The One Rule Approach

This is an exercise to use when you hear in your thoughts, or say out loud, significant demand and expectancy language (ie. I *shouldn’t* have to deal with this!). When this language presents in your thoughts or statements, try to catch it as (step #1), and then proceed with the alternatives below (steps #2-4).

1. Identify the demand language
   1. Should, could, would, have to, need to, supposed to, will, never, can’t
   2. Labels
2. Switch the demand to a preference
   1. I would prefer…
   2. It would be great if…
   3. Ideally, it would be the case that…
3. Add a but…
   1. I would have preferred to\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but….
4. Support your choices/behaviors
   1. But….since it didn’t go that way, I can \_\_\_\_\_(CREATE A LIST)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Example:

Switch to preference:

I *shouldn’t* have to deal with this! 🡪 *Ideally,* I am not dealing with this situation.

Add a “but”:

Ideally*,* I am not dealing with this situation, *but* since this is what is here in front of me…

Support your choice with a behavioral list:

Ideally, I am not dealing with this situation, but since this is what is here in front of me *I can: 1) Ignore it, 2) Get help, 3) Scream and yell, 4) Make sure I take a break after, 5) Make a plan, 6) Take it in steps or small pieces, 7) Leave or avoid it, and accept the consequences*