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When Did 'Sorry' Become a Weakness?



The latest ad campaign for Pantene haircare products asks the question, “Why are women always apologizing?” The ad shows women doing in everyday activities and saying “sorry” for interrupting, being in the way, or not understanding.

The question is, why are we in such a rush to apologize? Especially when we haven’t done anything worth saying sorry for?

When did the word ‘sorry’ become a common phrase for women to say before an explanation? In a 2010 study by *Scientific American*, it was concluded that women more frequently apologize than men do. This ad campaign and the research behind it just further perpetuate the negative stereotypes that affect us every day.

In a recent CNN article, Gloria Feldt, the founder of Take the Lead, believes overusing the word ‘sorry’ is based on power. Since men will always have more power traditionally, it becomes an accustomed idea for women to apologize if something isn’t up to proper standards that men hold.

When I was growing up, I remember learning that “I’m Sorry” is something you say when you do something that causes another person hurt. Last time I checked, daily activities in no way triggers harm. When did the word ‘sorry’ become a sign of weakness?

Why are we so willing to diminish ourselves to feel accepted? When did it become okay to say ‘sorry’ for anything and everything? Because it’s not. We’ve fought so hard for gender equality, why should one word hold us back?

There are so many labels against women now, made famous by the Ban Bossy campaign Beyoncé (and other famous women) has backed. All these negative stereotypes show the world, including young girls, how weak and quiet girls are *supposed* to be. But, why do we have to listen to them? What gives those select few perpetrators (that use such words) the power to dictate how we run our lives?

We don't need to accept those terms, those phrases. We can create our own. Such as: CONFIDENT, POWERFUL, STRONG. Our words, our life. And our words can transform a generation, and then, the world.

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