

ESTABLISHING *Your Core Values*



You may find yourself **lacking clarity on which direction to take your life in**, and this may cause you to **feel restless**. **By establishing your values, you will have your very own personal navigation system** to take you to your place of greatness. Find out how.

Values are responsible for the decisions that you make; the feelings that you feel; the boundaries that you set, and the behaviours that you exhibit. When you establish your personal values, you define the core of who you are and you are better able to navigate through your life and day-to-day situations you encounter with ease and confidence. However, if you haven't given any thought to what your values are, you may have been experiencing indecisiveness, feelings of unworthiness, betrayal by others, and even withdrawn from your social circle. By establishing your values, you begin build your own personal brand of who you are and what you stand for.



HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN ANY OF THESE SITUATIONS?

Many times when you haven't given much thought about your core values you end up in certain situations that can create a certain level of tension in your life:

- **Giving up your time** to attend an event or gathering that has little importance to you.
- **Pleasing others** because you are unsure of what direction you want to take your life in.
- **Setting goals**, but failing to act on them since you're unsure of your purpose.
- **Sacrificing your reputation** in doing something for others that you don't feel is right.
- **Not speaking up** about something that you don't agree with.
- **Having others tell you** what to do.

A lot of the times, these situations can be easily prevented just by being aware of what your core values are. By having values, you also feel better and it improves your subjective wellness.

HOW TO ESTABLISH YOUR CORE VALUES

Becoming aware of your core values and establishing them is actually easier than you may think it is because in many ways your attitudes and actions reflect your values.

Here are some questions to ask yourself to get started:

- What types of things **make me feel happy?**
- What/who **inspires** me?
- How do I **treat people?**
- What **causes do I support?**
- What **matters the most** to me?

WHEN YOU BECOME AWARE OF YOUR CORE VALUES, YOU APPEAR MORE CONFIDENT TO OTHERS

Once you begin to answer these questions, grab a pen and a piece of paper and brainstorm: actions, feelings, behaviours, and beliefs that accurately describe who you are. You don't have to place too much focus to your thoughts, just write down everything that comes to your mind. To allow yourself to be more efficient, set a two-minute timer; this way you won't let your mind slip into other thoughts.

Once you have your list, create four columns and label them: *actions, feelings, behaviours and beliefs* and place any word under the appropriate column as you see fit.

Next, pick your top ten. You want to narrow down your list because the goal is to really hone in to which values really represent who you are.

YOUR BIG THREE

Now it's time for you to prioritize your list down to your *big three*. Look for patterns, you may find that certain words may overlap. For example, you may have words like: fitness, healthy diet, and self-care - you can then come up with umbrella words to shorten your list. In this case, this all falls under '*health*.' Once you have your big three, it's time to do your happy dance and then to start incorporating your values into your lifestyle!

HOW TO LIVE BY YOUR VALUES

Alright, now that you have your *big three* you can begin to live by your values by doing this simple exercise in your head any time you are confronted with a situation that you feel requires careful navigation. This is what you do:

1. **Mentally become aware** of your big three in any moment.
2. **Check off all of your values** that are in alignment with the situation you are faced with.
3. **Are all three of your values checked off?** If they are, then you can give yourself the green light to proceed full throttle ahead. If you could only check off one or two of your values, then the situation is *not* in full alignment with who you are - honour your values by backing away respectfully.

CHANGE YOUR VALUES WHENEVER NEEDED

You are always going to be growing and evolving and your current values may no longer serve you in your near future. This is OK. It just means you are becoming clearer of your purpose and what new adventures you are navigating yourself towards. Whenever you feel that you have outgrown your values, sit down and do this value setting exercise again.



HERE ARE SOME MORE BENEFITS THAT ESTABLISHING YOUR CORE VALUES WILL SERVE YOU WITH:

- Career satisfaction
- Trusting and honest relationships
- Finding your purpose
- Becoming more self-aware
- Gaining more respect from others
- Establishing mental clarity/decluttering your mind
- Helping in saying 'no' more easily to undesirable requests
- Creating boundaries
- Aligning yourself with 'the right' opportunities and people
- Advocating for causes that you stand for
- Being a role model for others
- Embodying success and happiness
- Being more empathetic towards others
- Understanding your limits
- Taking more control of your life
- Leading with integrity
- Manifesting your goals

HERE ARE 10 STRATEGIES TO KEEP YOURSELF LIVING IN ALIGNMENT WITH YOUR VALUES

#1 Write your values down and look at them everyday, or have them appear as your screensaver on your phone. The more you see your values, the more your brain processes them and the greater the chances of you living by them.

#2 Your values can help you with goal setting. For example, if a person, situation or thought is getting in the way of you fulfilling your goals, ask yourself if any of these 'distractions' are aligned with your values. If they're not - focus on your goals.

#3 Create a mission statement for yourself that aligns with your values. This way you become clear on your purpose and further take action on your goals.

#4 Use your core values to make decisions that effect your everyday life and also to reveal your confidence to others.

#5 Elevate your well-being. When you are trying to prioritize your commitments. Schedule what is important to you first and if there is room left in your schedule, you can choose to commit to other requests.

#6 Set your boundaries. Your core values give you clarity on what types of boundaries to set for yourself so you further have control over you life and well-being.

#7 Be guided towards a cause to advocate for or to support. You will better live out your purpose by helping others grow.

#8 Steer yourself towards the right career/job. Apply for jobs that align with your values. This will ensure career satisfaction

#9 Maintain healthy relationships with your friends and happy. By communicating your values, others become aware of your outlook and respect your boundaries.

#10 Reflect upon your values often and change them as you further grow to better live in alignment with your thoughts and actions.