

Identifying Your Values

Our values are the principles or qualities we find matter the most in our lives. To better understand what motivates and fulfills us, we need to be really clear and honest about our values, to give our life (both professional and personal) real meaning and purpose.

The following is a list of values to help you identify which are the most important to you right now in your life.

First, check off all the values that are important to you - check off as many as you want. Be careful not to check off a value just because you think it “should” be important to you.

- Achievement/Accomplishment: achieving tasks/goals successfully
- Advancement: consistently moving ahead to new opportunities
- Autonomy: choosing own projects, setting own pace, minimal supervision
- Belonging to a Group: being identified with a close-knit group working toward mutual goals (family, community or work related)
- Building Something: creating or establishing a thing or idea
- Challenge: involvement with stimulating or demanding tasks/projects
- Competition: participating in activities that are measurable
- Community Involvement: contributing regularly to local, national or international well-being
- Creativity: making, inventing or producing innovative things or ideas
- Diversity: living/working with people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.
- Entrepreneurship: organizing & starting a new business or enterprise
- Equality: having the same value or status as others
- Excitement: engaging in continual change and variety
- Fame: public visibility, being widely recognized and renowned
- Family: time & energy for children, spouse, parents & relatives
- Financial Security: pay/benefits that are satisfactory and predictable
- Friendships: frequent and caring relationships outside the family
- Fun: experiencing pleasure, enjoyment and delight
- Happiness: feeling pleasure, contentment, well-being and joy
- Harmony: sense of inner calm and tranquility
- Health: positive physical and emotional health
- Independence: being self-reliant, freedom from control of others
- Integrity: adherence to personal code of ethics
- Leadership: guiding, motivating or directing others
- Learning: continuous drive to acquire knowledge and new skills
- Leisure: pursuing non-work related activities
- Physical Activity: active in regular physical work/challenges
- Recognition: being positively acknowledged by others
- Respect: being treated with consideration and fairness
- Risk-Taking: willingness to push oneself to face challenges/demands
- Security/Stability: predictability of routine, roles, life style

- Self-Expression: ability to communicate personal ideas & feelings
- Service to Others: giving assistance, support and aid to others
- Spirituality: having a spiritual belief that influences one's life work
- Status: possessing a prestigious job title or position
- Wealth: having significant financial resources and possessions
- Work/Life Balance: a positive balance of time and energy

Are there other values that are important to you but not on this list? If so, write them down using your own words.

- _____
- _____

Second, sort the values that you have checked off into the following three categories. Write the # next to the chosen value. A good way to do this is to remember a time in your life when you were the happiest and then ask yourself, "Was this value being fulfilled during this time in my life?"

- #1s *Must Have in My Work/Personal Life*
- #2s *Nice to Have But Not Necessary*
- #3s *Can Live Without*

Third, take your list of "Must Haves" and write them in priority order with the most important one first. Try to limit your number to a maximum of six.

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

Now you are ready to integrate these "Must Have" values into your life and your career. You may find you need to modify or refine your list as you move through the process of self-discovery. Keep checking in on these values as you make decisions, to make sure you're aligning your actions with what is most important to you.