



Identifying Your Values

Do you know what your core values are? Maybe you haven't really thought about it before, but it is worth taking the time to think about what we value. Values are the things you believe are the most important to you in the way you live, work, play and spend your time. They are your 'heart's deepest desires for how you want to behave as a human being'.¹

While you may not have thought consciously about it before, your values will emerge in everyday life, when you make hard choices, when you pursue your interests and when life's experiences bring you pleasure, pain or meaning. Values can be different for different people. A good way to recognise your values is to notice when you feel joy, or fulfilment or pleasure and think about what generated those feelings.

If we are connected to and act in alignment with our values it is likely that our lives will feel more meaningful, rich and fulfilled. It is also the case that acting in alignment with our values may allow us to endure more and feel more resilient in the face of life's challenges.

This exercise sheet is one way to help identify and connect to your values. Attached to this sheet are a series of value cards. Go through the cards, read each one, take a second to think and then place each card on one of squares below. As part of this task, you are not allowed more than 10 cards in the 'very important to me' pile.

Once you have gone through all the cards, if you feel there are some words/values that are missing, feel free to create your own and add them.

Going from 10 to 4

Your next task is to look through the 'very important to me' pile and cull that down to your top four. This does not mean that the remaining six are not still very important. The intent is to identify your top four. To get to four, ask yourself these questions:

1. What value really underpins who I am as a person?
2. What value is fundamental to me living my best life?
3. What value surfaces for me when I have to make the really hard decisions? Or What value do I rely on to get me through the tough times

The next step will be to start looking at how you can live these values in your day-to-day life. For that you can try the exercise worksheet called 'Operationalising Your Values'.

My top four values are:

Very Important To Me

Quite Important To Me

Not So Important To Me

¹ Russ Harris (2008), The Happiness Trap: How to stop struggling and start living: A guide to ACT



Acceptance

To be open to and accepting of myself and others



Accuracy

To be accurate in my opinions and beliefs



Achievement

To have important accomplishments



Adventure

To have new and exciting experiences



Attractiveness

To be physically attractive



Assertiveness

To respectfully stand up for my rights and request what I want



Autonomy

To be self-determined and independent



Authority

To be in charge of and responsible for others



Authenticity

To be authentic, genuine, real: to be true to myself



Beauty

To appreciate beauty around me



Caring

To be caring towards myself, others, the environment



Challenge

To take on difficult tasks and problems



Change

To have a life full of change and variety



Comfort

To have a pleasant and comfortable life



Compassion

To act with kindness towards those who are suffering



Connection

To engage fully in whatever I am doing, and be fully present with others



Contribution

To contribute, help, assist, or make a positive difference to myself, or others or the world



Conformity

To be respectful and obedient of rules and obligations



Courage

To be courageous or brave, to persist in the face of fear, threat or adversity



Creativity

To be creative or innovative



Curiosity

To be curious, open-minded and interested: to explore and discover



Cooperation

To be cooperative and collaborative with others



Courtesy

To be considerate and polite towards others



Dependability

To be reliable and trustworthy



Duty

To carry out my duties and obligations



Ecology

To live in harmony with the environment



Excitement

To have a life full of thrills and stimulation



Encouragement

To encourage people to achieve



Equality

To treat others as equals, to help create a world where people are treated equally



Faithfulness

To be loyal and true in relationships



Fairness

To be fair to myself and others



Fitness

To maintain or improve my fitness to look after my physical and mental health and wellbeing



Flexibility

To adjust and adapt readily to changing circumstances



Freedom

To live freely; to choose how I live and behave, or help others do likewise



Friendliness

To be friendly, companionable, or agreeable towards others



Forgiveness

To be forgiving towards myself or others



Fun

To be fun-loving; to seek, create and engage in fun-filled activities



Fame

To be known and recognised



Family

To be loving and caring to my family; to give my time and attention to those I love



Friendship

To be loving and caring to my friends; to give my time and attention my social group



Gratitude

To be grateful for and appreciative of the positive aspects of myself, others and life



Generosity

To be generous, sharing and giving, to myself or others



God's Will

To seek to understand and obey God's Will



Growth

To seek continual learning and development



Humility

To be humble or modest; to let my achievements speak for themselves



Honesty

To be honest, truthful and sincere with myself and others



Humour

To see and appreciate the humorous side of life



Health

To be physically healthy and well



Helpfulness

To be helpful to others



Hope

To be hopeful and optimistic



Industry

To be industrious, hard-working, dedicated



Independance

To be self-supportive, and choose my own way of doing things



Intimacy

To open up, reveal and share myself- emotionally or physically – in my close personal relationships



Justice

To uphold justice and fairness



Knowledge

To learn and contribute valuable knowledge



Kindness

To be kind, compassionate, considerate, nurturing or caring towards myself or others



Love

To act lovingly or affectionately towards myself or others



Leisure

To take time to relax and enjoy



Mindfulness

To be conscious of, open to and curious about my here and now experience



Mastery

To be competent in my everyday activities



Non-conformity

To question and challenge authority and norms



Nurturance

To take care of and nurture others



Order

To be orderly and organised



Open-Mindedness

To think things through, see things from other's points of view, and weigh evidence fairly



Patience

To wait calmly for what I want



Persistence

To continue resolutely, despite problems or difficulties



Pleasure

To create and give pleasure to myself or others



Power

To strongly influence or wield authority over others, e.g. taking charge, leading, organizing



Popularity

To be liked by many people



Purpose

To have meaning and purpose in my life



Reciprocity

To build relationships in which there is fair balance of giving and taking



Respect

To be respectful towards myself or others; to be polite, considerate and show positive regard



Responsibility

To be responsible and accountable for my actions



Romance

To be romantic; to display and express love or strong affection



Rationality

To be guided by reason and logic



Realism

To see and act realistically and with pragmatism



Risk

To take risks and chances



Safety

To secure, protect, or ensure safety of myself or others



Self-awareness

To be aware of my own thoughts, feelings and actions



Self-care

To look after my health and wellbeing, and get my needs met



Self-development

To keep growing, advancing or improving in knowledge, skills, character or life experience



Self-control

To act in accordance with my own ideals



Sensuality

To create, explore and enjoy experiences that stimulate the five senses



Sexuality

To explore or express my sexuality



Spirituality

To connect with things bigger than myself



Skilfulness

To continually practice and improve my skills, and apply myself fully when using them



Supportiveness

To be supportive, helpful, encouraging and available to myself or others



Simplicity

To live life simply with minimal needs



Solitude

To have time and space where I can be apart from others



Stability

To have a life that stays fairly consistent



Tolerance

To accept and respect those who differ from me



Tradition

To follow respected patterns of the past



Trust

To be trustworthy, to be loyal, faithful, sincere, and reliable



Virtue

To live a morally pure and excellent life



Wealth

To have plenty of money



World Peace

To promote peace in the world

My Value:

My Value:

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My Value

