

Aligning Your Values with Your Goals

Objective

To identify your values and effectively incorporate them into your life goals.

You Should Know

Your values are the basic and fundamental beliefs that determine your priorities, and they shape how you live, work, and measure whether or not your life is turning out the way you want it to. When your goals and choices match your values, life is good – you probably feel satisfied and content. But when your choices and goals do not align with your values, you might feel unhappy, stressed, or discontented with life.

This is why making a conscious effort to define your values is important. Values motivate your attitudes, choices, and actions. Values help you identify what is important to you. Your values influence how you interact with the world around you, and they are the foundation for purposeful action and goal creation. Your values might be very different from another person's values.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) It is an empirically-based psychological intervention that uses acceptance, mindfulness, commitment, and behavior-change strategies to increase psychological flexibility. ACT offers tools to consciously connect to the present moment, choosing to behave in a manner that is consistent with your values. Connecting and clarifying your core values is a key element, utilizing those values to guide your actions and create specific goals. In simple terms, goal setting is guided by your values.

This worksheet will help you clarify your values to create goals aligned with those values.

What to Do

Below you will find a list of the most common values. Not all of them will be relevant to you. Read through the list below and rate each value, where 10 = very important, 5 = somewhat important, and 1 = not at all important.

_____ **Acceptance.** I am open and accepting of myself, other people, and life circumstances.

_____ **Adventure.** I actively seek, create, or explore novel or stimulating experiences.

_____ **Assertiveness.** I respectfully stand up for my rights and request what I want.

_____ **Authenticity.** I strive to be genuine, real, and true to myself.

_____ **Beauty.** I appreciate, create, nurture, and cultivate beauty in myself and my surroundings.

_____ **Caring.** I am caring toward myself and others.

- _____ **Challenge.** I continuously challenge myself to grow, learn, and improve my life.
- _____ **Compassion.** I act with kindness toward suffering people or animals.
- _____ **Connection.** I engage fully in whatever I am doing, and I am fully present with others.
- _____ **Contribution.** I contribute, help, assist, or make a positive difference.
- _____ **Conformity.** I am respectful and obedient of rules and obligations.
- _____ **Cooperation.** I am cooperative and collaborative with others.
- _____ **Courage.** I am courageous or brave, and I persist in the face of fear, threat, or difficulty.
- _____ **Creativity.** I am creative and innovative.
- _____ **Curiosity.** I am curious, open-minded, and interested in exploring and discovering new things.
- _____ **Encouragement.** I encourage and reward behavior that I value in myself or others.
- _____ **Equality.** I treat others as equal to myself.
- _____ **Excitement.** I seek, create, and engage in activities that are stimulating or thrilling.
- _____ **Fairness.** I strive to be fair to myself or others.
- _____ **Fitness.** I maintain or improve my fitness and look after my physical and mental health and well-being.
- _____ **Flexibility.** I adjust and adapt readily to changing circumstances.
- _____ **Freedom.** I live freely and choose how I live and behave.
- _____ **Friendliness.** I am friendly, companionable, or agreeable toward other people.
- _____ **Forgiveness.** I am forgiving toward myself or others.
- _____ **Fun.** I am fun-loving, and I seek, create, and engage in fun-filled activities.
- _____ **Generosity.** I am generous, sharing, and giving to myself or others.
- _____ **Gratitude.** I am grateful for and appreciative of the positive aspects of myself, others, and life.
- _____ **Honesty.** I am honest, truthful, and sincere with myself and others.
- _____ **Humor.** I see and appreciate the humorous side of life.
- _____ **Humility.** I am humble or modest and I let my achievements speak for themselves.
- _____ **Industry.** I am industrious, hard-working, and dedicated.
- _____ **Independence.** I am self-supportive and choose my own way of doing things.
- _____ **Intimacy.** I open up, reveal, and share myself, emotionally or physically, in my close personal relationships.
- _____ **Justice.** I make every effort to uphold justice and fairness.
- _____ **Kindness.** I am kind, compassionate, considerate, nurturing, or caring.
- _____ **Love.** I act lovingly or affectionately toward myself and others.
- _____ **Mindfulness.** I am conscious of, open to, and curious about my present experience.
- _____ **Order.** I am orderly and organized.
- _____ **Open-mindedness.** I think things through, see things from other's points of view, and

weigh evidence fairly.

_____ **Patience.** I wait calmly for what I want.

_____ **Persistence:** I continue resolutely, despite problems or difficulties.

_____ **Pleasure.** I create and give pleasure to myself or others.

_____ **Power.** I strongly influence or wield authority over others by taking charge, leading, or organizing.

_____ **Reciprocity.** I build relationships in which there is a fair balance of giving and taking.

_____ **Respect.** I am respectful by being polite, considerate, and showing positive regard.

_____ **Responsibility.** I am responsible and accountable for my actions.

_____ **Romance.** I am romantic by displaying and expressing love or strong affection.

_____ **Safety.** I secure, protect, or ensure safety of myself or others.

_____ **Self-awareness.** I am aware of my own thoughts, feelings, and actions.

_____ **Self-care.** I look after my health and well-being, and get my needs met.

_____ **Self-development.** I keep growing, advancing, or improving in knowledge, skills, character, or life experience.

_____ **Self-control.** I act in accordance with my own ideals.

_____ **Sensuality.** I create, explore, and enjoy experiences that stimulate my five senses.

_____ **Sexuality.** I explore or express my sexuality.

_____ **Spirituality.** I connect with things bigger than myself.

_____ **Skillfulness.** I practice and improve my skills, and apply myself fully when using them.

_____ **Supportiveness.** I am supportive, helpful, encouraging, and available.

_____ **Trust.** I am trustworthy, loyal, faithful, sincere, and reliable.

_____ Other: _____

_____ Other: _____

Once you have rated each value, select the top six that are most important to you. Write those six values down below.

Next, thinking about the values you identified above, begin to formulate short- and long-term goals related to those values. Using the list above, match the values you identified with four primary life priorities: Love, Work/Education, Play, and Health.

1. **Love** – Your deepest and most meaningful relationships.

Related Values:

Short-Term Goal:

Long-Term Goal:

2. **Work/Education** – Paid work, study/education; volunteering, domestic tasks.

Related Values:

Short-Term Goal:

Long-Term Goal:

3. **Play** – Rest, relaxation, hobbies, sports; all forms of leisure, recreation, and entertainment.

Related Values:

Short-Term Goal:

Long-Term Goal:

4. **Health** – Physical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual health and well-being.

Related Values:

Short-Term Goal:

Long-Term Goal:

Reflections on This Exercise

Describe what it was like defining your top six values.

Now that you are aware of your values, do you think it will be easier to set goals based on your values? Why or why not?

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

Is there anything in particular you learned from this exercise?
