

# Balancing Expectations and Needs

A Guide to Reducing Pressure and Preventing Exhaustion



## Why This Matters

“Should” thoughts often arise from pressure, expectations, or guilt. They can sound like:

- “I should be doing more.”
- “I should never rest.”
- “I should keep going no matter what.”

Over time, this mindset can lead to exhaustion, overwhelm, and burnout. Learning to shift from “should” to “need” helps you care for yourself better.

## Notice Your “Shoulds”

Write down the thoughts or pressures you’re feeling:

## Where Are These Coming From?

These “shoulds” are influenced by:

- Work / school expectations
- Social pressure
- Family expectations
- Perfectionism
- Fear of falling behind
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## How Do These “Shoulds” Affect You?

- Exhausted
- Overwhelmed
- Anxious
- Guilty when resting
- Constantly “on”

Describe your experience:

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## *Separate “Should” vs “Need”*

<b>My “Shoulds” (Pressure)</b>	<b>My Actual Needs (Reality)</b>

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## *Reality Check*

Ask yourself:

- Is this a real requirement or self-imposed pressure?
  - What would happen if I didn't meet this “should”?
  - What do I actually need right now?
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# Reframe the Thought

Turn your “should” into a need-based statement:

**Instead of:**

“I should keep working even though I’m exhausted.”

**Try:**

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## Support Your Needs

What is one way you can honor your needs today?

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## Balance Check

Am I prioritizing:

- Productivity over well-being
- Expectations over needs
- Pressure over balance

What needs to shift?

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## Reflection

- What did you notice about your “should” patterns?

- How would life feel if you followed your needs more?

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You don't have to live by constant pressure. Your needs are valid—even if they slow you down.

***“Shift from pressure to care.”***

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