

Freeing Myself of Self-Demands

1. List below statements you make to yourself using the words “should,” “must,” “ought to,” “got to,” “have to,” “can’t,” etc. (e.g. “I can’t keep gaining weight like this.” “I ought to attend the meeting.” “I’ve got to do better”.)

2. Pick one statement and repeat it to yourself. What need(s) is this voice wanting to meet by making this demand?

3. Now imagine someone else making this demand of you. Go inside and notice the feelings and physical sensations that come up for you. Write them down:

4. Ask yourself, “This part of me that is resisting the demand, what need(s) does it value? What need(s) is it wanting to protect?”

HANDOUT 9.4 — Freeing Myself of Self-Demands

5. Look at the need-words you listed under #2 and #4, above. Circle those which carry the most energy or meaning for you right now.

6. Hold the needs which you circled and cherish them for a few moments. Notice how much you appreciate these needs. Over the course of the next 24 hours, return periodically to acknowledging and valuing these needs while allowing possible strategies to manifest themselves. Record strategies here.

7. Pick one strategy and decide whether you wish to actively commit to following through on it. If so, fill in the statement, "To meet my need for _____ I choose to _____."
