



PEACEFUL LIVING

Discovering Your True Values

for individuals, relationships,
families or teams

How To Live a Happy Life by Aligning Yourself To Your Highest Values

If you're struggling in some aspect of your life right now - career, relationships, finances, family, teamwork or feelings and expectations about yourself - it's possible that the problem is not with you. You may actually be pursuing people, goals or experiences that are not in line with your true self or expecting others to know what will make you happy. To get happy, you need to be willing to challenge aspects of your life that aren't working for you - including the possibility that you may be wanting and pursuing things that are simply not right for you.

If you're not seeing positive results or you catch yourself making excuses for not following through on longterm plans or dreams, don't be too hard on yourself. Instead, reassess your goals, plans or dreams. Are they what you really want? One of the most important reasons why you may not be motivated to accomplish a particular goal is because the goal does not fit in with what's most important to you. In other words, it doesn't fit your highest values.

For example, if you value education and your goal is to take on extra subjects so you can finish university in the next year but your highest values are being with your family and friends - consider giving yourself more-time to complete this goal so that you won't have to neglect your friends and family and therefore make yourself more vulnerable to depression and anxiety.

Anything you hold dear can be called a value. All you have to do to discover your values is to answer one simple question, **“What's most important to me in this area in my life?”** Your values are the behaviours, emotions and activities to which you are naturally drawn. When engaged in these behaviours, emotions and activities you feel most like yourself - connected, excited and happy and less likely to project your unhappiness onto your family, partner and friends.

Many of us spend our lives trying to consciously or unconsciously honour these values. We find ourselves getting upset or frustrated, bored or resigned - wishing and hoping to have a better life. This better life, among other things is based on your highest values.

Life's values are your personal compass, when you're not happy, you're not living to your values. Not using this compass wisely results in frustration, disappointment and a nagging sense that life could be more if only somehow something was different.

WHEN YOU SET YOUR GOALS ACCORDING TO YOUR HIGHEST VALUES YOU CAN REACH THEM WITHOUT HAVING TO CONTINUALLY MOTIVATE YOURSELF.

So, the first thing you have to do is find out what your values are. Then at least you'll know what direction your brain, heart and body are being pulled. What are your highest values? Is it love, happiness, security? Are they your family, your friendships, your freedom, your education, a worthy cause, teaching or mentoring others, adventure, security, having fun, your creativity or your health? There are no wrong or right answers - only the discovery of your own unique values or shared values (within a relationship).

Your life goals, plans or dreams take their meaning from your values. Therefore, the most effective way

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS WHY YOU MAY NOT BE MOTIVATED TO ACCOMPLISH A PARTICULAR GOAL IN LIFE IS BECAUSE THE GOAL DOES NOT FIT IN WITH WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU. IN OTHER WORDS, IT DOESN'T FIT YOUR HIGHEST VALUES.





to achieve them is to make sure they are value-based instead of “want” or “should” based.

Decision Making Comes Down to Values Clarification

When you're not clear about what you value most in any situation you also weaken your capacity to make effective decisions. In fact, all decision making comes down to values clarification. Anytime you have difficulty making an important decision, it's generally the result of being unclear about what you value most within that given situation. When

you learn to identify your core values, you won't find yourself torn between how to respond to a person, problem or opportunity - your values will choose for you.

Just like our life goals, sometimes we also need to review our life values. If your values no longer serve you, you can change them at any time. Part of the power of values and setting goals is flexibility. If they feel inflexible it could be that you've let someone else set a goal or value for you.

Regularly reassess your values - based on where you are right now in your life. Are they still the right values for you? Is that still the right direction for you? Consistently reviewing your life goals and values will keep you on track and produce the results you can be committed to.

The following is a great exercise in helping you to identify your values and become more true to yourself. **Take a moment to discover your values from the behaviours, emotions or activities you most value in your life.** Then in order of priority identify your top five highest values, either adapt your goals to fit the value or get rid of it and come up with another goal.

Start using your values as the reference point in your life – not your goals.

True Values Exercise

The purpose of the **True Values** exercise is to help you to identify what your core values really are and to re-orient your life around expressing these values.

Step 1: Identify Your Values

If you're doing this by yourself, follow these questions as written. If you're doing it as part of a couple, family or group then each person gets a chance to identify their values, the other asks and writes these down for them.

Start by asking **“What's important to you in the context of a happy, fulfilling life/loving relationship/functional family/cooperative team?”**

List each value as they come to you (use the space provided on the next page) – do not change the wording just write it down as a single word or short phrase.

When you hit a blank spot (as they stare off into space), ask them/yourself **“What else is important?”**

When you think you've exhausted the list, then ask this:

“Now I want you to just stop, and remember a specific incident when you were totally motivated in your life .. And as you go back to that time now, step into your body, see what you saw at the time, hear what you heard and feel the feelings of being totally motivated.... CLOSE YOUR EYES and see that now. Now rewind the movie just a bit and tell me, what was the name of the feeling or emotion that was present just prior to the feeling of being totally motivated?”

I F YOUR VALUES NO LONGER SERVE YOU, YOU CAN CHANGE THEM AT ANY TIME. PART OF THE POWER OF VALUES AND GOALS IS FLEXIBILITY....

Now you have your complete list, now you need to rank them in order of importance.

My Ten Highest Values are:

“As you look at your list of values, what’s most important to you in the context of a happy, fulfilling life?” (write the number 1 against it.)

“What’s the second most important?” (write 2 against it)

And so on. until you get to 10 values (the rest are not as important as these 10).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 2: Narrow Down Your Values to 5

- We all value a little of everything listed on this page, but now you need to pick the 5 True Values from the ones you circled.
- You may wish to compare your values with each other and ask yourself, “Now, do I really prefer 4 or 6? Which ones aren’t that intriguing to me anymore? Which ones, when honoured, make the other ones not as exciting?”

My Five True Values are:

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

If you’re working on relationship, family or group values, then do the above process for all members and then come up with an agreed list of what your top 5-10 combined relationship/family/team values are. Ensure everyone gets a say to ensure that everyone is on board with the new way of relating and working together.

*“OUR GREATEST
GLORY IS NOT IN
NEVER FALLING,
BUT IN RISING
EVERY TIME WE
FALL.”*

CONFUCIUS

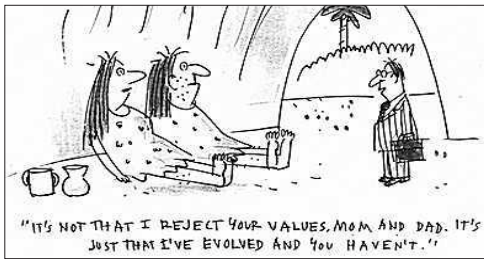
Elicit the meaning for each of your top 5-10 values. Ask yourself:

“What does _____ (insert the value) mean to you?”

How do you know when you’re getting/experiencing _____ (insert the value)?

How do you know when you don’t have or aren’t experiencing _____ (insert the value)?”

Values Alignment for A Happier Life



Now, examine these values and ensure they are based on what you value and not what others want you to value. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Why is this value important enough to me to be a True Value?
2. Who am I when I AM this value? How do I act? What do I think about? What motivates me?
3. Who am I when I am NOT this value? How do I behave? How do I feel about myself, about others, about life?
4. How well am I honouring or expressing this value in my life right now?
5. What changes do I need to make in my life in order to fully honour and express each value I have identified?

Is there another value that you would like to live your life, relationship, family by or have within a team environment? Make these adjustments now to your list. Are you now able to commit to living your life in this specific area according to these values?

How to Incorporate your True Values into your Life

Following are some of the ways you can use your values to have a happier life:

Express your True Values through a project:

Come up with a fun project which gives your values a showcase; a way to get stimulated and excited; a way to show yourself that living your values is both possible and fulfilling. This project shouldn't have any should's about it. Don't pick a goal that you are not ready for or one that you think you should want, but really don't. Rather, design a project or goal that lets you play big or play well, effortlessly. Ask yourself, “What could I achieve that would be a full expression of this value?”

Perhaps it may be a holiday, a recommitment of marriage vows, regular family game nights, team building weekends and such. Stretch your imagination. Get everyone involved in designing the project.

IF YOU HAVE A GOAL THAT DOES NOT FIT WITH ONE OF YOUR TOP 5 VALUES, EITHER ADAPT THE GOAL TO FIT THE VALUE OR GET RID OF IT AND COME UP WITH ANOTHER. DON'T ADAPT THE VALUE TO THE GOAL AND ONLY HAVE ONE GOAL PER VALUE.

USE YOUR VALUES AS THE REFERENCE POINT IN YOUR LIFE - NOT YOUR GOALS!

2. Now that you have your True Values identified you will want to design a way to have them all expressed in your life. You can do this by aligning your life goals with your-values:

Step A - Make a list of your 5-10 goals for this year

Step B - Make a list of your top 5 values

Step C - Match your goals with your values

Lastly, set your Vision & Mission

At this stage, it is very empowering to create vision, and mission for this area in your life.

Vision – a vision outlines what you wish to achieve. What are your expectations as you move towards your future. Remember expectation rule outcomes. The moment you bring your vision into your conscious awareness means that you are empowered to make it happen. A vision can be far reaching yet can be revised along the way.

Mission – is the path that you take to get there. A mission statement is a expression of what you're all about – what is it that you really want to achieve – and the principles you choose to govern this area of your life. It is based on the idea that all things are created twice. First comes the idea, or the mental creation, then comes the reality, or the physical creation. It's the blueprint before the construction. It's the flight plan before you take off. It's deciding what kind of life you want for yourself and identifying the principles that will help you to get there. And that mission will give you the context upon every decision that you take to make it. It will become your destination. It will be your huge powerful magnet that will draw you and help you to stay on track.

My/Our _____ Values are:

My/Our _____ Vision is:



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