

Discovering and Revising Your *Should* Statements

The following worksheet helps you recognize the statements that define how you feel you *should* behave and consider each one's positives and negatives.

Begin by identifying the beliefs and values you hold that shape how you feel you *should* behave (McKay & Fanning, 2016). Ask yourself (past or present) in your life:

- Where do I have feelings of guilt?
- Where do I feel conflicted?
- Where do I have a sense of obligation?
- Where do I avoid things?

When you reflect on the above four questions, you will identify areas of your life (work, childcare, etc.) where you sense conflict, guilt, etc., and the *shoulds*.

For example,

- Health – *I should lose another ten pounds*
- Work – *I should be more successful*

It is essential to ask yourself whether each one is positive or negative to identify its effect on your degree of self-esteem.

Complete the following table for each one:

For example:

Statement: I should lose another ten pounds	
Positives	Negatives
I will:	I will:
- fit into more of my older clothes	- have to go on a diet
- feel more attractive	- I am already my ideal weight
- like how I look	- be constantly worrying about gaining weight

If the *should* is undermining your self-esteem, and the negatives outweigh the positives, it needs to be cut from your internal self-talk (McKay & Fanning, 2016).

Statement:	
Positives	Negatives
I will: -	I will: -
-	-
-	-

Statement:	
Positives	Negatives
I will: -	I will: -
-	-
-	-

References

- McKay, M., & Fanning, P. (2016). *Self-esteem*. CA: New Harbinger.

Dr. Jeremy Sutton