



Values Exploration Guide

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Introduction

Most people have an idea of what values are. Most know they are important, but few know *which* values are *most* important to them and few use them as a positive and conscious guide to the way they live their lives.

Values are the foundation of our lives, the core of who we are. The deeply held principles that influence our choices, behaviours and emotions every day. They are also our motivators, the things that 'make us tick', the passion in our hearts and the reason why we do the things we do.

There are hundreds of values. There are some we all share. It is the combination of values that we hold that contributes to our uniqueness.

A person's core values are the things that are essential for them to have in their lives for them to be happy. They are not something they aspire to or something they feel they *should* value. They are *more than* their preferred way of doing things, they are **fundamental to the way they do things and have to be present in their lives for them to feel a sense of motivation, contentment and fulfilment.**

This Guide includes:

1. A set of **Questions** to explore and identify your Top 10 core values, then prioritise and measure them.
2. A list of 120 **Values** to assist you in finding the right words for you.

Support:

To talk about your values and for more information on how to use your values in everyday life to help you make better choices and decisions, for goal-setting, taking action, managing emotions and much more, please email lindsay@valuescoach.co.uk to arrange a free telephone consultation. Visit www.valuescoach.co.uk for details of talks, workshops and events.

1. Questions to ask yourself to explore and identify which values are most important to you:

At this stage, just note down everything that comes to mind, in each aspect.

Relationships

'What do you value in relationships with other people? Think of specific individuals and what you value about them?' 'What is important in this aspect of your life?'

Note: Take time to explore values in many different relationships in your life.

What else?

Keep asking, *'What else?'* after each question to explore deeper, until you are sure you have reached the base value and you are unable to come up with any more.

Work

'What do you value in your work? What does it give you? What do you get out of it?'

Note: This is particularly relevant if you want to focus on career values.

Fun and Leisure

'What does doing this hobby/activity give you? What is important about it to you?'

Note: This question can produce more unusual values and is worth exploring.

Health

'What does good health give you?' Note: Health in itself is not a value, this question takes you to a level deeper.

Money

'What does having more money give you?' Note: Money in itself is not a value, explore what money gives you.

Environment

'What is important about your environment to you?' Note: People's environment does have an effect on them, so this question may produce some interesting values.

Other aspects

If there are any other aspects of life that have not been covered e.g. spirituality or a particular interest or sport, then ask:
'Are there any other aspects of your life that you would like to focus on that may produce some other values?'

Children

If relevant, you might ask:

'What values do you feel are important to nurture in (your) children?'

Negative emotion

Another useful approach to take is to explore the causes of negative emotion by asking:

'What makes you angry/sad/frustrated?', then ask,

'What is the value that is missing in that situation that is the positive opposite of what you have experienced?'

(e.g. kindness might be the value missing when someone experiences unkindness, cruelty, lack of consideration, thoughtlessness, rudeness)

Note:

Sometimes when asked what is important to them, people say words like money, family and health, but these are not values. You need to take it to a deeper level and ask, 'What does money give you?' e.g. security, independence, freedom, choice. Family is important to lots of people, but to identify your values think about what you get from each relationship with different family members e.g. love, respect, connection, friendship, kindness, support.

Selecting your Top 10 core values:

Having asked yourself all the above-mentioned questions, you will now have a long list of all the values that are important to you.

The next step is to select the Top 10 core values.

Look down the list you have identified and tick the ones that absolutely have to be in your Top 10. Then it may be necessary to work through a selection process. If there are several values that are quite similar e.g. honesty, openness, integrity, then ask: *'Which of those values resonates most with you?' 'Which is the stronger word?'* and go with that one.

Keep reducing the list down until you have finally chosen your Top 10. Looking at this list, you will feel that this really represents who you are and what matters to you. If it doesn't, go back to the longer list and think again.

Prioritising your Top 10 Core Values

A simple way to prioritise your Top 10 values is to write each value on a separate small 'post-it' note, then arrange them vertically down a large sheet of paper, adjusting the order of priority, so the most important value is at the top and the least at the bottom of the page.

Measuring your Top 10 Core Values

In order to measure how closely you are living your life in line with your values, ask the following question in respect of each value and note down the score:

'On a scale of 0-10 how closely are you living your life in line with this value, with 0 being not at all and 10 being completely?'

Having noted the scores against each value, then ask:

'Which values would you like to focus on to increase your scores and what number would you like to increase each to?'

Note down these target scores to the right of the initial score alongside the relevant value. This then gives a goal and a measure of success to work towards.

Keep your personal Top 10 core values list with you at all times to keep focused on living them every day. Enjoy!

Values

stability	security	inner strength	joy	balance	moderation
happiness	fun/sense of humour	pleasure	relaxation	calmness	inner peace
achievement	success	recognition	appreciation	ambition	being valued
passion	contentment	harmony	beauty	comfort	simplicity
honesty	truth	trust	openness	empathy	expression
equality	fairness	justice	courtesy	dignity	integrity
love	friendship	connection	kindness	companionship	camaraderie
freedom	choice	variety	abundance	adventure	excitement
faith	forgiving	spirituality	tolerance	humility	grace
respect	consideration	loyalty	faithfulness	politeness	serenity
wisdom	intelligence	knowledge	insight	acceptance	honour
learning	development	growth	challenge	competition	excellence
sense of duty	tradition	order	sense of control	obedience	realism
authenticity	rationality	sense of authority	protection	compassion	patience
wellbeing	vitality	positivity	contribution	sense of belonging	cooperation
community	cleanliness	decency	professionalism	competence	virtue
support	helpfulness	caring	service	generosity	nurturance
gratitude	determination	hardworking	sense of purpose	making a difference	capability
innovation	creativity	resourcefulness	commitment	accountability	solitude
independence	responsibility	reliability	dependability	courage	quality