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.”

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