

## IDENTIFYING VALUES

Our values reflect what we find meaningful in life. They are what you care about, deep down, and what you consider to be important. Everybody's values are different, and they can change over time. They reflect how we want to engage with the world, with the people around us, and with ourselves.

Values are different from goals as goals can be achieved whereas values are more like directions that we want to head in. For example, we might have the value of being a good Mum or Dad and this may require a lifetime's effort. The specific achievable goal would be getting our children to school on time. We may also value our physical health and if this is the case a goal to achieve this may be exercising each day for half an hour.



**Understanding your personal values helps you live an authentic, happy life!**

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| <p><b>THE DOMAINS IN THIS GRID ARE SOME COMMON EXAMPLES OF VALUES. THERE MIGHT BE VALUES YOU THINK ARE IMPORTANT, AND OTHERS THAT DON'T MATTER SO MUCH TO YOU. THERE ARE NO 'RIGHT' ANSWERS.</b></p> |  | <p>Health /<br/>Physical wellbeing</p>                       |
| <p>Family</p>  | <p>Parenting</p>                                     | <p>Career /<br/>Employment</p>                               |
| <p>Marriage /<br/>Couple /<br/>Intimacy</p>  | <p>Friendships /<br/>Social life</p>                 | <p>Spirituality</p>  |
| <p>Recreation /<br/>Fun /<br/>Leisure</p>  | <p>Citizenship /<br/>Environment /<br/>Community</p> | <p>Education /<br/>Personal growth<br/>&amp; development</p> |

**LET'S LOOK AT HOW YOU CAN IDENTIFY YOUR VALUES . . .**

**Step 1: Identify the times when you were happiest.**

Find examples from both your career and personal life. This will ensure some balance in your answers.

What were you doing?

Were you with other people? Who?

What other factors contributed to your happiness?

**Step 2: Identify the times when you were most proud.**

Use examples from your career and personal life.

Why were you proud?

Did other people share your pride? Who?

What other factors contributed to your feelings of pride?

**Step 3: Identify the times when you were most fulfilled and satisfied.**

Again, use both work and personal examples.

What need or desire was fulfilled?

How and why did the experience give your life meaning?

What other factors contributed to your feelings of fulfilment?

**Step 4: Determine your top values, based on your experiences of happiness, pride, and fulfilment.**

Why is each experience profoundly important and memorable?

You can use the list at the end of this document to see examples of common personal values to help you get started – and aim for about 10 top values. (As you work through, you may find that some of these naturally combine. For instance, if you value community, and generosity, you might say that service to others is one of your top values.)

**Step 5: Prioritise your top values.**

This step is probably the most difficult because you'll have to look deep inside yourself. It's also the most important step, because, when deciding, you'll have to choose between solutions that may satisfy different values. This is when you must know which value is more important to you.

Write down your top values, not in any particular order.

Look at the first two values and ask yourself, "If I could satisfy only one of these, which would I choose?" It might help to visualise a situation in which you would have to make that choice. For example, if you compare the values of service and stability, imagine that you must decide whether to sell your house and move to another country to do valuable foreign aid work, or keep your house and volunteer to do charity work closer to home.

Keep working through the list, by comparing each value with each other value, until your list is in the correct order.

**Step 6: Reaffirm your values.**

Check your top-priority values, and make sure that they fit with your life and your vision for yourself.

Do these values make you feel good about yourself?

Are you proud of your top three values?

Would you be comfortable and proud to tell your values to people you respect and admire?

Do these values represent things you would support, even if your choice isn't popular, and it puts you in the minority?

When you consider your values in decision making, you can be sure to keep your sense of integrity and what you know is right, and approach decisions with confidence and clarity. You'll also know that what you're doing is best for your current and future happiness and satisfaction.

Making value-based choices may not always be easy. However, making a choice that you know is right is a lot less difficult in the long run.

Accomplishment  
Accuracy  
Achievement  
Adventurousness  
Altruism  
Ambition  
Assertiveness  
Balance  
Being the best  
Belonging  
Boldness  
Calmness  
Carefulness  
Challenge  
Cheerfulness  
Clear-mindedness  
Commitment  
Community  
Compassion  
Competitiveness  
Consistency  
Contentment  
Continuous Improvement  
Contribution  
Control  
Cooperation  
Correctness  
Courtesy  
Creativity  
Curiosity  
Decisiveness  
Democraticness  
Dependability  
Determination  
Devoutness  
Diligence  
Discipline  
Discretion  
Diversity  
Dynamism  
Economy  
Effectiveness  
Efficiency  
Elegance  
Empathy  
Enjoyment  
Enthusiasm  
Equality

Excellence  
Excitement  
Expertise  
Exploration  
Expressiveness  
Fairness  
Faith  
Family-orientedness  
Fidelity  
Fitness  
Fluency  
Focus  
Freedom  
Fun  
Generosity  
Goodness  
Grace  
Growth  
Happiness  
Hard Work  
Health  
Helping Society  
Holiness  
Honesty  
Honor  
Humility  
Independence  
Ingenuity  
Inner Harmony  
Inquisitiveness  
Insightfulness  
Intelligence  
Intellectual Status  
Intuition  
Joy  
Justice  
Leadership  
Legacy  
Love  
Loyalty  
Making a difference  
Mastery  
Merit  
Obedience  
Openness  
Order  
Originality  
Patriotism

Perfection  
Piety  
Positivity  
Practicality  
Preparedness  
Professionalism  
Prudence  
Quality-orientation  
Reliability  
Resourcefulness  
Restraint  
Results-oriented  
Rigor  
Security  
Self-actualization  
Self-control  
Selflessness  
Self-reliance  
Sensitivity  
Serenity  
Service  
Shrewdness  
Simplicity  
Soundness  
Speed  
Spontaneity  
Stability  
Strategic  
Strength  
Structure  
Success  
Support  
Teamwork  
Temperance  
Thankfulness  
Thoroughness  
Thoughtfulness  
Timeliness  
Tolerance  
Traditionalism  
Trustworthiness  
Truth-seeking  
Understanding  
Uniqueness  
Unity  
Usefulness  
Vision  
Vitality