



Values Guide for Individuals

What matters most to you as an individual?

Values are the things that are important to us as individuals, and as members of families, groups, organisations and communities.

World Values Day challenges us to think about our most important values and to act on them.

By putting our values into action each and every day we can change ourselves, each other and the world for the better.

This is the World Values Day call to action!

A powerful way to put values into action is through formal or informal volunteering; *'Values and Volunteering'* is our theme for this year.

World Values Day – Thursday, 15th October 2026

www.worldvaluesday.com

#WorldValuesDay

1. What are values?

Values are big ideas that are so important to us that they form the foundation of our lives. Values are immensely powerful! They motivate us, drive our behaviour, ignite passion in our hearts, and explain why we do the things we do and feel the way we feel.

Values are closely connected with our sense of self – they help make us who we are. They serve as a compass guiding everything we do - our choices and our actions. They show us the way. If we lose touch with that compass, we can take a wrong turn.

If our actions are in line with our values we will feel generally happier and fulfilled. If they are not aligned, we will be liable to stress and anxiety.

Values connect us to each other – they are the glue that binds our communities and societies together. They bring us together, and they help us shape a better future for us all.



2. Why are Values so important for us?

Values are central to our feelings of happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment. If we are awake to our values we can use them to grow, to balance our emotions, and to be spiritually and physically healthy.

Values help us to make better choices, develop healthy patterns of behaviour, and maintain meaningful personal relationships. They are the glue connecting us with others and our communities. Harnessing our



values strengthens our sense of knowing where we are going, and prompts us to take responsibility for our actions.

Our values shape our lives. When we live in alignment with them, we tend to be more purposeful and fulfilled. If we are not aligned, we get stressed and unhappy.

Research shows that even just thinking about our values keeps our neuroendocrine and psychological responses to stress at low levels and helps us to feel content.

3. Can values really change the world?

We human beings are wired to be social animals. We need to connect with others, and so we form communities. Interestingly, when we connect with positive values such as compassion and generosity the chemical response in our bodies spreads a feeling of wellbeing not only to us and those we are connecting with, but even to someone looking on. A positive ripple spreads out through all the communities that we interact with. The power of example is making those communities stronger, more united.

Similarly, when we don't live our values to the full in our lives, our own wellbeing suffers and there is a negative ripple effect on our friends and families, and on our groups, organisations and communities.

If our communities don't reflect our values, then the wider world won't reflect them either and its wellbeing will suffer too. It won't be a world we want to live in, where we can be fulfilled and happy.

So if we want to promote positive change in our own lives, our families' lives, the organisations we work for and the communities we live in, so ultimately changing the world itself, then we have to change the behaviours that currently create the problems in our lives and our wider world. And the only way to do that is for all of us to live our values to the full, connecting authentically and compassionately through our values with ourselves and others every day in everything we think, say or do.





4. I'm not sure what values are most important to me. How can I identify my top values?

Your values exist deep within your unconscious, but with some reflection, through conversation, or by using a tool, you will be able to find them.

Here is one way to explore your values and determine which are the most important ones for you.

First, reflect what it looks like and what it feels like when everything in your life is going well, and what it looks like when it sometimes doesn't go so well.

Then look down the table of values on the next page (print it out if you are looking at it in a digital version).

Tick the boxes opposite the 10 words in the table **that best describe your existing values, those that are most important to you and need to be present in your life for you to feel fulfilled. This is not about values you would like to have, or feel you should have. It is about the values that really resonate with you.**

Then reduce those 10 words to 5. This two-step process will help you to appreciate how some values are more essential to you than others. Put the 5 values in order of importance from 1 to 5, with 1 being the value that is most important to you.

acceptance	creativity	humility	quality
accountability	decency	independence	recognition
achievement	dependability	inner strength	reliability
adaptability	development	innovation	resourcefulness
appreciation	dignity	integrity	respect
authenticity	efficiency	kindness	responsibility
balance	empathy	knowledge	security
being valued	empowerment	listening	sense of purpose
belonging	environmental awareness	love	service
calmness	equality	loyalty	sharing
caring	excellence	making a difference	simplicity
challenge	fairness	obedience/duty	spirituality
cleanliness	family	openness/honesty	stability
collaboration	forgiveness	order/control	success
commitment	freedom	patience	support
community	friendship	peace	team/belonging
compassion	fun	perseverance	tolerance
competence	gratitude	positivity	trust
connection	growth	pride	truth
contribution	happiness	productivity	variety
cooperation	harmony	professionalism	wellbeing
courage	helpfulness	protection	wisdom

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If a value is important to you and it is not on the list, add it in one of the blank spaces in the table.

My most important values: 1.....
2.....
3.....
4.....
5.....



If you would like to dig a little further into the values you have chosen at this point, here is a further step you might take to deepen your sense of those values:

- Think about how each value feels to you and where/when/with whom you live that value. How does the idea represented by the value actually shape your behaviour and inform your decisions?
- Then write one or two lines of description for each chosen value: what does it mean to you or for you as you live your life. Now you have put some flesh on their bones, it is going to be much easier to put those values into practice.

5. Now let's put those values into action!

Values are for acting on! This year for World Values Day the focus is on **values and volunteering**. If we make a conscious effort to make our values an integral part of our lives wherever we are and whatever we are doing, we will enhance our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around us, and shape the future we most want to see for ourselves, our families and our communities, so helping to build a better world.

Start by identifying a value that really matters to you at this moment in your life. Think about what your chosen value means to you and whether you truly put that value into action in your everyday activities and interactions with others. Is there room for improvement? For most if not all of us, there usually is.

Think of the effect it might have on you and the people around if you really brought that value to life in everything you do today and every day. Think of how you might behave in all the different situations of a typical day, how it would make you feel, and what impact it might have on others. How it might help bring people together and help them feel more connected with each other.

Is there a way you could express that value through some positive action that involves your family, friends, people you work or learn with, or your



local community? Something that makes you and others feel better about yourselves and each other?

Here are some suggestions – many of them reflecting this year’s World Values Day theme of **Values and Volunteering**, by which we mean not just organised volunteering but any action done to help others without expecting any reward or recognition.

For example: maybe your chosen value is **kindness**. You could put the value into action by doing some unexpected act of kindness which involves someone you know or even someone you don’t know. It might be letting someone else take the last seat on the bus, or by offering your place in a queue to someone whose need is more urgent than yours, or by holding a door for someone struggling with bags or a buggy, or by buying someone a cup of tea, or by just smiling at someone in the street who looks tired or harassed.

Or perhaps you chose the value of **appreciation**. You could decide to smile and thank everyone who does something for you that day (and every day), including the person who serves you in a shop, or the person who smiles at *you*. You could write notes of gratitude to other members of your community by posting on their Facebook timelines or tweeting about people you admire or are grateful to among your family, friends, colleagues or in the community.

Or maybe your top value is **service, helpfulness, or making a difference**. You might decide to help your community by volunteering some of your time to a local organisation that helps people in need, or you could help out at a local hospital or care home, offer to be a reading volunteer at a local school, or go online to give your professional or IT expertise to charities and not-for-profits who are helping your community.

If you chose the value of **respect or responsibility**, you might express your respect for the natural environment in your area by joining with friends or colleagues in clearing up litter from a local park or river, or some other litter black spot, being careful how you dispose of the litter collected and trying where possible to send it for recycling.



If you chose **harmony, peace, sharing** or **collaboration** as your value, you might use those values to reconnect with family, friends or members of your community that you haven't seen for a while by sending them a loving message, or by having a quiet cup of tea or coffee with them with each of you sharing something that is particularly important to you at that moment.

Or perhaps you chose the value of **responsibility, caring** or **environmental awareness**. You could put this into action with your family, friends, colleagues or members of your local community by getting together with them to examine all the choices of food and drink that you all make from the point of view of sustainability and care for the environment. You might all decide to stop buying coffee or vegetables which are not produced by a company paying fair wages, or in a sustainable way. You could seek out the most responsible suppliers of your staple foods and household items and switch to them, or spread the message of what you are doing (and why you are doing it) throughout your community. Not preaching to them but just showing them a better way. This is how change begins...

Don't wait until World Values Day itself to start acting on your values and so help to bring people together. Start today, and keep on doing it all the way through to World Values Day and beyond.

6. Then please share what you have done - let's do this together!

Once you've put your values into action, we'd love to hear about it! Share your experience with the global World Values Day community.

What to include:

- The value(s) you chose
- The action(s) you took
- How it went
- Use words, photos, videos. Whatever works best!

How to share:

Post on your favourite social media using **#WorldValuesDay** or email us at info@worldvaluesday.com. You could use our 'I Value/We Value'



Templates to do this which you can download here:

<https://www.worldvaluesday.com/value-templates-download/>. Just fill in your chosen value and the action, and use it in a selfie.

Connect with us:

- LinkedIn: [World Values Day](#)
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- Threads: [@valuesday](#)
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/ValuesDay
- TikTok: [@worldvaluesday](#)
- BlueSky: [@valuesday.bsky.social](#)
- X (Twitter): [@ValuesDay](#)

And why not join us in other World Values Day values-related activities? Many organisations, community groups, schools and individuals from around the world will be taking part too.

Please have a look at the events and activities that will be taking place on and around World Values Day on Thursday 15th October 2026 at <https://www.worldvaluesday.com/events-and-activities/>

Let's show the world just how valuable living our values can be.

Get involved!

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