

When you live in alignment with your values, the quality of your life improves. Your values are a reflection of what makes you, you. At a simplistic level, your values are your brand.

Benefits of Understanding Your Values

- Reduces stress:** When you are not living in synch with what is important to you, it's similar to living in a state of constant conflict. You are doing one thing but always want to do something else. This can create frustration, anger and eventually stress.
- Better decision making:** When you understand what your core values are, decision making is more straight forward. This does not mean that it will always be easy, but you will know what is right for you.
- Clear Priority Setting:** Understanding your values means that when multiple things are calling for your attention, you are in a better position to determine what takes priority.



If you're not sure how to identify your values, consider those things that make your life meaningful. When have you been your happiest or most satisfied? When are you utterly engaged? What are you doing? Who are you with? Chances are whatever that thing was, it was in alignment with your values.

If you are not sure what your values are take a look at the exercise below.

Exercise 1 - Which Words Feel Right?

Below is a list of 200+ words. Go through the list to choose those words that you feel reflect your values. Once you have done that, condense your list to 20 values. Do this

two more times, always halving the number until you come up with 5 values. It will be difficult but try. If you simply can't imagine not having something on your list, then it reflects one of your core values. Obviously, you can have more than five core values, but the exercise is a great way to identify what's really important to you.

Tip: When considering the list think about what you stand for; what do you choose to chase, defend and more importantly act on? The answer to these questions gives you some insight into what you value.

If there is something important to you but it's not on the list, then add it.

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|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Acceptance | Charity | Creativity |
| Accomplishment | Cleanliness | Credibility |
| Accountability | Clear | Curiosity |
| Accuracy | Clever | Decisive |
| Achievement | Comfort | Decisiveness |
| Adaptability | Commitment | Dedication |
| Alertness | Common sense | Dependability |
| Altruism | Communication | Determination |
| Ambition | Community | Development |
| Amusement | Compassion | Devotion |
| Assertiveness | Competence | Dignity |
| Attentive | Concentration | Discipline |
| Awareness | Confidence | Discovery |
| Balance | Connection | Drive |
| Beauty | Consciousness | Effectiveness |
| Boldness | Consistency | Efficiency |
| Bravery | Contentment | Empathy |
| Brilliance | Contribution | Empower |
| Calm | Control | Endurance |
| Candor | Conviction | Energy |
| Capable | Cooperation | Enjoyment |
| Careful | Courage | Enthusiasm |
| Certainty | Courtesy | Environmentalism |
| Challenge | Creation | Equality |

Value Your Values

Ethical	Humility	Originality
Excellence	Humour	Passion
Experience	Imagination	Patience
Exploration	Improvement	Patriotism
Expressive	Independence	Peace
Fairness	Individuality	Performance
Family	Innovation	Perseverance
Famous	Inquisitive	Persistence
Fearless	Insightful	Playfulness
Feelings	Inspiring	Poise
Ferocious	Integrity	Positivity
Fidelity	Intelligence	Potential
Fitness	Intensity	Power
Flexibility	Intuitive	Present
Focus	Irreverent	Productivity
Foresight	Joy	Professionalism
Fortitude	Justice	Prosperity
Freedom	Kindness	Purpose
Friendship	Knowledge	Quality
Fun	Lawful	Realistic
Generosity	Leadership	Reason
Genius	Learning	Recognition
Giving	Liberty	Recreation
Goodness	Logic	Reflective
Grace	Love	Reliability
Gratitude	Loyalty	Respect
Greatness	Mastery	Responsibility
Growth	Maturity	Restraint
Happiness	Meaning	Results-oriented
Hard work	Moderation	Reverence
Harmony	Motivation	Rigor
Health	Openness	Risk
Honesty	Optimism	Satisfaction
Honor	Order	Security
Hope	Organization	Self-reliance

Value Your Values

Selfless	Strength	Truth
Sensitivity	Structure	Understanding
Serenity	Success	Uniqueness
Service	Support	Unity
Sharing	Surprise	Usefulness
Significance	Sustainability	Valor
Silence	Talent	Victory
Simplicity	Teamwork	Vigor
Sincerity	Temperance	Virtue
Skill	Thankful	Vision
Skillfulness	Thorough	Vitality
Smart	Thoughtful	Warmth
Solitude	Timeliness	Wealth
Spirit	Tolerance	Welcoming
Spirit of adventure	Toughness	Winning
Spirituality	Traditional	Wisdom
Spontaneous	Tranquility	Wonder
Stability	Transparency	Worthiness
Status	Trust	
Stewardship	Trustworthy	

Exercise 2 – Bring Your Values to Life

Now that you have a list of values, think about placing that list where you can see it every day. At the end of each day, ask yourself if you have lived in alignment with your values and consider what actions you can take the following day that are consistent with your values. In order to act on your values you need to focus on what they look like in action. If athletics are important to you, you need to find ways to incorporate athletic activities into your life. It may be by joining a team or running in a marathon.

This exercise takes only a few minutes but is a great way to stay in step with what really matters to you.