



## **PERSONAL VALUES REFLECTION**

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### **Activity's Purpose and Goals:**

Most people have such busy lives these days that they don't take the time to stop and reflect on the core values that guide their lives. The purpose of this exercise is to help you identify your most important values and then to evaluate for yourself how much these values are integrated into your life. A values-centered life is more rewarding and fulfilling, and an awareness of your values can guide you in making important career and life decisions.

**Length of Time Required:** 90 minutes

**Pre-work Needed:** None

**Best Type of Participants:** This exercise works for both undergraduate and graduate students. However, graduate students and part-time working students are likely to get more out of it.

### **Number of Participants:**

Minimum: 1

Maximum Recommended: 50

### **Specific Steps:**

1. The facilitator will hand out the Personal Values Reflection Form and review the steps with participants.
2. Participants are then sent out to work on the Form for 30 minutes. Ideally they should have access to the outdoors or to other places that support inner reflection. Ask them not to talk to anyone until they return.
3. After 30 minutes, participants return to the room and are put in triads. Each person shares their top five values, and the details about at least two of the values from the reflection portion of the form.
4. After all three people have shared, then they each help each other to identify specific actions that can help with living a chosen value in a more integrated way. The facilitator may wish to give an example of one of his or her core values and an action he or she could take to integrate that value more. Most people are

uncomfortable committing to concrete actions, yet this can be the most valuable part of the exercise. It helps if the facilitator walks around to the triads and coaches people on concrete actions they might take.

5. The participants reconvene into a large group for the debriefing questions.

**Debriefing Questions:**

1. How important is it to be aware of one's personal values?
2. In what ways might this be important to business? To leadership?
3. What role does one's faith or spirituality play in values formation and values clarification?
4. Can values change?
5. What happens if we don't live by our values, or don't pay attention to them?
6. What did you learn from this exercise?
7. Are there any changes you are going to make as a result of your personal values reflection?

## PERSONAL VALUES REFLECTION FORM

This Personal Values Reflection will take you through four important steps.

**STEP ONE:** Through a brainstorming process, identify your five most important values, the values that are at the core of who you are, and put them in a prioritized order (with one being the most important).

**STEP TWO:** Define each core value in a sentence or two. In your definition process, it may help to think of an experience in your life when you fully lived out this value or an experience when you deeply felt the absence of this value. Describe this experience briefly.

**STEP THREE:** Reflect on where you are in the process of incorporating or integrating this value in your life using the values integration scale below.

1 I live this value every day. It has become a seamless part of my consciousness and everyday life. I feel great about how deeply this value has become an integral part of my everyday life.

2 I live this value consistently, it is more present than absent in my daily life. I feel like I am making significant progress toward the full integration of this value in my thoughts, actions, balance of time, and priorities. However, I am still challenged to live it more fully, especially in times of tension or stress.

3 I live this value in an on-again, off-again way. Sometimes I am able to really bring it alive in my life and other times it seems that I am far from making it a reality in how I live every day. I really want to incorporate it more fully into my life, but I need to explore its practical applications more closely.

4 I live this value only occasionally. Although I believe in my heart that it is really important, I have only begun to translate this belief into everyday action. When I do act on this value, I feel like I am on the right track and living out of my true character.

5 I have intellectually recognized this value as very important to my life but I haven't really begun to put it into practice. I know that living out this value would bring greater meaning and satisfaction to my life. Now I need to find the ways to begin to incorporate it.

**STEP FOUR:** Focusing on one or two values, create a set of action steps that will enable you to more fully incorporate the chosen core value into your everyday life.

## **STEP ONE: Identifying your values**

On this page, brainstorm at least 20 values that are core to who you are. Don't worry about whether or not something is technically a value or not. What is important is if it is core to who you are and to how you want to live your life. When you have the complete list of your values, then choose the top five that are most important to you. Finally, prioritize these values, with number one being the value that is most important to you. Notice any feelings or thoughts that you have as you make your choices in narrowing the list and setting priorities.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

**STEPS TWO AND THREE: Defining your values and rating them on the Integration Scale**

Value Priority ONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition:

Integration Scale:

|                     |                         |                       |                         |                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 2                       | 3                     | 4                       | 5                    |
| Live it<br>Everyday | Live it<br>consistently | On again<br>off again | Occasionally<br>live it | Desire<br>to live it |

Value Priority TWO: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition:

Integration Scale:

|                     |                         |                       |                         |                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 2                       | 3                     | 4                       | 5                    |
| Live it<br>Everyday | Live it<br>consistently | On again<br>off again | Occasionally<br>live it | Desire<br>to live it |

Value Priority THREE: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition:

Integration Scale:

|                     |                         |                       |                         |                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 2                       | 3                     | 4                       | 5                    |
| Live it<br>Everyday | Live it<br>consistently | On again<br>off again | Occasionally<br>live it | Desire<br>to live it |

Value Priority FOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition:

Integration Scale:

|                     |                         |                       |                         |                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 2                       | 3                     | 4                       | 5                    |
| Live it<br>Everyday | Live it<br>consistently | On again<br>off again | Occasionally<br>live it | Desire<br>to live it |

Value Priority FIVE: \_\_\_\_\_

Definition:

Integration Scale:

|                     |                         |                       |                         |                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 2                       | 3                     | 4                       | 5                    |
| Live it<br>Everyday | Live it<br>consistently | On again<br>off again | Occasionally<br>live it | Desire<br>to live it |

**STEP FOUR:** Action steps for values integration

Choose one or two of your core values that you would like to more fully integrate into your everyday life. Reflecting on the following questions, create 3-5 action steps to incorporate this value into your daily existence. Questions: What situations are most challenging for me in living out this value? What people in my life seem to draw me away from this value? What people help me to stay on track with this value? What are the implications of this value for my everyday schedule? What kind of reflective processes might help me to live this value more fully? The one thing that I could do to really move me along in putting this value into practice would be...

VALUE \_\_\_\_\_

Action Steps:

VALUE \_\_\_\_\_

Action Steps: