, after Dan Harmon responded to her by saying, “I’m filled with regret and a lot of foggy memories about abusing my position. I would feel a lot of relief if you told me there was a way to fix it. I’ll let you call the shots. Til then, at least know I know I was an awful boss and a selfish baby.”

“I wish my memories were foggier. I wish there was a way to fix it. It took me years to believe in my talents again, to trust a boss when he complimented me and not cringe. When he asked for my number, I was afraid to be enthusiastic knowing it might be turned against me later. You want relief? So do I... Figure out how to give me that relief and I’ll return the favor.”

- a. Dan Harmon states in his tweet that he will let Megan Ganz call the shots for next steps to take. Does that feel to you like a respectful ceding of space to allow her to outline what she needs from him to proceed in her healing? Or do you sense that he is abdicating his responsibility for figuring out how to resolve the

pain and suffering that he caused? Or do you deem it some combination of these things, and/or something else? On what basis do you make your assessment?

b. When can apologies bring healing, and when do they perpetuate pain?

3. 9:22 - Rabbi Leon:

"We have some work to do to figure out not only how to make an apology work, but how to ensure that it's not used as a false indication of righteousness or as a mechanism for preserving the imbalances of power that caused the pain in the first place.."

a. What are the different elements that make up an apology that "works"?

Describe not just the content of the apology, but the setting and manner in which it is given, and any actions that need to happen alongside it.

b. Are there meaningful apologies that you have received or given in your own life? What made them so significant?

4. 12:12 - Rabbi Felicia Sol:

"What happened, I think, with the apology, was this very profound release and recognition of kind of her own process of questioning about who she was. What it seemed like through the apology is that (1), she was validated in a way that she had never been. And (2) that she could finally kind of take stock of who she really was... the truth of who she was."

a. How can receiving a sincere apology help us validate ourselves and our experiences?

b. How can offering a sincere apology help us take stock of ourselves?

c. Why do apologies have such power?

5. 18:48 - Rabbi Felicia Sol, reflecting on *Netivot Shalom*, by the Slonimer Rebbe:

"We often think about teshuva as a forward moving process, but it, in and of itself, the word means to return, which is to some kind of essence which is not marred or blemished. And so this particular text feels to me, a very core teaching about asking the question about identity and purpose. And often I think when we go off track is when we make mistakes."

- a. What does Rabbi Felicia mean when she suggests conceiving of *teshuva* as an act of returning to our pure essence, rather than an act of growing or moving past difficult challenges or experiences we have?
- b. Do you agree with her conception of *teshuva*?

6. 23:36 - Rabbi Felicia Sol:

"I feel like the Slonimer's orientation to us is to know before whom you stand and what you're standing for."

- a. What do you think the Slonimer rabbi means in suggesting that we know before whom we're standing? Is it just a theological claim or is he trying to get at some kind of human experience not limited to "believers"? Do you agree, or would you expand on that answer at all?
- b. What do you think the Slonimer rabbi means in suggesting that we know what we're standing for? How would you answer this question if you were asked How would you want that answer to come through in any apology that you offer?

7. 19:30 and 31:48 - Rabbi Leon:

"We came in this world with certain gifts and we came in this world with certain less than positive inclinations, and they're going to play themselves out in some way. And therefore, part of our job in this world and in our lives is, once they've played themselves out, to do that process of fixing."

"[The Slonimer Rebbe] says in the text, that which is the hardest for you, is your unique task, your special purpose....The Slonimer talks about... there being certain moments in our lives, which are ripe with possibility."

- a. Do you agree with this idea that one of our largest responsibilities in the world is to address that which is hardest for us, paying close attention to the area(s) in which we are most likely to cause damage to others?
- b. In what ways can knowledge of ourselves and our negative inclinations help us figure out work we need to do?
- c. How can meaningful apologies help those whom we have hurt – and even us, as those who caused the hurt – to heal, grow, and repair the world?

8. 45:50 - Scott Siff outlines the three pieces to a company's making an apology: an acknowledgement of wrongdoing, an effort to fix the damage, and an explanation of the specific steps to prevent it from happening again.

- a. In what ways do you feel like this is parallel to an individual's apology? In what ways is it different?
- b. Are there any elements here that ought to be incorporated when a person is apologizing to another person? If so, what are they? Are there any elements here that are missing, that you believe a corporation should do in addition to these?

9. 56:03 - Leon:

"I learned that the apology is not something to master so that I can overcome the wrongdoing. It's the entry point into the tikkun that mending work that I'm being called to do right now. It's my special work in the world. And my job is to enter its expanse and not dismiss it quickly. It's my work in the world, but it's not about me."

- a. What have you learned about an apology in this discussion?
- b. Do you agree with the Slonimer Rebbe, when he said "that which is hard for you is what you are here for"? Does that impact how you feel about apologies in general, or perhaps about any that you feel you owe others or that others owe you?