

The Repair *Script.*

Four lines to say after you've snapped. Because rupture is normal, and repair is the skill nobody taught you.

Every parent snaps. The evidence on this is clear, and it isn't the thing that shapes a child. What shapes them is **what happens next** — whether you disappear, or whether you come back. You don't need the perfect moment. A minute on the edge of the bed is enough.

The four lines

1 “I was sharp with you earlier.”

Start with ownership. Not explanation. Full stop — resist adding “but”.

2 “That wasn't about you. You didn't do anything wrong.”

Kids fill in the blanks, and they fill them in against themselves. Fill them in for them.

3 “I was tired and I brought too much of the day home.”

True, simple, at their level. No oversharing. They don't need to carry your day.

4 “I'm sorry. You didn't deserve that.”

Close short and warm. More words often undo the repair. Then go and read the story.

You're not teaching them that you're a bad dad. **You're teaching them that men repair.** That's a rarer gift than you think.

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

- × Don't grovel. A long apology asks them to comfort you.
- × Don't explain at length. Ownership, not a defence case.
- × Don't wait for the right moment. It won't come. Tonight is fine.
- × Don't promise it will never happen again. It might. Repair is the promise.

Not therapy. Practical, educational material built on clinical frameworks — not clinical or therapeutic care.

If you're going through something that needs more than a page right now, please speak to your GP or call Samaritans on 116 123 (free, 24/7).