

Replacing the “Should”s

Version 1: The “Should” Formula

“[So and so] _____ **SHOULD**
[do such and such] _____.”

Version 2: 3-Part “Should”–Replacement Formula

1 “**IT WOULD BE NICE IF** [so and so] _____
[did such and such] _____.”

2 “**BUT THE REALITY IS...** _____.”

3 “**THEREFORE, MY MOST EFFECTIVE RESPONSE COULD BE...**
_____.”

Examples:

“I **shouldn’t** have made so many mistakes playing that piano piece at the concert.” >>

- “**It would be nice if** I hadn’t made mistakes playing my piece.
- “**But the reality is,** I made a few mistakes, and know I can do better.
- “**Therefore , my most effective response could be** to keep practicing the tough spots till I’m more secure.”

“My husband **should** have remembered our anniversary.” >>

- “**It would be nice if** my husband had remembered our anniversary.
- “**But the reality is,** he was hit by a major deadline at work that distracted him.
- “**Therefore , my most effective response could be** to take the lead in celebrating our relationship this year.”

“My parents **shouldn’t** have gotten a divorce.” >>

- “**It would be nice if** my parents hadn’t gotten a divorce.
- “**But the reality is,** that is their decision, not mine, and I don’t know all the factors involved.
- “**Therefore , my most effective response could be** to learn from their experience to strengthen my own marriage; and to nurture and appreciate my individual relationships with each of them as my parents.”