



## Values Clarification Process

### Step 1: Identifying and Clarifying Core Values

The goal of this exercise is to discover and clarify your deepest core values.

It's something to use with your clients right at the beginning to get them motivated and inspired when making healthy choices becomes difficult. Feel free to use this document or your own variation with your clients. Start by doing the process yourself.

Values clarification is the first step toward developing a lifestyle that's in harmony with your innermost desires. It's very valuable to get in touch with what's truly important so when difficult choices present themselves, you can make a decision that is consistent with whom you really are.

A core value is something that is so important to you that it affects how you live your life. It determines your activities in every moment. You may have core values of integrity, love, health, or any number of things, but they are so central to you that you would go to the ends of the earth to preserve them.



Read each of the words in the "Values List" below and mark the ones that appeal to you. Make an emotional decision as you read through them -- don't even think about it. You can circle them, or put a star or check next to each one. Mark every word in that list that feels especially important to you, and write in any particular values you hold dear that are missing from the list. This is your first pass through the words, which should take you just a little bit of time (maybe 5 minutes).

Next, take another pass through the words. This time you might find similarities in some of the words you marked. For example, *wealth* and *money* are similar, as are *wisdom* and *knowledge*. If you have circled words that seem synonymous evaluate which one of the two seems to resonate with you more, and cross off the other one. You may need to spend a bit longer this time, in order to pick that exact word that feels best to you. This is an intuitive process so just listen to your heart.

A couple of things worth noting: There is a difference between **means values** and **ends values**, and with this exercise we are focusing on **ends values**. For example, let's say you circled *money*. Money is, in our framework, more of a means value because money is a vehicle to secure those things that are truly valuable to us. A stack of green stuff in hand usually does not mean anything, of and by itself. What may be truly valued are the things money can provide, such as freedom, adventure, travel to exotic places and the connection with nature found there. So in this instance money is a **means goal**, whereas some of the others may be **ends goals**, as in "I really just want the joy of experiencing nature in many different settings," or "I want adventure in my life." For the purpose of this exercise you are encouraged to *focus on ends goals*.



## Values List

Ability	Energy	Intimacy	Responsibility
Acceptance	Excitement	Justice	Risk
Accuracy	Fame	Kindness	Romance
Achievement	Family	Knowledge	Routine
Adventure	Forgiveness	Law-Abidance	Safety
Altruism	Freedom	Leaving a Mark	Security
Balance	Friendship	Love	Self-Control
Beauty	Fun	Mastery	Self-Esteem
Brotherhood	Glory	Maturity	Self-Interest
Charity	God	Money	Service
Children	Goodness	Nature	Sex
Comfort	Greatness	Optimism	Spirituality
Communication	Growth	Originality	Strength
Compassion	Happiness	Patience	Success
Competence	Health	Peace	Support
Conquest	Honesty	Pleasure	Surrender
Cooperation	Honor	Popularity	Talent
Courage	Hope	Power	Toys
Creativity	Humility	Prestige	Treasure
Culture	Independence	Pride	Trust
Dignity	Individuality	Privacy	Truth
Discovery	Innocence.	Property	Wealth
Duty	Innovation	Purpose	Wisdom
Ease	Integrity	Reason	

When doing the first exercise above, you may have found a difference between what you really want for yourself and how you are living now. This is not uncommon. In fact, gaps between the two are exactly what lead to decisions that are out of alignment with what you really want in your life (and the reason this exercise is so valuable!)

*If you are among those of us who tend towards self-sabotaging behaviors (such as binging on inappropriate foods in spite of a newly devised goal suggesting otherwise...) take a moment first to recognize that finding those disconnects is an amazing discovery! Reviewing your marked Values List, consider which are fully realized in your life, and the ones you want but are not quite actualized. It will be a very important distinction.*

Another thing you may notice when doing the exercise – you have probably grown and are now already living closer to your goals than in past years! Acknowledging this can be powerful.

**That's it! You're ready to prioritize your top ten values.**



## Step 2: Prioritizing Your Top Ten Values

Next you are going to narrow your list of words from the first exercise down to the ten that have the highest value to you. This is not an easy step, and requires much thought and soul searching. Of course, in real life you would not necessarily have to choose among your values as an all-or-nothing proposition. But there may be moments when you have to choose, so this process will help you.

Step 2 may seem to be a daunting task, but the following technique is offered to guide you:

Take two values you chose from your list and compare them. It's helpful if you can say them out loud. Ask yourself, "If I could have ONLY ONE, which would it be?" With the chosen value continue through the list, comparing it with the next one on the list.

Continue on down until you've reached the bottom of the list. The chosen value is your number 1 priority. Write it in the #1 slot on the form on the next page.

Now start the process all over again to determine your #2 priority. Continue until you have listed your top ten priorities.

*To help elucidate* – say you are comparing 'Family' and 'Self-Esteem.' This may push a few buttons, leaving you to respond, "I can't give up family for self esteem" or "It would be terribly selfish to choose self-esteem over family." But this exercise is for you alone -- choose whatever comes up, from the inside out, without judgment or self-arguments.

In reality, you are not going to have to give up family to have self-esteem, but there may be *situations* in which you will need to choose protection of your self-esteem over family, and wouldn't it be nice to know what your top values are? You will be shown later how to use this information to make the best decisions, in every moment of your day.

You will notice the following form has blank spaces below each of the top ten values. This is for you to write a short description – just a sentence or two – about what this particular value means to you, why it is important. For example, for 'family' one might write "intimacy, love; I enjoy connecting with people and sharing people's lives."

Your description should be kept short and to the point – just a few good descriptive phrases are needed.



**Take your time and enjoy the assignment!**



My Top Ten Core Values in Priority Order	
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	
5)	
6)	
7)	
8)	
9)	
10)	



### Step 3: Expanding on Your Top Five Values

Now you have the opportunity to dig deeper into your TOP 5 Values! You are asked to elaborate on why they are important enough to rate them in the Top 5, and to *also* relate how you feel each time you experience these values.

Be very specific in your word choice, and also put a lot of emotion into your language. You may want to write, read it back a few times, and change the wording a little so that it viscerally resonates and feels like, “Wow. This is really true to me and who I really am!” You want to capture how you feel when you access this.

So, for example, if ‘love’ is your top priority you want to go to that place of experiencing love. You want to say, “I am filled with love. What is this like for me? Is it a tingly feeling? Do I just feel joyful? Do I feel relaxed?” Notice what it is that you feel when powerfully accessing the state of love, then write down your description of that feeling.

NOTE: Should you find that “health” does not pop up on their list of Top 5 Values, remember that it is necessary to be true to who you are. However, we encourage you to imagine that you are suffering from a disease or disability, and living in pain or distress. Ask yourself how this situation might affect your ability to express those Top 5 Values. Are your current Top 5 still a higher priority than your health? If not, re-evaluate the order in light of this new awareness.





## Expanding on My Top Five Core Values in Priority Order

1)

What's important about this value?

How I feel when I access this state:

2)

What's important about this value?

How I feel when I access this state:

3)

What's important about this value?

How I feel when I access this state:



4)

What's important about this value?

How I feel when I access this state:

5)

What's important about this value?

How I feel when I access this state: