

## Appendix A

### Samples processes for discerning personal core values

#### I. **Criteria Based**

([http://www.decision-making-solutions.com/personal\\_core\\_values.html](http://www.decision-making-solutions.com/personal_core_values.html))

Criteria based selection encourages you to predetermine a set of guidelines you wish to use as the basis for managing your discernment/selection of core values. Here are six that might help you form a framework for your overall process:

#### **Consistent with my personal vision, mission, and core beliefs**

You can use these criteria as a way to eliminate personal values that are inconsistent with your other decisions.

## **Inspirational**

Personal values should encourage you to fulfill your purpose in life. Great personal values, read every day, will provide an uplift and motivation to take on the day's challenges.

## **Unique**

Your values need to speak to you. Don't hesitate to use values learned from others, but your core values should help you define who you are and want to be. They should reflect the priorities in your life and will tend to emphasize your strengths while compensating for your weaknesses.

## **Provides guidance**

Personal core values should help you in your everyday decisions, particularly with relationships.

## **Long lasting**

This is about creating your future. Expect that your values will evolve as you grow, mature and gain life experience. However, this is not about following the latest fad. If you expect a personal core value to change next week, it likely isn't very core.

## **Meaningful and rewarding**

Values provide the measures that help us live meaningful lives that fulfill our given purpose. Living a life of meaning brings us joy.

With a listing of criteria such as this, you can then begin to write down values that seem to fit within the scope of what matters to you. You can simply allow various values to come to mind, or view the listing of possible core values that is included in Appendix B.

## II. Five-Step Personal Core Values Exercise

(<https://www.inc.com/kevin-daum/define-your-personal-core-values-5-steps.html>)

This five-step process involves writing/journaling. It encourages you to give yourself a quiet space, with no distractions, and to allow at least one hour for each of the five steps.

### **Step 1 - Think through and describe the following in detail:**

1. What have been your three greatest accomplishments?
2. What have been your three greatest moments of efficiency?
3. What are any common rules or themes that you can identify?

**Step 2 - Think through and describe the following in detail:**

1. What have been your three greatest failures?
2. What have been your three greatest moments of inefficiency?
3. What are any common rules or themes that you can identify?

**Step 3 - Identify three or four brief sentences of advice you would give to yourself based upon these commonalities.**

**Step 4 - Next, try to reduce them to a few words.**

For example, if your advice is, 'Don't overindulge in food and booze at parties and get in trouble', reduce that down to *Keep Control Through Moderation*, or even *Moderation*.

## **Step 5 - Now comes the fun. You need to test the value.**

Think of a situation where following your core value hurts you rather than helps you. For example, you might think *Innovation* sounds good until you realize that your life thrives on stability rather than constant change. You have to think it through carefully. If you can't identify a legitimate case where the value steers you wrong, you probably have a good core value.

Know that this process requires focused time and thought. You may wish to do it with someone you trust. Then you'll get honest feedback and you can help each other. It may require several discussions over weeks or even months. Your values may adjust and develop over time just as you do, so embrace the change.

### **III. Six-Step Process to Define Your Values**

[https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED\\_85.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_85.htm)

This process is one in which six steps are followed and it is based on looking back on your life to date. In doing so, you begin to identify times and experiences when you felt happy and content and had confidence in making good decisions.

#### **Step 1: Identify the times when you were happiest.**

Find examples from both your career and personal life. This will ensure some balance in your answers.

What were you doing?

Were you with other people? Who?

What other factors contributed to your happiness?

## **Step 2: Identify the times when you were most proud.**

Use examples from your career and personal life.

Why were you proud?

Did other people share your pride? Who?

What other factors contributed to your feelings of pride?

## **Step 3: Identify the times when you were most fulfilled and satisfied.**

Again, use both work and personal examples.

What need or desire was fulfilled?

How and why did the experience give your life meaning?

What other factors contributed to your feelings of fulfillment?

**Step 4: Determine your top values, based on your experiences of happiness, pride, and fulfillment.**

Why is each experience truly important and memorable?

Use the list of values in Appendix B to help get you started. Aim for at least 10 top values. As you work through, you may find that some of these naturally combine. For instance, if you value philanthropy, community, and generosity, you might say that service to others in one of your top values.

**Step 5: Prioritize your top values.**

Write down your top values, not in any particular order.

Look at the first two values and ask yourself, 'If I could satisfy only one of these, which would I choose?' It might help to visualize a

situation in which you would have to make that choice. For example, if you compare the values of service and stability, imagine that you must decide whether to sell your house and move to another country to do valuable foreign aid work, or keep your house and volunteer to do charity work closer to home.

Keep working through the list, comparing each value with the other value, until your list is in the correct order.

### **Step 6: Reaffirm your values.**

Check your top-priority values, and make sure they fit with your life and your vision for yourself.

Do these values make you feel good about yourself? Are you proud of your top three values? Would you be comfortable and proud to tell your values to people you respect and admire? Do these values represent things you

would support, even if your choice isn't popular, and it puts you in the minority?

When you consider your values in decision making, you can be sure to keep your sense of integrity and what you know is right, and approach decisions with confidence and clarity. You'll also know that what you're doing is best for your current and future happiness and satisfaction.

Making value-based choices may not always be easy. However, making a choice that you know is right is a lot less difficult in the long run.

#### **IV. ‘Why is that important to me?’ exercise**

This exercise is one that has been used in Unity seminary training, as well as various classes and experiences where those involved desire to dig deep within themselves for clarity and understanding in their lives. It can easily be used to assist in the discernment of your personal core values.

At the top of a sheet of lined paper, write the question, ‘What is something that is important to me?’

Underneath it, write your answer to that question.

Next, spend some time in quiet reflection, asking your higher self, ‘Why? Why is this important to me?’

When an answer comes to you, write in on the next line. And then ask why that is important to you.

Continue this question and answer process of ‘why?’ for several more times. As you do, eventually you will get to a point where a core value emerges.

For example, you may write:

1. Something that is important to me is having a relationship with God.
2. Why is that important to me? Because I believe that there is something greater than me in this life.
3. (Why . . .?) Because I know that I would not have overcome challenges in my life without It.

4. (Why . . .?) Because I know that life will have its challenges, and I want to move through them in partnership with God.
  
5. (Why . . .?) Because it's important to me to be Spirit-Led in all areas of my life.

**'Spirit-Led'** emerges as a potential core value  
for your life.