

Regrets? I have a few...

1. Complete the statements about you.

- I regret not... earlier.
- The decision I regret the most is... .
- In the future I might regret... if I don't change anything about... .
- I used to regret... but now I've come to terms with it.

2. Discuss the questions.

- What things do people tend to regret?
- What is worse, regretting doing something or not doing something? Why?
- How do you think regrets change with age?



3. Decide whether the regrets are more common among kids and teens or adults. Explain your choices.

[Make sure students are using the *-ing* form of the verb in their answers, e.g. 'I think kids and teens regret getting into a fight with their best friend.']

- get into a fight with their best friend
- not take more advantage of their college experience
- tease their sister
- not follow their dreams earlier in life
- get angry at their family
- not stay single longer
- not say sorry more often
- not spend time with their oldest brother

4. Watch two parts of a [video](https://youtu.be/N8i6rUL4UIY) [https://youtu.be/N8i6rUL4UIY] (to 01:00 and from 01:47 to 02:38) and check your answers.

[Note: In the video (at 01:57), one of the speakers says 'pissing away my twenties'.]

Kids/teens regret:

- teasing their sister [00:18]
- getting angry at their family [00:21]

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h) not spending time with their oldest brother [00:33]

a) getting into a fight with their best friend [00:42]

Adults regret:

b) not taking more advantage of their college experience [01:47]

g) not saying sorry more often [02:08]

d) not following their dreams earlier in life [02:27]

f) not staying single longer [02:36]

5. Discuss to what extent you agree with the statements (0 – disagree, 1 – partly agree, 2 – agree, 3 – absolutely agree). Give reasons for your opinions.

- The older you get, the fewer things you tend to regret.
- If you listen to the regrets older people have, you are likely to avoid their mistakes.
- Regretting too many things is meaningless as we can't change the past.
- If you focus on your regrets, you might overlook new opportunities.
- For some people, their regrets are the only thing they have as it's too late for them to change anything.
- People who say they don't regret anything are only fooling themselves.

6. Read the sentences and answer the questions below.

a) I regret not following my dreams earlier in life.

b) I should have followed my dreams earlier in life.

c) I wish I had followed my dreams earlier in life.

d) If only I had followed my dreams earlier in life.

1) Do the sentences have the same or different meaning? **The same.**

2) Are these regrets about something in the present or in the past? **They are about something in the past.**

3) What verb form is used after 'should'? **'have' + past participle**

4) What tense is used after 'I wish' and 'If only'? **Past Perfect**

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7. Paraphrase the following regrets using the word in brackets. Make any other changes where necessary.

a) I regret making this decision without talking to anyone. If I had, everything would have turned out much better. (should)

I shouldn't have made this decision without talking to anyone.

b) I shouldn't have taken a taxi to work. With all these traffic jams, I'm going to be late. (wish)

I wish I hadn't taken a taxi to work.

c) I regret lying to them in the first place. Now I'm lost and have no idea what to do next. (only)

If only I hadn't lied to them in the first place.

d) I should have spent more time preparing for this exam. Then, I would have got a better result. (wish)

I wish I had spent more time preparing for this exam.

e) I regret moving to the countryside. There's so little for me to do apart from my work and I feel bored most of the time. (should)

I shouldn't have moved to the countryside.

f) If only I had never said that to her. She'll never forgive me! (regret)

I regret saying that to her.

8. Complete the responses to the regrets using the words in the box.

feel

hard

look

prone

pull

take

1) Don't be so **hard** on yourself. You did your best.

2) Why don't you try and **pull** yourself together? It's going to be OK. We'll be on time.

3) If I were you, I wouldn't **take** it so seriously. You can always apologize for what you said.

4) I wish you could **look** on the bright side. This place is so beautiful! Besides, you can visit the city whenever you want.

5) I **feel** you on this one. But it doesn't mean there's no way out.

6) All of us are **prone** to mistakes. Learn from this lesson and reach out for someone next time.

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9. Match the regrets in ex. 7 with the possible responses in ex. 8.

Correct answers: a – 6; b – 2; c – 5; d – 1; e – 4; f – 3.

10. Decide what the people are saying. Use the structures for expressing regrets from ex. 6 and phrases for responding to regrets in the box.

be hard on yourself

be prone to mistakes

I feel you

look on the bright side

pull yourself together

take something seriously



Possible answers:

1. Girl in a white top: She's never going to forgive me. If only I hadn't been so rude.
Girl in a red top: Don't be too hard on yourself. I'm sure we can figure out how to patch things up.
2. Student 1: Have you seen my results? My parents are going to kill me. I should have worked harder for the exams.
Student 2: I feel you. I regret not taking this seriously as well.
3. Patient: I wish I had started therapy earlier.
Doctor: You're here now and that's the most important thing. I'm happy you've decided to take your mental health more seriously.
4. Man: You're taking this too seriously. Everyone's prone to mistakes.
Woman: I shouldn't have told you anything in the first place! Just leave me alone now.
5. Woman: I wish we'd picked a different film. This one was so sad!
Man: Hey, just pull yourself together. Next time we're going to watch a comedy.
6. Son: It's a disaster! This topic is too hard. I should have picked something less challenging for my research.
Father: Here, have a cup of tea and try to look on the bright side. You're not alone and you have what it takes to complete your research on time.