



Values Clarification Exercises

As you now know, clarity is incredibly important for having the courage to take action, as well in making decisions easier for us. Remember Day 1:

beliefs/values-->thoughts-->emotions-->decisions/actions-->experience/destiny

So it makes sense that we start at clarifying our values! It can sometimes be difficult to come up with the words to describe them. Below are some ideas. Also, don't be afraid to use your own metaphors to represent a value of yours, like..."chocolate," or "mango juice," or "schmerpy." The important thing is that it has meaning for YOU, and that you are clear about what importance it has and what it represents. Add any others that may apply to your life!

Sample Values

Aspired Values (what you aspire to have)	Functional Values (how you attain aspired values)
Achievement	Accountability/Responsibility
Adventure	Affection
Balance	Autonomy
Beauty	Communication
Community	Competency
Contribution	Courtesy
Family	Courage
Freedom	Creativity
Friendship	Discipline
Fun	Drive
Health	Fairness
Justice	Flexibility
Love	Forgiveness
Nature/Environment	Giving

Partnership	Honesty
Peace	Humor
Power	Knowledge
Recognition	Loyalty
Self-worth	Organization
Spirituality	Reason
Stability	Safety
Wealth	Team
Wisdom	Tolerance

Inherited Values

Let's start by identifying your Inherited Values. Use the form below and list the top values of your:

a) mom

b) dad

(or the people who raised you)

c) culture (predominant environments in which you were raised, i.e., rural south, strict Irish Catholic, inner city, etc.)

d) the mentor who has had the biggest impact on your life.

You will often need to "guess" as to what each of these peoples' values were. Base it on the way they lived their lives and the things they said during a time when you were around them a lot and most impressionable.

Mom's values

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Dad's values

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

My cultural values

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Mentor

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

After listing out the top values for each of these significant roles in your life, **circle** those that you believe are running your life and your decisions today. **Cross out** those that are not working for you. Try not to place any judgment on yourself, or the roles others have played in your life. Recognize that it is all a part of the journey.

Current Values

Next, take a look at the current reality of your life. Based on the way you live your life today, and the way you have lived over the past few months, what are your current life priorities? Note again, that this has nothing to do with *shoulds*. Forget about the way you think you *should* be living your life or the way others think you *should* be living. The goal here is to capture the current reality of the situation so that you will have a place to start in creating your future. Not to *should* on yourself;)

You may find narrowing these down to five difficult. Note that *this does not exclude other values that are important to you*. For this exercise, you want to select the **top five**. They will be those values upon which you spend the **most amount of time, energy, and thought**. After you have listed the top five, re-list them in order of priority as they show up in your life currently (not as you think they *should* show up).

My current values:

List the top-five values that have consistently been present in your life over the past three months

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

List your current values in order of priority:

Prioritize based on which values have taken up the most time or thought in your life over the past three months. While this may seem difficult, it is important that you consciously choose an order based upon how things have really been occurring in your life.

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

My ideal values

The next step in this values-clarification process is to think about your **ideal life**. Get “greedy” and really go for what you want. All of it! Watch out for those gremlins that try to tell you something isn’t “realistic,” or that you are not worthy.

Close your eyes, sit quietly, and bring yourself to center for a few minutes. Then picture how your ideal life would look and feel like. Sometimes, when “ideal life” seems overwhelming to consider, it can be helpful to do instead imagine your “ideal day.” Not a crazy-miracle-perfection day, but what your ideal day would look like if it was part of your regular, kick-ass week.

Where are you living? Who is in your life? What are you doing when you wake up? What “things” do you have? What are you doing with your time throughout your day(s)? How do you feel when you wake up? What time do you go to bed? Get detailed!

Remember to envision not only how your life looks but who you are **being** in life, the type of person you are. And get detailed and visceral about how you are **feeling** in this ideal place. For example, “I feel confident and content. My body is at ease and comfortable. I feel strong and balanced. I have a calm energy, and I inspire others throughout my day...”

When you have this picture firmly in your mind, jot down some notes then list the values that are represented in this scene, what is important to you. Then narrow it down to the top five and list them in order of priority. What would be the number-one priority in your ideal life?

The values that are represented in your image:

Then list your **top-five** ideal values based on what you imagine your ideal life to be.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

List your ideal values **in order of priority**. It is important that you prioritize your ideal values so that you will have consciousness about what is important to you. It is okay to change the order at a later date.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
- 5.** _____

Immediately after this visualization, take out some crayons or markers and draw whatever picture comes to mind. Play some relaxing music while you draw or paint. I recommend that you do not skip this exercise. While it may seem trivial, drawing or painting accesses the intuitive side of your brain and often provides big insights for people. It is also fun! Don't worry about your perception of your of artistic ability. Artistic talent has nothing to do with this exercise. Go ahead and use fingerpaint. It's fun! Use it on your skin (more fun!).

After drawing/painting, notice what objects, people, colors , emotions showed up in your picture. Have some friends look at it and tell you what they see (depending on where you put the fingerpaint on your skin). Take a few minutes to journal your thoughts after this exercise and insert them in your notebook. Refer back to your picture often.

Close the Gap to Your Ideal Values

To close the gap to your ideal life, notice the differences between your current values and your ideal values. The lists may be the same but in a different order, or they may be totally different lists. Which of those things on your ideal list would you like to be different in your life now? How can you start to make that happen? Write some action steps that will move you forward in the direction of your ideal life.

Where is the Gap?

Note that even things that appear to be small differences, such as a difference in Priority 1 & 2, can make a *big* difference in your life.

For example, if Laura Smith decides she ideally wants Friendship to come before Achievement in her life, she will have to make some significant changes in her behavior to make this happen.

Below, list those ideal values you would like to move up on the priority list in your current life, and action steps to make it happen.

Ideal Values	Action Steps
1.	
2.	

3.	
4.	
5.	