How to Respond after a Misstep

You said something you realize offended someone or made others uncomfortable. Now what?

This is meant to offer some guidance but by no means is an exhaustive approach. The two most important things to keep in mind are to:
1) Do something that feels authentic.
2) Understand that while you may have had a misstep, it doesn't make you a bad person.

Take a breath: Being called out or realizing you offended someone feels bad. A breath gives you a reset to prevent emotions from driving your response.

Don't make it about you: The focus needs to be on the other party and the impact on them rather than on what you intended.

Listen: Try to be genuinely curious and approach the conversation with a growth mindset. The person took a risk, make sure they feel heard.

Sincerely apologize but don't overdo it: There may need to be a break before this step to reflect. This needs to be authentic.

Examples of things to say:

If you realize it before anyone says anything…	"Did that statement I just made...
	    Sound weird to anyone else?"
	    Land uncomfortably for anyone else?"
	    Unintentionally offend anyone?"

OR

If someone gives you feedback directly...	Appreciate: "Thank you for telling me this." Ownership: "I said (or did) x." Remorse: "I'm genuinely sorry I said (or did) that." OR "Thank you for telling me x. Can I take some time to process and get back to you?"

Examples of things to AVOID:

"I'm sorry you feel that way." "I didn't mean it that way."	"This is being blown out of proportion." Don't try to explain what you meant.