



# EMPLOYEE

## ASSISTANCE NEWSLETTER

FALL 2025

## THE POWER OF AN ARTFUL APOLOGY

When you hear the word apology, does someone in particular come to mind? Say their name out loud. Ask yourself, “why do I feel the need to apologize?”



Have you done something hurtful? Was it on purpose or by accident? Were you careless with this person or their feelings? Did you say or do something you regret? Have you taken accountability for what is weighing on your heart? Are you angry with them or angry with yourself? Are you craving reconciliation and repair? Would you like to be able to move forward? Do you have a desire to make them feel better or yourself feel better? Do you feel or believe you deserve to be forgiven?

A strong meaningful apology can go a long way in repairing rifts in a relationship. Most of us learned the skill to apologize as children but this is a skill that needs to grow with us. When we first learned to apologize, we often did so because we were told to do so. The other child is often told to express a form of forgiveness. This is where we learn there is a clear outcome in the dance of repair.

As we age, apologies become more layered and complex. We tend to forget how important it is for us to play and connect, it's something we NEED. Often, we cling to our position, to being right or justified. We convince ourselves that an apology means admitting defeat or we worry that no matter what, the apology we will not be forgiven. While we know the way back to one another, an apology can

feel tremendously hard. It can feel shameful, and shame is often what prevents us from reaching out.

An apology puts the relationship first. It doesn't find a way to justify what you did or keep score with the other person. In general, working toward repair, we put the good of the collective above our individual interests. It's challenging to ask yourself before you yell, slam the door, blame, engage in the silent treatment, or keep score: “What will this do to our connection? Is it worth it? What is it that our relationship really needs?”

Apologies can be tricky. We may not regret not inviting a friend somewhere or engaging in an activity without our partner, but if we deem it appropriate, we can apologize for the impact it had on the other person. Be mindful when using language like “I am sorry if I made you feel...”, it can sound apologetic but also puts the responsibility on the other person. Redemption requires accountability.

So, what does an artful apology include? An artful apology includes:

- An awareness of what YOU did
- Taking responsibility for how YOU behaved
- Providing acknowledgement of the impact this had on the other person, even if they hurt you too

It's from this place that you can stand accountable without needing the other person to validate, redeem, or forgive you. You are doing your part for the good of the relationship.

So, what do you get out of an artful apology?

A sincere apology can empower us. There is a great deal of empowerment vulnerability. There is something powerful about owning, claiming, and taking responsibility; it gives you a sense of agency. This is not power over another person, it is power to clarify and make things right. When you apologize, you are making a choice to change the story and to move forward. You are saying

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**Saint Alphonbus**  
A Member of Trinity Health

**EAP MISSION** Saint Alphonbus Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary, confidential counseling service that assists employees and their families with issues that affect their quality of life at home and work.



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"Enough. We may have made this mess together but I am taking responsibility for my part. I am sorry for what I have done."

Apologizing helps us realize how much we impact others; there is weight to our actions. If we have the power to hurt, we also have the power to take steps toward healing. When we apologize, we open the door and invite the other person to join us in the place of open communication. We lessen shame and acknowledge the person and relationship are more important than winning an argument or disagreement.

While you do have the power to apologize, the other person has the freedom to forgive or not forgive. Forgiveness cannot be forced. This is what makes the idea of apologizing so difficult. We know that once we make the first move, we are no longer in control. It is possible our vulnerability may be met with rejection.

- **A good scenario:** You apologize and the other person meets you there by saying thank you or I forgive you or by coming forward with their own self-awareness.

- **A less-than-ideal scenario:** You apologize and ask for forgiveness, maybe even beg. It may seem they want to humiliate you, which may be true if you're in an abusive relationship. Most of the time, the other person is just so hurt that they want you to feel how much they are hurting.

- **A worse scenario:** The apology has never been made or accepted and the unfinished business follows us to the end of life, even traveling across generations.

A serious offense requires a serious apology. Depending on the situation, it may be needed more than once, but there is a limit. The truth is: **sometimes forgiveness takes time, and sometimes it doesn't come at all.**

The unseen benefit of apologizing is the connection to our humanity. The words "I am sorry" are

three of the hardest words to say for many of us but are some of the most important words we can use. We are all connected. We are all imperfect humans. We all make mistakes. When apologies are sincere, they can be very healing. Conversely, when the apology is insincere, goes sideways, or doesn't happen at all, the potential risk is compromising or can lead to the end of the relationship. Apologizing is central to everything we hold dear... to family, partner(s), leadership, parenting, and most importantly our ability to love ourselves and others.

One of the most healing aspects of repair comes when we see another person trying. Even if we or they don't get it exactly right, the effort means a lot and we get better with each attempt. Throughout life we are gifted with many opportunities to say, "I am sorry." With each apology we gain a deeper understanding of the power of the apology and how to do it right. We can learn from 13th-century Persian poet Rumi, who once said, "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."



## LOADED BACON AND EGG HASH BROWN MUFFINS

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 large eggs
- 1/4 cup sour cream plus additional for serving
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 20 oz package shredded refrigerated hash browns
- 2 Tbsp butter melted
- 4 green onion finely chopped
- 6 slices bacon cooked and finely crumbled
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese divided

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and spray a regular 12 cup muffin tin with cooking spray or butter flavor cooking spray. Set aside.
2. In a medium size mixing bowl whisk together the eggs, sour cream, garlic salt, black pepper and paprika.
3. To the egg mixture add the hash browns, melted butter, green onion, crumbled bacon, grated Parmesan cheese and 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese. Mix well to combine.
4. Use a measuring cup or a medium size ice cream scoop to divide the mixture between the muffin cups. Sprinkle the remaining 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese on top.
5. Bake for 25-30 minutes until golden. Rest for 5 minutes, then run a knife around the edges to loosen.
6. Serve as is or with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkle of bacon crumbles and green onions.

PREP  
15 m

COOK  
30 m

SERVINGS  
12 muffins

Melissa Sperka @melissaskk, #melissaskk | [melissassouthernstylekitchen.com/wprm\\_print/loaded-bacon-and-egg-hash-brown-muffins](http://melissassouthernstylekitchen.com/wprm_print/loaded-bacon-and-egg-hash-brown-muffins)

# LIVING WITH ADULT CHILDREN:

## HOW TO MANAGE LIFE UNDER ONE ROOF

Over the past few decades, the number of young adults living at home has steadily climbed. What used to be a short stop between college and full independence has, for many families, become a longer arrangement.

According to the Pew Research Center, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, more than half of adults between 18 and 29 were living with one or both parents. Even before the pandemic, however, the trend had been on the rise. In 1990, only about 17 percent of young adults lived at home but today that figure hovers around one-third.

Several factors explain why this pattern has grown: rising housing costs, student debt, inflation, and the financial fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic have made it harder for young adults to live on their own.

For parents, the return of an adult child can bring comfort and companionship, but it can also strain the family. The rules that worked when your child was a teenager no longer apply, yet complete freedom under your roof isn't realistic either. The key is striking a balance between offering support and encouraging independence.

### Establishing Boundaries, Rules, and Expectations

When an adult child moves back home it is essential for parents to set boundaries. Having a clear conversation before the move establishes expectations and prevents misunderstandings. Key issues to address include:

- **RENT:** Will they pay full rent, contribute a smaller amount, or live rent-free?
- **CHORES:** Who is responsible for dishes, vacuuming, and other household work?
- **MEALS:** Will you eat together most nights, or is everyone on their own?
- **GROCERIES:** Who buys what and how are shared items covered?
- **LENGTH OF STAY:** Is there a timeline or is it open-ended?
- **PRIVACY:** How will common areas be shared and private spaces respected?



- **GUESTS:** What are the ground rules for visitors or overnight partners?
- **QUIET HOURS:** When does the household need to be quiet for work or rest?
- **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL:** What rules apply to substance use inside the home?
- **SCHEDULES:** How will late nights or time away be communicated so no one worries?

These conversations may feel uncomfortable at first, but they are vital. You may also want to consider writing down the agreements in a contract. Having the rules written down gives everyone a reference point and helps avoid "I thought you said..." arguments. The contract should outline financial contributions, household duties, and behavioral expectations. Parents and adult children can draft this together to ensure that both voices are heard. Templates are available online by searching for "contract for an adult child living at home." Having weekly or monthly family meetings to review progress, discuss challenges, and adjust expectations can be helpful to ensure that both parents and adult children remain on the same page.

### Helping Without Enabling

One of the biggest traps parents fall into is enabling rather than helping. It's natural to want to protect your child, but doing too much, by covering their bills, solving their problems, or excusing their mistakes, can keep them stuck in dependency. Healthy support looks different. It means encouraging your child to handle their own finances, make

their own appointments, and solve their own conflicts. It means being available for advice but not swooping in to fix everything.

### Knowing When It's Time for a Change

Most arrangements work best when they're temporary. If an adult child persistently ignores agreements, refuses to work toward independence, or becomes verbally or physically abusive, parents may need to set a firm timeline for leaving. Providing clear notice (such as 30–60 days) and offering support to find other options can help the transition.

### Where to Find Support

Parents navigating this situation do not have to do it alone. There are many resources available, including websites, support groups, books, and professional help:

#### WEBSITES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

- [Parents Helping Parents \(parentshelpingparents.org/parenting-adult-children\)](https://www.parentshelpingparents.org/parenting-adult-children)
- [Other Parents Like Me \(oplm.com\)](https://www.oplm.com)
- [Empowering Parents \(empoweringparents.com\)](https://www.empoweringparents.com)

#### BOOKS

- *Doing Life with Your Adult Children* by Jim Burns
- *You and Your Adult Child* by Laurence Steinberg
- *A Parent's Guide to Living with Adult Children* by Catherine Jennings
- *The Hands-On Guide to Surviving Adult Children Living at Home* by Christina Newberry

### Professional Help

Sometimes, despite the best planning and intentions, conflict arises that parents and adult children cannot resolve on their own. Family therapy can help improve communication, mediate disagreements, and establish workable boundaries. The Saint Alphonsus Employee Assistance Program offers individual and family counseling if you need professional guidance and support.

## EAP COUNSELORS

## SAINT ALPHONSUS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



**Jared Belsher – Supervisor  
MA, LCPC, NCC**

Jared is a licensed clinical professional counselor (LCPC) and national certified counselor (NCC) who has worked in outpatient mental health clinics and in private

practice since 2007. He received a bachelor's Degree in Political Science and a master's Degree in Community Counseling from Northern Arizona University. His approach to counseling is strength-based, which means that rather than dwelling on

things that are wrong, he focuses on the strength individuals have, and how they can use those strengths to overcome their obstacles. He uses a person-centered approach and additional counseling techniques such as cognitive-behavioral

therapy (CBT) to help clients discover healthier ways to cope and think about a problem.

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# MOVING FORWARD WHEN YOUR ADULT CHILD PULLS AWAY

If you find yourself estranged from your adult child, you are not alone. Recently I have had several clients who find themselves in this very difficult position. Many believe themselves to be, and likely were and are, good parents. Most clients are blindsided by their child's choice to cut off or severely limit contact with their parents. For those parents I work with who have lost contact with their child face a whirlwind of loss, despair, and confusion. Many spend countless hours wondering what they have done to cause the breach in the relationship unable to contact their child for answers or a way to help repair the fracture between them. The stages of grief set in: shock, bargaining, sadness, anger, and rarely a sense of acceptance or closure. Most must manage living with an unanswered "why."

Although there is no control these clients have over their distant child's actions, feelings, or decisions, there are things parents with estranged children can do.

- Get help and support. Your feelings of grief and pain over the distance or loss of contact with your child are real. There are several online

support groups that offer additional resources for estranged parents. PEAK (Parents with Estranged Adult Kids), PEAC International, and Calling Home are just a few online forums. Often talking with others who are experiencing a similar situation can help people feel less alone, to blame, and understood. Many companies offer EAP programs that provide a series of free counseling sessions such as ours.

- Try not to cut off from your child in response. With the anguish and hurt that a child's decision to distance from a parent causes, it is easy to want to break ties with them in return. It's important to have a safe place to share what you are feeling, such as the resources stated above, and remaining open and receptive is key when and if your child does choose to resume contact.
- Don't feed the anger. Anger can often feel like a more powerful stance in response to such a hurtful and confusing event. However, underneath the anger is often hurt and sadness which can be more painful to feel but needs to be aired and

processed. Nonetheless anger targeted at your estranged child will only push them further away and leave you with an even more painful set of circumstances.

- Listen to your child without becoming defensive. If your child does reach out to you to share their experience of the relationship, try very hard to simply listen. This can be incredibly difficult to do given the hurt caused by the estrangement. It is likely you and your child will have very different recollections or experiences of your relationship. It is important to note that you do not have to agree with their recounting, however it is the first step in repairing the relationship and moving forward.
- This is a time to keep focused on yourself and not on your child. As tempting as it may be to focus on your child, this is a time to better understand yourself, your needs, and self-care, rather than on trying to 'fix' your child, explaining to them why they are wrong, or getting lost in self-blame and shame.

Parenting is hard! None of us are perfect parents. We are also human and are fallible. As children move into adulthood, they may have an increased capacity and frame of reference to understand that. Please know we are here for you at the EAP and would be honored to help support you if you are experiencing this very painful life event.

## EAP COUNSELORS

### SAINT ALPHONSUS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



**Jenny Lee Doty, MSW, LCSW**

Jenny Lee has been practicing as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for nearly a decade. She has worked in the mental health field for more than 20 years in a variety of treatment settings including but not limited to schools, day treatment centers, hospitals, and local community agencies. Jenny Lee has provided treatment to children, pre-teens and teens, and adults in individual, group, and family settings.

Jenny Lee is skilled in working with complex family units, emotional and behavioral issues, trauma, depression, mood disorders, anxiety, co-occurring diagnosis, psychotic disorders, self-harm, suicidal ideation, gangs, and those involved with foster care and Child Protective Services. Jenny Lee practices from a strength-based approach to treatment, while using a combination of interventions tailored to meet each individual's needs.



**Melissa Young, MSW, LCSW**

Melissa has been a Mental Health Professional for 30+ years having the opportunity to serve in a variety of mental health settings, with diverse client populations, working in various roles. As a Clinical Social Worker she has had the opportunity to work with survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence; as an Outpatient Psychotherapist within a Community Mental Health Center; a Peace Corps Volunteer in Asuncion, Paraguay; Hospice Social Worker; and currently working as a Counselor at the Saint Alphonsus Employee Assistance Program and Safe Connections LLC. She employs an eclectic approach to her work with clients, believing that a trusting and supportive relationship is key to any therapeutic success. In addition to her professional life, she is a mother of three sons and is a proud dog, cat, chicken and horse owner.

#### Saint Alphonsus Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

##### Regular Appointment Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday  
(special appointment hours by request)

**Phone: (208) 367-3300**

##### Locations:

6140 W. Emerald St., Boise, ID 83704  
3025 W. Cherry Ln, Meridian, ID 83642

##### Counselors:

Jared Belsher, MA, LCPC, NCC  
Jenny Lee Doty, MSW, LCSW  
Melissa Young, MSW, LCSW

**Website:** [saintalphonsus.org/EAP](http://saintalphonsus.org/EAP)

**Email:** [EAP@saintalphonsus.org](mailto:EAP@saintalphonsus.org)



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