



What are Values?

"If you don't stick to your values when they are being tested, they're not values, they're hobbies."

Steven Reiss

*„I think the world would be a lot better off if more people were to define themselves in terms of their own standards and **values** and not what other people said or thought about them.“* Hillary Clinton

Values are a booster for your success, or they slow you down completely in reaching your goals. There are good reasons why you should make sure that your goals and values work hand-in-hand.

Your values is what is really important to you in life. In other words, there is always conscious intention behind what you do. Values are very individual and of course they change in the course of life or they may acquire a different importance; "Having fun" probably looks different at the age of 19 than at the age of 48. Perhaps "Health" is at a higher position at the age of 55 than at the age of 20. There are no good or bad values, but there are values which are either more or less helpful in the context of your personal goal achievement.

Reasons, why goals and values should be aligned

Why do some people achieve their goals and others don't? Why do you achieve some goals with ease and others you find extremely difficult to attain? The energy that you need to achieve your goal is mostly activated unconsciously. This happens when your goal is what you really want. That means it has to satisfy the values that are really important to you. Goals that you only set with your conscious mind and that run counter to your values do not have a chance. Rather, you drive with one foot on the accelerator and the other on the brake.

An example of congruence between values and goals is when top values include independence, professional success and perfection and the goal is to build a successful company. The achievement of goals becomes unlikely if the most important values have no relation to the goal and there is a risk that you counteract the goal, e.g. when leisure and relaxation are at the top of the value hierarchy and the goal is to motivate co-workers to work harder or longer.

If you act in accordance with your personal values, it will give you pleasure and feel good despite possible ups and downs. When you act against your values, you are working against yourself. Few people who are in this situation are aware of this; it can lead to frustration, exhaustion, burnout or other negative symptoms.

Have you ever achieved anything by betraying your values? Because you told a white lie, for example, or



kept something secret, although honesty is important to you? Anyone who has had such an experience knows that the result does not feel good. Nevertheless, there are many people who act against their values every day and are then surprised they are not satisfied with the result.

Your inner Compass

If you know your values, you have an inner compass that accompanies you on the way to your goal. For example, you will be able to make better decisions with more ease because you have an instinct for what is right for you.

What to do if the value and goal don't match?

If you know your values, you can check to what extent your goals contribute to living your values. This is an important factor for achieving goals.

Sometimes people try to "manipulate" their values towards their goals, which is not helpful. The solution may be to adjust or nudge one or more goal.



With this exercise you can create your personal value hierarchy of within a relatively short time (20 to 30 minutes). You only need paper or index cards and a pen.

Step 1: Collect the values that are most important to you (see list below) on a sheet or card (this can be 15 to 20 values).

Step 2: Take two values and compare them by imagining a life in which one value is fully fulfilled and the other is not and vice versa. Decide on one of the values and set the other aside.

Step 3: This is how you can go through the list and compare other cards against the value you hold in your hand. If a value other than "love" is more important in this process, put "love" aside and keep that value in your hand.

Tip: You do not need to test the new value against the values that you previously set aside. If "friendship" is more important than all these values and the new value is more important to you than "friendship", then the new value is also more important than all the values that you previously set aside.

Step 4: The value that remains in your hand after the first round is your number 1 value. Place this all the way up on the value hierarchy that is still to be created.

Step 5: Then go through the other values in the same way. The value that is still in your hand after the second round is number 2 and so on.

Step 6: Once you have defined your 10 most important values, you do not need to prioritize the other values. These are values that play a role for you but are not among your most important values. In particular, your goals should be in line with the numbers 1 to 5.

Step 7: Take a look at the hierarchy you have formed and evaluate for yourself whether it is right for you. Otherwise you can still make changes.

Use the list of values below, but at the same time note that this is not an exhaustive list - if you are missing a value in the list, add it.

Mindfulness	Credibility	Realism
Aesthetics	Happiness	Honesty
Activity	Generosity	Wealth
Timeliness	Kindness	Respect
Acceptance	Harmony	Consideration
Altruism	Calm	Home
Recognition	Challenge	Gentleness
Being Different	Helpfulness	Cleanliness
Grace	Devotion	Beauty
Reputation	Hope	Self-determination
Decency	Courtesy	Self-discipline
Open-mindedness	Humour	Sensitivity
Attention	Idealism	Safety
Balance	Innovation	Solidarity
Authenticity	Inspiration	Care
Balance	Integration	Thrift
Enthusiasm	Integrity	Fun
Perseverance	Intelligence	Stability
Modesty	Interest	Stability
Prudence	Intuition	Sympathy
Gratitude	Clarity	Courage
Humility	Wisdom	Team Spirit
Discipline	Expertise	Sharing
Effectiveness	Conservative	Tolerance
Efficiency	Control	Tradition
Sincerity	Creativity	Dreaming
Uniqueness	Culture	Transparency
Elegance	Passion	Faithfulness
Empathy	Ease	Competence
Decisiveness	Love	Independence
Success	Curiosity	Warmth
Seriousness	Loyalty	Change
Family	Power	Responsibility
Fairness	Humanity	Unity
Diligence	Compassion	Reliability
Flexibility	Motivation	Networking
Freedom	Boldness	Trust
Joy	Sustainability	Forgiveness
Friendship	Charity	Diversity
Peace	Naturalness	Vigilance
Development	Neutrality	Patience
Security	Openness	Comfort
Pleasure	Optimism	Foresight
Serenity	Neatness	Dignity
Community	Perfection	Determination
Presence	Sense of Duty	Belonging
Dependability	Justice	Precision
Health	Punctuality	Affection



Now you have your values – now what?

What can “working according to my values” look like?

Here are some suggestions for questions you can ask yourself:

1. Why is this value important enough for me to be on my list?
Write down 5 specific reasons.
2. Who am I if I “live” this value? How do I behave? How do I think about myself? About others?
About life? What am I thinking of? What motivates me?
3. How is this value expressed in my actions and how not?
4. Are my goals aligned with my values?
5. What three things would I change in my life to do more justice to my values?
Write down three specific points you want to implement in the next 90 days.

Examples of changes:

- Start something that I've avoided doing so far
- Part from people who deplete my energy
- Learn something new
- Job Change

If you are “stuck” but want to continue working with and on yourself, I am happy to support you.