



Identifying Core Values

Identifying our own values can be tricky. Looking at a long lists of values, we might see *many* traits that matter to us. Narrowing down your highest priority personal values (aim for a max of 5) can help you make decisions about how you spend your time and energy. If you're struggling to decide on 5, the questions below can help you do that.

1. Who do you admire?

To better understand what *you* value, look to real-life examples of people who you respect. Can you name some positive role models who inspire you now or in the past?

This might be people you know personally, but they don't have to be. Public figures, religious figures, characters in a book, etc. are all possible role models.

What it is about them that inspires you? Think of the qualities they possess or behaviors/actions that you would like to emulate.

2. What inspires you to take action?

We're often driven to act because of our core values. Can you think of a situation when you took action for someone or something?

What are some of the reasons you felt so strongly to take a stand?



3. When do you feel most like yourself/authentic?

When you're in situations that allow you to be authentic, it's likely that you are in alignment with your values. The opposite is also true. When you have to go against your beliefs to fit in or find success, it's a clue that you're not making choices that line up with your values.

When you feel most like yourself? Write down: who you're with, what activities are involved, What impact this has had on you (thoughts, emotions or outcomes)?:

4. When do you feel least like yourself/ inauthentic?

Write down: who you're with, what activities are involved, and what impact this has had on you (thoughts, emotions or outcomes)?:



Values-Driven Choices

We only have so many hours in a day. That means we all have choose how we spend our time; and sometimes that can even mean choosing between two good things!

Once we've identified our core values, we can prioritize the actions that line up with them. Below are a couple of core vales and ideas of what putting those in action might look like.

Core value example: **Freedom**

If you chose freedom, you value "the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint."

Here are some examples of actions you could take to align more fully with freedom as a core value and belief in your life:

- Express yourself freely and openly.
- Build a life in which you can create your own schedule, travel, try new things, etc.
- Nurture relationships with friends and family who give you the freedom to be yourself.
- Become your own boss.
- Include enough free time in your schedule.

Core value example: **Wellness**

If you identified wellness as a core value, the active pursuit of health would become a priority in your life.

Here are some day-to-day examples of how your short-term actions would line up with this personal value example:

- Fuel your body with nutritious foods.
- Stay active through regular exercise.
- Take care of your mental health by taking breaks, getting enough rest, spending time with loved ones, and asking for help when needed.
- Avoiding self-destructive habits.

Small Actions Snowball

Living according to your values (usually) isn't done with big, dramatic, "ah-ha" moments. It's the smaller, every day actions that you take that will shape your life and allow you to live in sync with your values.

*Food for thought: Our values are not necessarily "fixed". You may have different values in different seasons of your life. You may also notice that there are values that have remained consistent for you over time.



Good Enough List of Personal Values

Looking through a list of 500 values is overwhelming for many of us. This is a “good-enough” list of personal values for you to choose from. If there’s a value that you’ve identified as important to you that is not listed here, feel free to add to this list!

Achievement – Being driven to accomplish a successful result by hard work that is noteworthy or admirable.

Related words: Accomplishment, Attainment

Adventure – Planning and experiencing events that are out of the ordinary and are unusual, exciting or daring.

Related words: Escapade, Experience

Authentic – Being yourself in all situations, others that can be taken at face value.

Related words: Genuine, Certifiable

Authority – A high level of knowledge or skill and the ability to persuade and influence others.

Related words: Expert, Professional

Autonomy – The power to make own choices or decisions.

Related words: Free will, Self-determination

Balance – Pleasing or suitable arrangements in life or perspective on life.

Related words: Harmony, Proportion

Beauty – Pleasure through observing that which is aesthetically appealing in either natural or human creations.

Related words: Art, Glamour

Belonging – A feeling of connectedness, a sense of fitting in and being an important part of a group. A place to call home. Related words: Connection, Kinship

Boldness – The inclination or willingness to take risks in pursuit of a goal.

Related words: Daring, Enterprising

Challenge – Performing a feat, or demanding the truth or rightness in a given situation.

Related words: Competition, Bravery

Citizenship – The rights, privileges and duties of a citizen. Showing concern for the welfare and dignity of others and supporting the right and freedoms of all individuals.

Related words: Community, Personalist

Community – A group of peers created or existing for the purpose of ongoing mutual support and the enhancement of each other.

Related words: Camaraderie, Fellowship

Compassion – Taking action to recognize and help those that are suffering, a tangible expression of love for those who are suffering.

Related words: Humanity, Kind-heartedness

Competency – The physical or mental power to get something done successfully.

Related words: Ability, Capable

Connection – Close relationships with people, formed by emotional bonds and interactions.

Related words: Affinity, Relationship

Contribution – Giving a gift of money or its equivalent to a charity, humanitarian causes, the community or a public institutions.

Related words: Philanthropy, Benefaction

Creativity – Products or works of art to enhance the world and our life in it. Original thought and expression.

Related words: Imagination, Talented

Curiosity – A strong desire to know or learn something.

Related words: Inquisitive, Wonderment

Determination – A firm or unwavering resolve to one's purpose.

Related words: Persistence, Decisive



Fairness – The absence of favoritism or discrimination toward one side or another.
Related words: Impartiality, Equity

Faith – The integrity, ability, effectiveness, or genuineness of someone or something. Also, belief and trust in and loyalty to God.
Related words: Devotion, Conviction

Family – Devotion to your family, and belonging to and being accepted by your family.
Related words: Tribe, Kindred

Freedom – The ability to act or move freely without the control or power of another.
Related words: Autonomy, Liberty

Friendship – Having friends to share things with on a day-to-day basis, to give and receive kindly concern, interest, or support.
Related words: Amity, Companionship

Fulfilment – The state of being actual or complete.
Related words: Satisfaction, Self-actualization

Fun – Light-hearted pleasure, enjoyment, or amusement.
Related words: Cheerful, Jovial

Giving Back – Providing for others in appreciation of one's own success or good fortune.
Related words: Generosity, Volunteer

Growth – To develop and expand to make a better version.
Related words: Improvement, Development

Happiness – The feeling or state of well-being and contentment. Related words: Blissful, Cheerful

Health – The state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing.
Related words: Wellness, Wellbeing

Honesty – Being honorable in principles, intentions, and actions. Showing uprightness and fairness.
Related words: Integrity, Honor

Hope – A desire for things to change for the better, an expectation of positive outcomes.
Related words: Opportunity, Possibility

Humor – The ability to see the amusing quality or element in something.
Related words: Comedy, Jocularly

Inclusion – Being an advocate for practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.
Related words: Equality, Embracing

Independence – The ability to care for oneself and be free from the control or power of another.
Related words: Self-sufficient, Strength

Influence – The power to bring about a result or direct the thinking or behavior of others, usually indirectly.
Related words: Command, Authority

Inner Harmony – The state of emotional and mental poise, happiness, confidence and inner strength.
Related words: Peace of mind, Inner calm

Joy – The feeling of great pleasure and happiness, to rejoice.
Related words: Delight, Intense happiness



Justice – The morally fair and right state of everything.

Related words: Moral rightness, Ethical

Kindness – The quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate.

Related words: Warm-hearted, Tenderness

Knowledge – Awareness, understanding, or information that has been obtained by experience or study.

Related words: Insight, Intelligence

Leadership – The capacity to guide and influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.

Related words: Management, Guidance

Learning – The acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience, or being taught.

Related words: Knowledge, Study

Legacy – The accomplishments, beliefs, actions and guidance demonstrated in life that carry forward to future generations.

Related words: Impact, Bequest

Love – The feeling of strong or constant regard for and dedication to someone. Related words:

Affection, Attachment

Loyalty – An importance on the strict observance of promises and duties in relationships.

Related words: Commitment, Allegiance

Meaningful Work – Work that aligns with your personal values and utilizes your talents and skills, making you feel part of something bigger.

Related words: Alignment, Mission

Openness – Free expression of true feelings and a receptivity to new ideas, behaviors, cultures, peoples, environments, experiences.

Related words: Candid, Unguarded

Optimism – An inclination to believe in the most favorable outcome.

Related words: Positive, Cheerful

Peace – A stress-free state of security and calmness that comes when there's no fighting or war, everything coexisting in perfect harmony and freedom.

Related words: Serenity, Tranquil

Perseverance – The ability to keep doing something in spite of obstacles. Related words: Endurance, Steadfastness

Pleasure – Someone or something that provides amusement or enjoyment.

Related words: Entertainment, Recreation

Popularity – Enjoying widespread approval.

Related words: Prominence, Favor

Power – The ability to control people or things.

Related words: Dominance, Strength

Recognition – Being publicly acknowledged or known for something (such as an achievement).

Related words: Praise, Acclaim

Reputation – How you are seen or judged by people in general.

Related words: Character, Renown

Respect – The feeling of deep regard or to show regard for someone's feelings, wishes, or rights.

Related words: Dignity, Empathy



Responsibility – Being answerable for something within one's power, control, or management.

Related words: Reliable, Accountable

Risk Taking – Being willing to do things that involve danger to achieve a goal.

Related words: Heroic, Dangerous

Safety – Avoidance of personal injury, danger, or loss, and doing what is necessary to protect yourself and others.

Related words: Protection, Sheltered

Security – Being free from danger or threat.

Related words: Protection, Surety

Self-Respect – Having pride and confidence in oneself, a feeling that one is behaving with honor and dignity.

Related words: Pride, Self-regard

Service – The desire to share your unique gifts and skills with others as a way of serving humanity without expecting anything in return.

Related words: Assistance, Duty

Spirituality – Recognition of a feeling or sense or belief that there is something greater than oneself.

Related words: Unworldly, Religious

Stability – The state of continuing without change or the ability to withstand force or stress without being distorted.

Related words: Reliability, Sturdiness

Success – The accomplishment of an aim or purpose.

Related words: Victory, Accomplish

Teamwork – Being part of a number of persons who individually contribute toward the efficiency of the whole.

Related words: Collaboration, Cooperation

Tradition – An inherited or established way of thinking, feeling, or doing. Ritual and ceremony to increase bonds and meaning.

Related words: Custom, Heritage

Trustworthy – Being able to be relied on as honest or truthful.

Related words: Reliable, Dependable

Truth – The intense pursuit and discovery of ultimate truth above all other activities.

Related words: Honesty, Genuineness

Uniqueness – Being particularly remarkable, special, unusual or one of a kind.

Related words: Individual, Distinctive

Vision – A conception or image created by the imagination and having no objective reality.

Related words: Foresight, Imagination

Wealth – The total of your money and property equaling a large amount.

Related words: Prosperity, Affluent

Wellbeing – The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy.

Related words: Welfare, Health

Wisdom – The ability to think and act using knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight. Related words: Discernment, Insight