

'SHOULD' STATEMENTS

When a preference gets rewritten as a rule you are failing.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

“Should” sounds like motivation. It behaves like a judge.

The task stays the same. Only the shame changes.

“I should be further along.” Further along than whom, by when, agreed with whom?

THE CLINICAL NAME

“Should” statements

A rule you never agreed to, enforced by a part of you with no authority to enforce it. The word imports an invisible standard and an invisible deadline, so falling short of a preference feels like breaking a law. Motivation drops; self-criticism rises; the work does not get done faster.



Thought → Feeling → Behaviour

THE BEHAVIOUR PROVES THE THOUGHT RIGHT

HOW IT RUNS Sunday night, comparing your career to a friend's

THE VERDICT

THE NEXT STEP

THOUGHT

“I should own a home and run a team by now.”

“I would like more security. Here is this quarter's step.”

FEELING

Flat, heavy, vaguely ashamed of the whole week.

Sober, but pointed at something specific.

BEHAVIOUR

Scroll. Compare. Plan a total life overhaul that never starts.

Write one action for Monday and close the laptop.

THREE TOOLS

- 1 Swap the verb.** “I should” becomes “I would like to”. Say it aloud. The pressure drops.
- 2 Name the author.** Who set this rule? If nobody did, it is not a rule.
- 3 Shrink the deadline.** Not “by now”. By Friday, one step, written down.

A MUSLIM LENS

“I should be praying like so-and-so, reading like so-and-so” — and the weight of it stops you praying at all.

Istiḳāmah over intensity — The beloved deeds are the small and constant ones, not the heroic ones.

In sujūd — Ask for consistency, not for a transformation by Ramaḍān.

Then one act — Two rak'ah you will actually keep. Add later, from strength.

A standard you cannot sustain is not piety. It is a trap with a religious accent.

THIS WEEK Catch one “should”. Rewrite it as “I'd like to” and add a date you actually believe.

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