Should I be specific?

According to Maimonides, the commandment of Teshuba is fulfilled when we recite the Viduy. Viduy means **‘confession,’** and it consists on **the articulation of our transgressions, admitting our responsibility and feeling regret for the wrong things we have done.**
The Viduy/confession is done **privately**. **We do not disclose our sins** in front of other people or a rabbi, but right **in front of God**. Whispering the confession to ourselves.
There is a discussion of the Talmud if at the recitation of the Viduy **one has to specify** his wrongdoings (Rabbi Yehuda ben Baba) or one can just state **in general terms** that he has acted wrongly (Rabbi Akiba).
According to the Shulchan Arukh, **there is no need to mention every specific sin** that one has committed during the last year. This leniency aims at not discouraging a person who wants to repent, but **does not find himself capable** (or courageous enough) of recalling **the specifics of his bad behavior**.
Maimonides, however, rules like the first opinion and **indicates that one has to mention in his private confession, everything wrong he has done**.
To follow Maimonides opinion, one will need **to apply himself to a deep introspection**, exercising greatly his **memory**, struggling against **his own denial**, **reviewing** last year’s actions, and perhaps, writing a list of all misdeeds he can remember.
Additionally, the text of the Viduy that we have in the Machzorim –the one we say for Selichot

for example– should be seen as a **reminder of the subjects one has to review, repent for, and hopefully correct**.
As we have said before, all **this spiritual/ethical activity** cannot be done overnight. **We dedicate to it forty days**, from the beginning of Elul until Yom Kippur: the day we devote ourselves **entirely and exclusively to Teshuba/Viduy**.

Shabbat Shalom!
Candle Lighting in NYC: 7:08 PM

Shabbat ends in NYC: 8:15 PM

Click here to read
"Confession and Redemption"
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