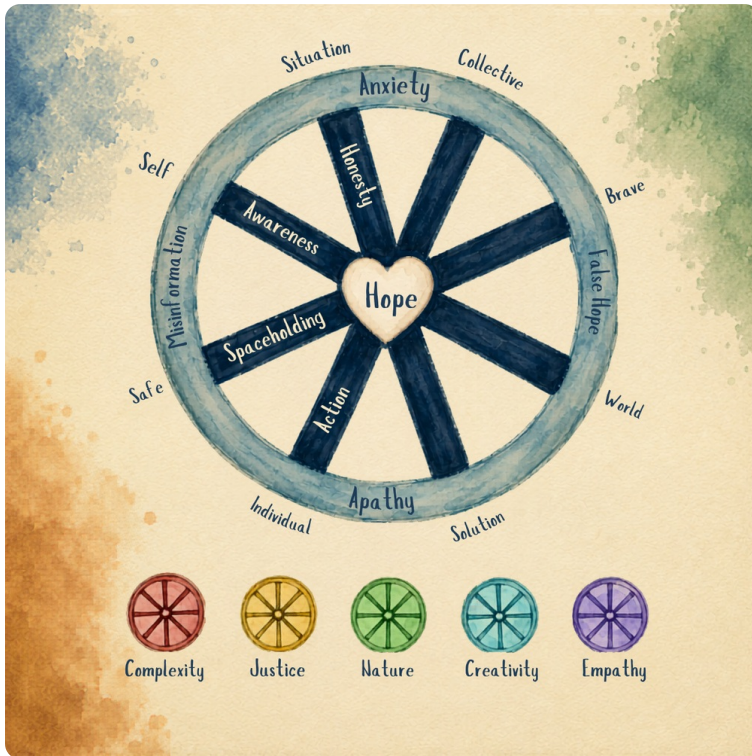


# Values and Volunteering: A Hope Wheel Guide for World Values Day



World Values Day is a precious opportunity to pause, name the values that matter to us most, and find ways to make them count in daily life. As World Values Day puts it: values are what matter most to us, they motivate and guide us, they are the passion in our hearts, the reason we do the things we do.

This guide uses the Hope Wheel, a research based framework from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University, to help us reflect on our own values, connect with the values of others, and see how our actions can make a real contribution to a kinder, fairer world.

This year's theme is Values and Volunteering. Volunteering is a powerful way to put our values into action by choosing to do something for others without being asked and without expecting anything in return. This can take many forms, from a simple, unprompted act of kindness to a more involved commitment with a community, charity or organisation. It also connects us to others, a concrete, hopeful step towards a kinder, fairer, healthier world.

*"There can be no greater gift than that of giving one's time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return."*

Nelson Mandela, *Notes to the Future: Words of Wisdom* (2012)

## What is the Hope Wheel?

The Hope Wheel has three parts. The spokes are the **handrails** to hold on to. The rim holds the **guardrails**, things to watch for as we go. The five **lenses** help us look again, more deeply. Start with one step and build from there, you don't need to be an expert, just bring curiosity, care and a value worth living.

# Trying out the Hope Wheel

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This is designed as an **individual or pair activity**. Work through the steps below on your own, or take it in turns with someone else, spending a few minutes on each.

## The Four Handrails

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### ● **Honesty**

Think of one value you hold strongly. Why does it matter to you? What makes it hard to uphold sometimes?

### ● **Awareness**

What other values matter to you? Do you think others hold similar ones, or different? What makes you think that?

### ● **Spaceholding**

Name the emotions that connect to this value, the positive ones and the harder ones. Who can you share these with?

### ● **Action**

Choose one small act you'll commit to today or this week, a message, a favour, a listening ear, a small act of volunteering. How could you build on it?

## The Four Guardrails

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Check for the four things worth watching as you go.

● **False hope.** Are you sugarcoating or being overoptimistic anywhere?

● **Anxiety.** Is worry getting in the way?

● **Apathy.** Might you be tempted to give up or lose interest?

● **Misinformation.** Do you have clear, reliable information? The values perception gap is itself a kind of misinformation, challenge it when you see it.

## The Five Lenses

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Look through one or two of these to see what changes.

● **Complexity:** what tensions sit between different values you and others hold?

● **Justice:** whose values shaped the norms around you, and whose were left out?

● **Nature:** do your values reach beyond people, to the living world too?

- **Creativity:** how could you express or act on your values in a creative way?
- **Empathy:** how might this look from someone else's viewpoint, human and more than human?

## Mind the Gap

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Global Action Plan, a leading educational charity for young people in the UK, has found through years of research that the majority of young people hold deeply compassionate values, kindness, fairness, care for others and the planet, but an equal majority don't believe their peers hold the same ones. They wrongly assume most people are self interested and don't share their care.

In one study of over 900 young people in the UK and Turkey, two out of three sixteen to eighteen year olds held this belief about their friends. This values perception gap really matters, because when we think our values aren't shared, we're less likely to act on them.

World Values Day can help narrow that gap. Every value named and shared, however small, helps others see they're not alone in caring. Recognising how many people share strong values of care, love and concern for others and the natural world is a powerful, purposeful way to change this common misconception.

## Sharing and Collaborating

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You've reflected on your values and committed to a step towards living them. Now share it. Post what you've committed to today using **#WorldValuesDay**, however small the action feels. It makes visible that the values you hold are part of a much wider story, a large network of people who share the same warmth, generosity and care.

The Hope Wheel highlights the importance of recognising situations and solutions, developing self and world awareness, acknowledging and honouring emotions, and moving from individual to collective action. Contributing to World Values Day by reflecting, discussing and sharing your hopeful, constructive contributions is a way of collaboratively working with values towards a fairer, fitter future for everyone.

## Dig Deeper

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The Hope Wheel was developed by William Finnegan (University of Oxford) and Cathy d'Abreu (Oxford Brookes University). Finnegan and d'Abreu (2024) The Hope Wheel. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15:1347392. More at [climatehope.uk/hopewheel](https://climatehope.uk/hopewheel).