

Living Purposefully: A Core Values Exercise

As humans, we have the capacity to evolve: Our thinking and beliefs are as complex as they are transformative. Even our values, the internal system that guides our behaviors and attitudes, may differ over time. Our innate desire to live purposefully comes when our values are in sync with the three key aspects of our daily life: Self, career and relationships.

Most of us have contemplated the following questions:

- *What really matters to me?*
- *How have I changed over the past few years?*
- *What am I looking for in my Self, career, and relationships at this stage in life?*
- *Am I where I want to be?*

In asking these important questions, you are assessing your core values. You may have many values that are important to you, but your core values are the ones you inevitably prioritize, either knowingly or unknowingly. Taking stock of your core values brings new awareness, clarity and authenticity to your life. If you want to live purposefully, the first step is to name your core values.

The Core Values Exercise on the following page is meant to identify your core values at this juncture of your life and align them with your personal self, career, and relationships. In doing so, you will recognize that these key aspects of your life should elevate your core values and vice versa. That is what it means to live purposefully.

Often, values and goals are intertwined, but for this exercise, they are very different. Values are internal (non-tangible), while goals are external (tangible). To differentiate values with goals, see the chart to the right. Additional examples of values are listed on the third page, but adding your own unique ones is encouraged.

Lastly, it is important to revisit your core values annually, as their degree of significance may have changed, or you replace old values with new ones. And that's okay. To know where you're going in life, you must regularly acknowledge what matters to you at each stage of your evolution.

VALUES	GOALS
Security	Retire with \$1M dollars
Happiness	Be debt free
Power	Be the boss at work
Spirituality	Go to church/temple
Creativity	Learn to paint
Love	Have a great marriage
Health	Lose weight

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Purpose: To identify your core values and align them with your Self, career and relationships.
Duration: 15-min
Add-on: Have someone you care about complete this exercise on their own and have a conversation about what matters to each of you, keeping an open mind and reserving judgment.
(Note: this exercise is not meant to contrast the differences between people, but instead, offer a better understanding of what matters to each of us.)

Date: _____

Step 1. At this moment in time, what specific question are you contemplating about your life?

Step 2. Name your values under each of the three aspects of your life.

What are 5 **Self** values important to you right now?

Next, rank your **Self** values, starting with the highest.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What are 5 **career** values important to you right now?

Next, rank your **career** values, starting with the highest.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What are 5 **relationship** values important to you right now?

Next, rank your **relationship** values, starting with the highest.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 3. When completed, consider the following:

- What do you notice? Are there any values that are the same across all 3 categories? Any surprises? Any confirmations?
- Imagine doing this exercise 5-years ago, what values do you think mattered then? Would any have changed today?
- How will you use this information to respond to the first question about what you are contemplating?

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Examples of Values

Achievement	Happiness	Purpose
Adventure	Hard Work	Reaching out
Ambition	Health	Respect
Appreciation	Helping Others	Responsibility
Balance	Honesty	Right Choices
Believe	Hope	Sacrifice
Believe in Yourself	Humility	Security
Caring	Including Others	Sharing
Character	Independence	Smile
Charity	Ingenuity	Spirituality
Class and Grace	Innovation	Sportsmanship
Commitment	Inspiration	Spread Your Wings
Common Ground	Integrity	Stewardship
Companionship	Kindness	Strength
Compassion	Laughter	Teaching by Example
Compromise	Leadership	Teamwork
Confidence	Learning	True Beauty
Courage	Listening	Trust
Courtesy	Live Life	Unity
Curiosity	Live Your Dreams	
Dedication	Love	
Determination	Loyalty	
Devotion	Making a Difference	
Encouragement	Marriage	
Excellence	Mentoring	
Excitement	Motivation	
Family	Opportunity	
Foresight	Patience	
Freedom	Peace	
Friendship	Perseverance	
Fulfillment	Persistence	
Fun	Power	
Gratitude	Practice	
Growth	Preparation	