



HONESTY

to be honest and truthful

PERSONAL VALUES > > >

Why knowing and living by your values matters.

Have you ever spent time thinking about what is really important to you? Does it even matter or is it worth taking the time to think about it when we are all rushing around living busy and hectic lives?

Well, it may be a surprise to hear that being aware of your personal values can actually make going about your day to day life easier. How? Evidence is now widely accepted that suggests living to our personal values can improve your decision making, confidence or overall happiness to name but a few.

Let me explain. If something crops up and you have to choose between two, three or maybe four different things, how do you decide what or whom to prioritise? To put this question into context let us have a think about a common and simple real-life scenario;

Imagine for a moment you are in an important client meeting that is drastically overrunning and you should have already left to travel to your child's sport day and be there on time. What do you decide to do? Make your apologies and leave the meeting part way through, perhaps missing some important information or even marring the relationship with the client? Or stay and miss the sports day?

There is obviously no right or wrong answer in this scenario and whatever decision you make is your personal choice and we can all only do what we feel is right at that point in time.

Could it be however that by deciding to stay in the meeting we are risking potential family upset? Or leaving and feeling like you have shirked your responsibilities to the client or even fearing you have lost some of your authority or future work?

These decisions can be very hard in the moment and we often lean towards compromising ourselves for fear of having to be the person that stands and says 'I'm leaving now'. Especially if you are already frustrated that it's now likely you are leaving the meeting without conclusion anyway and in fact still going to be late for your other commitment.

The truth is there is a gentle way we can navigate these situations if we have spent the time to be more conscious and therefore aware of our personal values.

So could we flip that entirely and suggest that it's ok to say to your client that although you are committed to the relationship and to the meeting that the time allowed has been taken up and in fact you have another pressing commitment to your family and that work can reconvene after this?

or at home. They help you grow and develop, and they help you shape the future you want to experience. One of the best descriptions I have found for personal values is by Alan Williams author of *The Values Economy*. He describes values as 'emotional laden motivators that guide the way we behave and make choices', or simply put, if we are aware of our values and choose to live by them, then our values are our inner guiding compass.

Let us think back to the scenario, if family is one of your core values then the decision is probably an easy one, you will make your apologies and leave the meeting and attend the sports day. However, if responsibility or authority are your core values, the chances are you will choose to stay at the client meeting. *Trouble begins however when you believe the choice is not yours at all – but that's a big one and perhaps a topic for another day...*

In reality we tend not to walk around all day consciously thinking about our values and so making choices such as these can cause inner tension. This is especially so as we are swayed by what we think we should do rather than what we want to do. And too, I'm sure we have all made decisions that we don't feel great about but we have done it anyway – could this be a sign that the decision you have made contradicts your values?

So, if you were asked, right now would you be able to tell me what your top 5 values are?

If your answer is no, and we know that we can all benefit from being more aware of our values, would you be prepared to take some time to think that through?

Techniques to identify your values
There are obviously hundreds of



MINDFULNESS

to live conscious and mindful of the present moment

What do I mean by personal values?

Simply put, values are the things that you believe are important to the way you live your life - be that at work

different values you could choose from but the key has to be that the choice is yours and yours alone.

Could it be that achievement, adventure, determination, integrity, respect, family, wealth are some values that may help to get the mental cogs turning? The list goes on and on, so beginning can seem like a big task.

There are no 'one size fits all' answers but there are a few things you can do to start homing in on you core values and the NFDC Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub is a great place to start.

Visit the NFDC's new Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub at: demolition-nfdc.com/hub-mental-health-articles, where you will find a downloadable 'Personal Values card sort' activity which was created by W Miller et al, University of New Mexico in 2001.

This useful resource provides a set of cards each containing words describing values that are important to some people. There are lots to choose from so please be sure to read those instructions on how we keep this simple yet effective.

Alternatively, there are numerous value surveys online which are easy to find with a simple internet search, such as the free Personal Values Assessment (PVA) survey by Barrett Values Centre.

And, if this feels like it's too much just now another good way to start identifying your values is to take a moment to think of a time in your life when you have felt amazing and that everything was in-flow, ask yourself 'why was that?'. Perhaps when you are in that state it is because you were living to your values.

And without suggesting we relive those bad moments I'm sure it wouldn't take long to think of an example of the opposite. A time when you were really fed up and consider if in fact this was because your values were being trampled upon, either by you or by someone else. Once you have identified your core values you can start using them to help inform your decisions and actions which will consequently make your life simpler, facilitate decision making and leave you feeling more confident that the right decisions have been made.

Of course there may be times when your core values will be in conflict, and


this is to be expected. So give yourself a break as our values can't always be adhered to rigidly. They are a set, just as a pack of cards are a set and maybe we can't play the whole hand at the same time.

Understanding and acting on your personal values has not only been shown to improve your overall quality of life but there have also been numerous research studies looking into other benefits such as helping to reduce stress, inspire better health habits, improve your willpower, helping you to act more assertively, or even helping you make wiser work choices.

So, all in all, if we as a collective, choose to understand our own values and why they are important this can help us to avoid misunderstandings, frustration, and distrust. If we are mindful that everyone we meet has their own

values and that they may be different from our own this will also help us understand reasons for differing viewpoints, thus allow us to be more tolerant of each other.

Now, more than ever, is the perfect time to focus and remember what is important to you as there is much going on in the world and so many distractions. Take the opportunity, find some time to think about your values as they may just help guide you in achieving your goals.

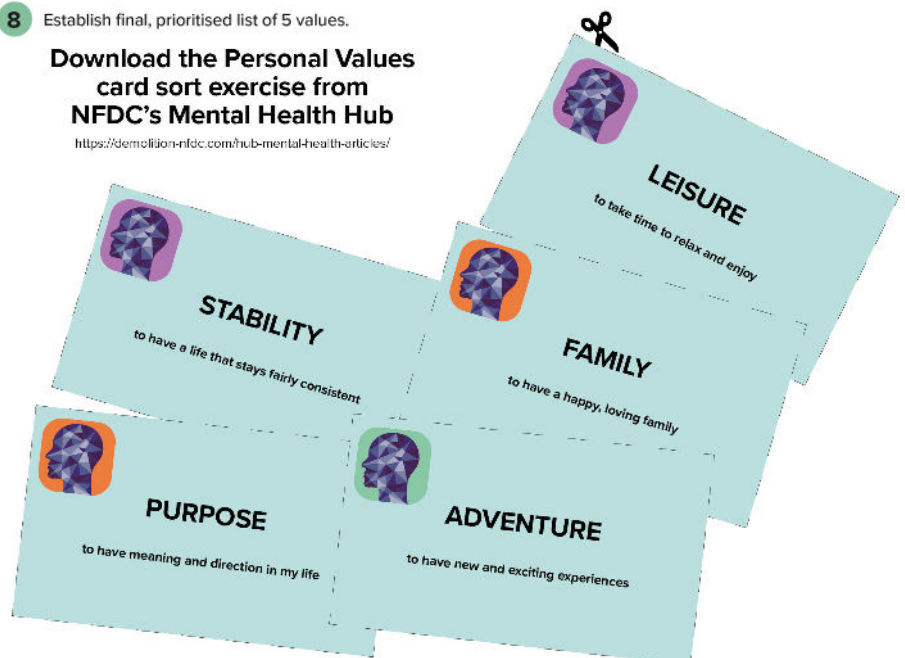
David Price
Vector Equilibrium
 www.v-eq.com



- 1 To begin, print and cut out each card then shuffle all the value cards except for the blank 'Other Value' cards.
- 2 IMPORTANT: READ AND COMPLETE EACH STEP IN ORDER, BEFORE MOVING ON.
- 3 Once the cards are shuffled, go ahead and sort by placing all cards under the relevant heading – 'Very Important to Me', 'Important to ME', 'Not Important to ME'. Be quick, don't over analyse.
- 4 When done, check, move cards if necessary. Now remove all cards except those under 'Very Important'.
- 5 Prioritise then remove all cards except top 5.
- 6 Challenge yourself: 'Why is this important to me? Is it really MY value?'
- 7 Check priority again by comparing each value. 'If I could have X or Y which would I choose?'
- 8 Establish final, prioritised list of 5 values.

Download the Personal Values card sort exercise from NFDC's Mental Health Hub

<https://demolition-nfdc.com/hub-mental-health-articles/>



PERSONAL VALUES Card Sort Exercise

(created by W.R. Miller et al, University of New Mexico in 2001.)

- 1 To begin, print and cut out each card then shuffle all the value cards except for the blank 'Other Value' cards.
- 2 **IMPORTANT: READ AND COMPLETE EACH STEP IN ORDER, BEFORE MOVING ON.**
- 3 Once the cards are shuffled, go ahead and sort by placing all cards under the relevant heading – 'Very Important to Me', 'Important to ME', 'Not Important to ME'. Be quick, don't over analyse.
- 4 When done, check, move cards if necessary. Now remove all cards except those under 'Very Important'.
- 5 Prioritise then remove all cards except top 5.
- 6 Challenge yourself: 'Why is this important to me? Is it really MY value?'
- 7 Check priority again by comparing each value. 'If I could have X or Y which would I choose?'
- 8 Establish final, prioritised list of 5 values.





ACCEPTANCE

to be accepted as I am

ACCURACY

to be accurate in my opinions and beliefs

ACHIEVEMENT

to have important accomplishments

ADVENTURE

to have new and exciting experiences

ATTRACTIVENESS

to be physically attractive

AUTHORITY

to be in charge of and responsible for others

AUTONOMY

to be self-determined and independent

BEAUTY

to appreciate beauty around me

CARING

to take care of others

CHALLENGE

to take on difficult tasks and problems



CHANGE

to have a life full of change and variety

COMFORT

to have a pleasant and comfortable life

COMMITMENT

to make enduring, meaningful commitments

COMPASSION

to feel and act on concern for others

CONTRIBUTION

to make a lasting contribution in the world

CO-OPERATION

to work collaboratively with others

COURTESY

to be considerate and polite toward others

CREATIVITY

to have new and original ideas

DEPENDABILITY

to be reliable and trustworthy

DUTY

to carry out my duties and obligations



ECOLOGY

to live in harmony with the environment

EXCITEMENT

to have a life full of thrills and stimulation

FAITHFULNESS

to be loyal and true in relationships

FAME

to be known and recognised

FAMILY

to have a happy, loving family

FITNESS

to be physically fit and strong

FLEXIBILITY

to adjust to new circumstances easily

FORGIVENESS

to be forgiving of others

FRIENDSHIP

to have close, supportive friends

FUN

to play and have fun



GENEROSITY

to give what I have to others

GENUINENESS

to act in a manner that is true to who I am

GOD'S WILL

to seek and obey the will of God

GROWTH

to keep changing and growing

HEALTH

to be physically well and healthy

HELPFULNESS

to be helpful to others

HONESTY

to be honest and truthful

HOPE

to maintain a positive and optimistic outlook

HUMILITY

to be modest and unassuming

HUMOUR

to see the humorous side of myself and the world



INDEPENDENCE

to be free from dependence on others

INDUSTRY

to work hard and well at my life tasks

INNER PEACE

to experience personal peace

INTIMACY

to share my innermost experiences with others

JUSTICE

to promote fair and equal treatment for all

KNOWLEDGE

to learn and contribute valuable knowledge

LEISURE

to take time to relax and enjoy

LOVED

to be loved by those close to me

LOVING

to give love to others

MASTERY

to be competent in my everyday activities



MINDFULNESS

to live conscious and mindful of the present moment

MODERATION

to avoid excesses and find a middle ground

MONOGAMY

to have one close, loving relationship

NON-CONFORMITY

to question and challenge authority and norms

NURTURANCE

to take care of and nurture others

OPENNESS

to be open to new experiences, ideas, and options

ORDER

to have a life that is well-ordered and organized

PASSION

to have deep feelings about ideas, activities, or people

PLEASURE

to feel good

POPULARITY

to be well-liked by many people



POWER

to have control over others

PURPOSE

to have meaning and direction in my life

RATIONALITY

to be guided by reason and logic

REALISM

to see and act realistically and practically

RESPONSIBILITY

to make and carry out responsible decisions

RISK

to take risks and chances

ROMANCE

to have intense, exciting love in my life

SAFETY

to be safe and secure

SELF-ACCEPTANCE

to accept myself as I am

SELF-CONTROL

to be disciplined in my own actions



SELF-ESTEEM

to feel good about myself

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

to have a deep and honest understanding of myself

SERVICE

to be of service to others

SEXUALITY

to have an active and satisfying sex life

SIMPLICITY

to live life simply, with minimal needs

SOLITUDE

to have time and space where I can be apart from others

SPIRITUALITY

to grow and mature spiritually

STABILITY

to have a life that stays fairly consistent

TOLERANCE

to accept and respect those who differ from me

TRADITION

to follow respected patterns of the past



VIRTUE

to live a morally pure and excellent life

WEALTH

to have plenty of money

WORLD PEACE

to work to promote peace in the world

Other Value:

Other Value:

Other Value:

Other Value:

Other Value:

Other Value:

Other Value: