

You have more values than you may think

We all have personal values, whether we are aware of them, or not. Values can be seen in the way you live, study and work. When you feel that something is important, you value that over something else, and this reflects in your decisions. Values are present when making smaller and bigger choices related to all aspects of your life.

When your values and your actions correspond, you feel that your life in general is good. If there is a mismatch, you start to feel that something is going wrong.

For example, if you do not value competition, but for some reason have ended up selling phone subscriptions in a highly competitive work environment, competing for weekly bonuses, you would most likely feel uneasy. Or, if you value teamwork above anything else, having a back-office job, analysing samples alone would probably drive you nuts sooner or later 😊.

So, it is worth the effort to identify your most important values. When you make decisions that respect your values, you can lead a life that looks and feels your own. When your values are clear, you are able to identify and grab opportunities that suit you.

Find your top priority values

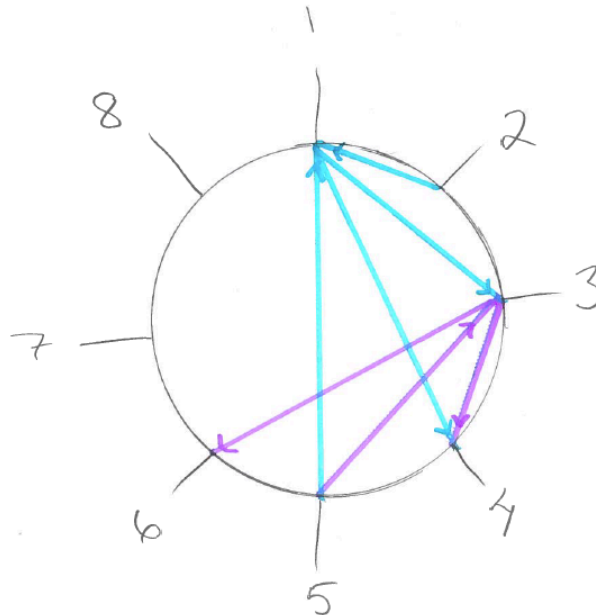
Let's find your top values by looking at the moments when you felt really good and aligned with your life.

- A. When were you happiest?** When did you feel really proud? When did you feel satisfied with yourself and your life?
 - Answer these three questions by writing down a few examples of such situations. Use your experiences from studies, internship periods, summer jobs, and also from your personal life.
 - Enrich the examples by describing what you were doing, with whom, and what contributed to your positive, happy, proud, and satisfied feelings.

- B. Find the connected values:** In the following list, you may find some common values.
 - What values are connected to these feelings that you have had? Why do you remember all these good moments that you just described so clearly?
 - Which values on the list apply to you? Find 6-10 values. If your value is not on the list, write your own.

Accountability	Excellence	Perfection
Accuracy	Excitement	Piety
Achievement	Expertise	Positivity
Adventurousness	Exploration	Practicality
Altruism	Expressiveness	Preparedness
Ambition	Fairness	Professionalism
Assertiveness	Faith	Prudence
Balance	Family-orientedness	Quality-orientation
Being the best	Fidelity	Reliability
Belonging	Fitness	Resourcefulness
Boldness	Fluency	Restraint
Calmness	Focus	Results-oriented
Carefulness	Freedom	Rigor
Challenge	Fun	Security
Cheerfulness	Generosity	Self-actualization
Clear-mindedness	Goodness	Self-control
Commitment	Grace	Selflessness
Community	Growth	Self-reliance
Compassion	Happiness	Sensitivity
Competitiveness	Hard Work	Serenity
Consistency	Health	Service
Contentment	Helping Society	Shrewdness
Continuous Improvement	Holiness	Simplicity
Contribution	Honesty	Soundness
Control	Honor	Speed
Cooperation	Humility	Spontaneity
Correctness	Independence	Stability
Courtesy	Ingenuity	Strategic
Creativity	Inner Harmony	Strength
Curiosity	Inquisitiveness	Structure
Decisiveness	Insightfulness	Success
Democraticness	Intelligence	Support
Dependability	Intellectual Status	Teamwork
Determination	Intuition	Temperance
Devoutness	Joy	Thankfulness
Diligence	Justice	Thoroughness
Discipline	Leadership	Thoughtfulness
Discretion	Legacy	Timeliness
Diversity	Love	Tolerance
Dynamism	Loyalty	Traditionalism
Economy	Making a difference	Trustworthiness
Effectiveness	Mastery	Truth-seeking
Efficiency	Merit	Understanding
Elegance	Obedience	Uniqueness
Empathy	Openness	Unity
Enjoyment	Order	Usefulness
Enthusiasm	Originality	Vision
Equality	Patriotism	Vitality

- C. Prioritising:** When making decisions, you will use your values as a basis. Sometimes it is a question of determining which value is more important in a certain situation. Now you can find out the order of importance of your values.
- Look at the list of your 6-10 top values. Write them on a blank paper, around a circle, as seen in the example below. (In the example, someone has started to compare 8 values, here indicated with numbers; you can write the values instead)
 - Begin by comparing any two values around the circle against each other. Connect these two values with a line. If you could satisfy just one value of these two, which one would you choose over the other? Draw an arrowhead pointing at it. To help, think of a real-life situation, where both of these values would be challenged when making a choice.
 - Continue with the next value pair, and the next, so that in the end you have compared every value against other values.
 - Find the order of your values by looking at the arrowheads. Your top priority values are the ones that have the most arrowheads. What kind of a personal value set can you discover?



D. Final check - what does it look like?

- What were your key findings?
- How do you feel about them?
- Do these values represent your world and what you think is important?
- How would you speak about these values with others, for example with friends or in a job interview?

Your values will not remain 100% same during the course of your life. Instead, they will evolve. So, when you live your life onward, remember to stop from time to time, and check how your life and work experiences and your overall life situation have affected your values.