Identify Your Key Values & the Principles You Want to Live by

By



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1. Before You Set Your Goals

For lasting success in life you need to follow the order of knowing who you want to BE, then what you want to DO and how you want to do it, and from this course of action you will find that you get what you want to HAVE

So often our society encourages us to set goals according to what you want to HAVE, and to DO. But if you attempt to do this before you know who you want to BE and what you most Value in life, most people usually make little progress.

If you do achieve these goals, you may find that what you HAVE may not satisfy you – or that you have achieved them at the cost of DOING some things you would prefer not to have done.

And so I have created a course which starts with exploring your **key virtues**, **the qualities that you most want to live out in life**.

You will then identify **your core values and how you want to rank them**. This is an invaluable tool to help you make choices and prioritise your life when difficult choices need to be made

The combination of Virtues and Values creates your compass of who you want to BE

With your foundations clear and strong you can then set goals for doing and having that are really true to you – you get to choose how to live your life – instead of someone else's!

So remember:

- 1. Identify your virtues then your values, so you know who you want to BE
- 2. Choose what you want to DO, and HOW you want to do it
- 3. Lastly you will get what you want to HAVE.

This course will lead you through the steps of identifying your Virtues and your Values.

It is designed so you can work on it alone or combined with personal coaching.



2. Who Do You Want To BE? - Identify Your Key Virtues

You will need some time when you can work on this undisturbed. Some people like to work in long chunks – e.g. an hour or two. Others prefer shorter snatches more often

I recommend that you take at least 30 minutes to do step one and then experiment with what works for you.

I suggest you also have a notebook that is dedicated to your exploration of your Key Virtues to keep all your reflections in one place. You could also use a ring binder and loose-leaf refill or whatever appeals to you.

Do not be tempted to miss Step One – I find that everyone has an inner wisdom about what is important to them – and getting that out first – even if it is very simple and short – before you refer to other sources will yield you best results.

I suggest that you allow yourself a few days between each step so that ideas shift and take shape – and for new thoughts to emerge. I suggest that you allow at least two weeks to complete all the steps.

Steps in Identifying your Key Virtues

- 1. Brainstorm virtues you can think of e.g. honesty, loyalty courage. Write a preliminary definition for each of them. Put your project aside and leave it a while
- 2. If you wish research virtues to add to your list. http://www.virtuesproject.com/virtues.html is a website you may find useful
- 3. Identify your top 10 values. Write them down with your definitions
- 4. From that list choose your top 5 and a final list of three that you most want to demonstrate in your life.
- 5. Record these top three virtues in a way that appeals. For example:
 - a. create a certificate or poster for your wall,
 - b. put them on a screen saver
 - c. make a visual representation of these virtues
 - d. Write them on small cards to put around your house, car, office, wallet etc

6.	Think about these virtues and about how you are living them out. Write any in you have.		



3. Why Focus On Values?

As a leader in business it is essential that you know who you are, and what is important to you. You are at the centre of your enterprise – and for you to lead successfully you need to be in alignment with your deepest truth.

Unless you deliberately choose to become conscious, you run the risk of being overwhelmed trying to manage competing needs and demands and lose awareness of who you really are and what you really want.

To lead a successful company you need a clear idea of who you are and where you want to go, and why.

In his book *Finding True North*, writer Michael Henderson describes living unconsciously as like being oriented to Magnetic North

Magnetic North - is when you feel sidetracked or even off track. Living a life that may be regularly or constantly stressful, meaningless, boring, tiring, difficult or unrewarding, and requires excessive effort just to maintain your position. May be a simple feeling that something is missing in your life, but you are not sure what it is. It is a way of living when your effort is increased and yet your return is diminished... Magnetic North can be incredibly seductive and can seem to have a gravitational pull on you, engaging you in things that may not be in your best interests long term

He contrasts this to living oriented to True North

True North is knowing your values and living them. You have experienced True North if you have ever undertaken some endeavour that felt absolutely rewarding and aligned with all you have to offer as a person. Also if you have ever been engaged in something that you were happy to do regardless of the pay, time or effort required because you knew in every cell of your body that this was a way of expressing and revealing a part of who you really are.

(Finding True North pp46 – 49)

- ✓ Knowing our values what is REALLY important to you gives you a way to navigate through life and set your own course.
- ✓ Knowing your values gives you a clue to the reason you are here on earth and the
 gift(s) that you have come to give.
- √ Values can hold the key to your life purpose and guide you in how to fulfill it.
- ✓ Living in accordance with your purpose and giftedness is at the heart of the most successful businesses.



Values are principles to orient your life and company by.

Generally speaking they may be

A virtue such as integrity, kindness, loyalty
 An attitude such as gratitude
 An aspect of life such as home or family

• An **activity** such as travel, work or sport

Values are not

- **Goals**. Goals that are true for you arise out of your values. For example Home might be a value, to own a mortgage free home is a goal
- **Feelings**. We often try to pursue 'good feelings' (such as happiness) for their own sake. Good feelings arise spontaneously when we are living life in accordance with our values.

Values may also be activities that you will do regardless of whether or not you are paid. They are the things you have always done, and feel alive doing, that bring you joy and make you feel intensely alive. They are the activities when time passes without you knowing it.

Clarifying my values will support my business by:	Date



4. Clarifying Your Personal Values - Warm Up Exercise

- 1. What parts of your life are you most satisfied with?
- 2. What are your most prized possessions? Why?
- 3. What characteristics do you most admire in people (including yourself)?
- 4. What are the aspects of your body you appreciate most?
- 5. What brings you the most joy in life?
- 6. What do you currently not have in your life that you would appreciate having?
- 7. What would you least like to lose from your life?
- 8. What would you still like to achieve in your life?
- 9. What is important to you?
- 10. What is important for you that you take for granted?
- 11. What are your most treasured memories? What would you like your future treasured memories to be?
- 12. What would you like to have written on your tombstone?
- 13. What is your philosophy for life?
- 14. What positive, uplifting, inspiring quotes do you refer to?
- 15. What makes you feel alive?
- 16. How would you prefer your life to be?
- 17. How would you prefer to be?
- 18. Anything else you would like to add



5. Brainstorm and Define Your Values

For this week's activity you will need a total of $1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 hours – with the at least 15 minutes in a single slot of uninterrupted time to brainstorm your values

Step 1 BRAINSTORM Your Values (15 - 30 mins approx)

Materials:

- Memo cube or loose-leaf notebook.
- A ziplock bag or large envelope to keep your values sheets safely together

Process

- 1. Review through the definition of priority values from below
- 2. **Reread** and add to your notes from last week's **warm up exercise** to get your juices flowing
- Brainstorm your priority values, writing whatever comes to you, one per sheet of paper. If definitions come at the same time write them down. (Don't overthink this part of the process)

A priority value is one that has a significant impact on your life e.g. love or health. If a priority value is missing from your life you would almost certainly be affected by their absence.

You may write down as many values as you wish: however **try to concentrate on the things that are most important to you.** If you write something down but its absence would not make too much difference to you, then try again and write down something that would make a difference.

4. Take a break and come back to your values later

Step 2 DEFINE Your Values (60 mins approx)

Work through each of your values in turn, writing your own definitions for each one
on the same sheet. Take your time over this process, taking breaks when
necessary.

NB: If you notice that the **same word keeps appearing in different definitions**, it is known as a **'cluster value'**. (e.g. *security* might appear as part of the definition of *home, family* and *work*.) Make sure that word is **included as a value in its own right** with its own definition.

Take another break



Step 3 Combine Overlaps and IDENTIFY TOP 20 values (15 - 30 mins approx)

- Review your values and definitions and see if there are any overlaps e.g. meanings so similar that you can combine them
- 2. Use the **Very Highly Valued**, **Highly Valued and Valued sheet** to help you Identify your **top 20 values** that you will work with for the next stage of the process.
- 3. Rank into the 3 columns quickly and intuitively. Use muscle testing to help you decide where to place something if unsure.

Step 4 - Let your UNCONSCIOUS do the WORK

- Put your values work aside for the week, and let things 'percolate'.
- Make a note of anything that comes to you in the intervening time.
- **Practice your muscle testing** 'yes' and 'no' until you are really confident with the process. (Muscle-testing instructions can be found in the appendices)
- Congratulate yourself on your progress.



6. Prioritising Your Values

Very Highly Valued	Highly Valued	Valued



7. Getting to Your Core Values

Some questions to think about as you prioritise your values:

- ♣ If the people you love weren't there, what is left?
- What principles do you want to live your life by?

Family/Home/Work are the ways we live out and express our core, our essence, our deepest values.

Beware of making them the centre of your life.

These things change. People move away. People die. Businesses and work situations come and go.

Who are you underneath all the things that change?

What are the key principles: you want to live out in and through your family and home and work and all the other things that come and go in life?

When you identify those things, (which are usually virtues) then you have found your bedrock and you will have something solid to guide you in all of life's changes

And they are guides to how you want to be in any situation.

For example my family are now adults, and starting to have children of their own.

They are old enough to stand on their own feet but not old enough to be really confident in who they are. At times are still touchy about my presence in their life - liable to resent what they see as interference, what to me is just motherly care and concern.

An ongoing question for me has been 'How do I evolve to support them as they grow? How do I respond to the ups and downs of their lives in a way that is constructive for everyone?'

Doing my values gave me the key as I'll illustrate below.

- My highest value is Truth which I define as knowing that Love is the Essence of All
 That Is. I haven't listed Love as a value but I have noted that it is the foundation of
 everything it is the nature of the Universe and comes before everything else. It is a
 given for me.
- Next comes Trust and part of that definition is Truth internalised knowing and living that Love is all there is.
- No 5 is Kindness which I define as a gentle warmth and benevolence to all beings, including myself, it includes appreciation and generosity.
- And at number 8 is Respect which I've described as an honouring of the Eternal Value of all Beings, and their right to choose their own path. I've added that it is easiest when I am rooted in Trust and Love, and it's a natural consequence of internalising Truth (see my definition again).



 My family come in at no 11 - I've defined that as belonging, love, friendship, intimacy. Next I've noted TRUST, RESPECT & KINDNESS - because I realise that these values give me the key to how I want to be with my family. They are what I want to give, and what I want to receive back.

Trust, Respect and Kindness are: the bigger principles I want to live by - not just with my family, but with everyone. They are my bedrock, and the compass I choose to orient to.

So dig deep this week as you continue to identify, define, clarify and prioritise your values.

Who are you - and how do you want to be in life?

Once you have your principles in place, then work on prioritising your activities.

Enjoy yourself.



8. Create your Values Hierarchy

Step 1 – WARM UP (5 – 10 mins)

Consider the following four values and rank them, 1 - 4 in the order you would give them.

FUN	HEALTH	WORK	FAMILY

The order in which you have placed the values is a value hierarchy and reflects the measure of importance you place on each one. Consider what your life would be like if you were making life choices based on this hierarchy you have established for yourself. What impact would it make for example on quality time with your family? How would it influence your attitude towards work?

Now swap your fourth value with your top value in the box below.

FUN	HEALTH	WORK	FAMILY

Review the questions above. What changes do you notice?

The order of priority we place on our values dictates the way we think and view the world.

Even though the values are the same, a shift in the hierarchy alters your perception when viewed through your values.

♣ Continue straight onto Step Two on the next page

Step 2 The Ruthless Compassion Exercise:

CREATING YOUR OWN VALUES HIERARCHY - (60 mins approx)

- 1. Read page 15 for notes about creating your hierarchy.
- 2. Taking the sheet from last week's work, start with your Very Highly Valued list.
- 3. Take **the first two on your list** and say the following statement to yourself and see whether your intuitive response is yes or no.
 - If I had to choose I would sooner have (value 1) in my life than (value 2) or If I had to choose (value 1) is more important to me than (value 2)
- 4. **If the answer is yes** then continue the process, taking value three and comparing it with value two and so forth through the list.
- 5. **If the answer is no** then rearrange the value sheets and ask yourself the questions again to check.
- 6. **Continue through the list** until you have reached the end. Each time you shift values around check with the ones higher up the list as shifting one may shift others.
- Take your time over this process, taking breaks when necessary.
- Use **muscle testing if you are struggling** to get clear yes/no answers.

Step 3 - Create your VALUES HIERARCHY RECORD

Once you are happy with your order, transfer your values and their definitions onto the Hierarchy Record Sheet.

Have a cup of tea or coffee and congratulate yourself!

NB If thinking in lists makes your creativity dry up completely, then see alternative ways to approach this exercise on pages 15 and 16

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NOTES FOR COMPLETING THIS EXERCISE

Having to Choose - The Ruthless Compassion exercise

Rather than creating a balanced life, you are in the process of creating a prioritised life.

In drawing, a 3 dimensional effect is created by giving some colours greater depth (known as value) than others. By prioritising your life around your core values you will be creating a three dimensional life, rather than a flat one. It will be a life unique to you, a life that you value — and that is most likely to support you in offering your talents and gifts to others. In other words it will be a life of value to others as well.

Although in real life you will of course be able to experience more than one value, creating an ordered list will help you in those times when you have to choose between to competing goods (or values). You will know in advance what is most important to you and that will be a great support to you in how you choose to act in those moments. This process just helps you decide which of the two (values you are comparing) you want most.

So when you find it hard to choose – or you don't want to: **Take a break**, then come back to your task fresh, **pose the question anew**. *If I had to choose... is more important to me than...*

Use muscle testing to help you decide and/or to confirm your intuitive response.

• Valuing Significant Others

Many people have an expectation that significant others in their lives (spouse, children, dog etc) should automatically be number one on the list.

This is not necessarily so – as our most important values may be to do with an intrinsic approach to life, with or without our spouse.

This list is for you – not others. Answer as you feel, not as you think anyone else would expect you to!

If thinking in lists isn't for you

Not everyone's mind works easily in hierarchical lists. If this is you, then mindmap, or draw a plan which shows you what are your Highest priority values.

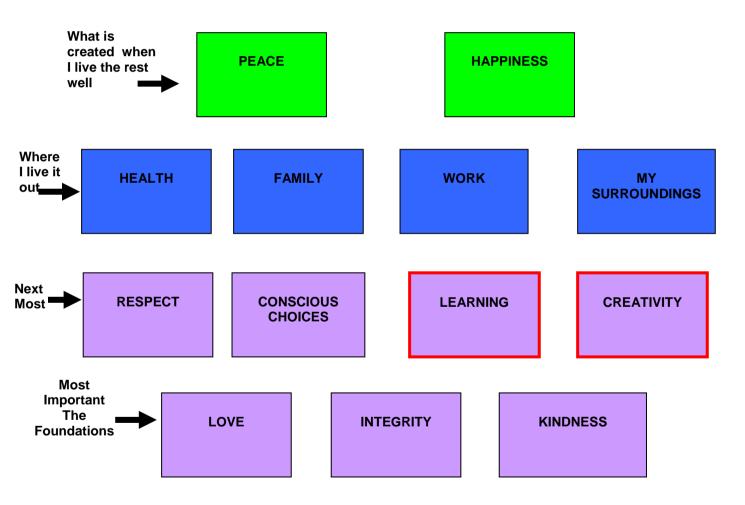
(I give an example of how this was done by one client on the next page)



One client drew a pyramid – with her three most important values as the base, then next 4 'blocks' the practical aspects of those – then two more layers. She ended up with a 'Top Seven' and has seen the areas of her life that she needs to pay attention to every day in order to feel happy and successful.

Her 'list' looked something like the one below (value names have been changed to protect her privacy) She identified the ones with red around them as areas that were lacking and set herself to pay particular attention to them each day. A few weeks after completing the course she commented that she has written a number of activities for each of these key values and chooses three to perform each day. In the midst of a busy life with three young children and a professional career, making conscious choices around her values each day is helping her feel like she is in charge of her life and doing something to nurture herself each day.

She was also able to 'reframe' many of her daily tasks and see how what she was already doing was fulfilling her Highest Values, which has shifted how she feels about daily chores.





9. Create Your Values Vision

CONGRATULATIONS! You've done the hard work, identified your values and created a prioritized list.

Now you are going to create your personal vision and affirmations FOCUSING ON THE TOP FIVE values from your Values Hierarchy

Step 1 - IDENTIFY YOUR TRUE NORTH BEHAVIOURS

- Review the definitions for True and Magnetic North on the next page.
- O Look at the True North Behaviours **example sheet** attached.
- Then for each of your top five values identify your True and Magnetic North behaviours, and the things which support you in staying aligned to your True North. Fill them into the sheet provided.
- Take a look at what you've written in the "What Helps me Stay Aligned?" column.

 Are there particular things that appear more than once? (e.g. Meditation occurs as a supporting habit in all of my Top Five) Highlight them. Are they already part of your regular schedule? If not how are you going to include them? Do they warrant a Valued Identity of their own? Where would you place them? Make sure you include them as part of your vision in the next step.

Step 2 - CREATING YOUR VISION

Now that you know your Top Five Values, and the True North behaviours and supporting activities associated with them, it is time to **create your own personalised vision of YOUR ideal life.**

Here are some suggestions – use them as a springboard to make your own vision as real and vivid as possible

- Write Your Vision When I live my top five values my life is... or when I live my top five values I...
- Create a Dreamboard use the pictures you have collected and others you are attracted to illustrate your Valued life
- Write a poem

Draw a picture

•	Your own ideas:			



Step 3 - WRITING YOUR AFFIRMATIONS

An affirmation is a **short positive statement** about what you want to be, do or have.

(We have to BE the person we want to be before we can DO the things that person would do – which will then give us the things we want to HAVE.)

Visualise and feel yourself living True North behaviour for your top five values.

Write affirmations that support you in living your valued vision.

- Write them in the **present tense** as though they have already happened.
- State affirmations in a positive way (avoid words like "don't" or "not").
- Focus on how you want to feel.

Example:

One of my top 5 values is presence which I define as *'Living fully in the now'*. So a suitable affirmation to help me live that value is *I am focused and fully present in each moment*.

True North and Magnetic North - Review

In his book *Finding True North*, writer Michael Henderson describes living unconsciously as like being oriented to Magnetic North

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He contrasts this to living oriented to True North.

True North is knowing your values and living them. You have experienced True North if you have ever undertaken some endeavour that felt absolutely rewarding and aligned with all you have to offer as a person. Also if you have ever been engaged in something that you were happy to do regardless of the pay, time or effort required because you knew in every cell of your body that this was a way of expressing and revealing a part of who you really are.

(Finding True North pp46 – 49)



10. Living Your Values

Step One – Evaluate your current practices

In learning how to live your values the first step is to evaluate your current practices relating to the top values. How are you living, or not living, these values at the moment?

Complete the columns with some keywords that are for you the essence of when you are living that value (True North) and when you are not (Magnetic North). You will gain insights into how to go about harmonising your life.

VALUE	TRUE NORTH	MAGNETIC NORTH	CHANGES I WISH TO MAKE
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

11. Appendix

Muscle testing is one of the most useful techniques I have learned to give me confidence in the choices I am making. It is also known as kinesiology and you may have experienced it with a natural therapists testing the most suitable method of treatment for you.

When your conscious and unconscious minds are in harmony, your body tests strong.

(Yes) When they are not, it tests weak. **(No)** It also tests strong when you are in contact with anything that is beneficial for you e.g. a particular food – and weak when it is not.

By asking your body yes/no questions – or making statements and testing for yes/no responses from your body - you have a reliable method of testing out the best decision, literally at your fingertips. You tap into the wisdom of your unconscious mind which is encoded into your muscle fibres.

There are a variety of methods of muscle testing. Some of them are need two people Here are two methods you can use at home by yourself.

The one I use most often creates a link with the thumb and forefingers of both hands. This is the one you learned in class.

Pull against the fingers – they will hold firm for yes and pull apart for no.

The other simple method is to brace the ring finger against the thumb while you make your statement.

Then pull the thumb against the ring finger. They hold strong for yes and flick apart for no.





Ways to use muscle testing

- * Make a statement e.g. the best thing I can do right now is take a break.
- * Ask a question e.g. is taking this course of study in my Highest Good?
- * Test foods by thinking about something you want to eat, or holding it and testing. If your body agrees with you, it will test strong. Sometimes you get surprising answers. It is a guilt free way to eat the things that we normally think are bad for us e.g. chocolate but do **listen and honour when your body says 'no'** or you will weaken your confidence and trust in this method.
- * Use it to test out the best brand of items in the supermarket, between different nutritional supplements, courses of medical treatment, etc etc etc.
- * Write your own ideas here.



What if you are unsure of your answer?

Practice being open to the true answer and detached about the outcome. This will help you to build confidence in your ability to muscle test accurately.

Sometimes our answer can seem uncertain – or we are not sure if our keen desire to eat that chocolate cake has overridden our body's answer. Or it is a really serious issue and we don't want the answer contaminated by with our unconscious desires.

In those cases test while you make the following statements

- My name is.... (test) *
- I am ready to test truthfully (test)
- Free from all deception, fear and desire (test)**

Test the topic you wished to get guidance on

Afterwards say,

• I have tested truthfully... (test)

* If you muscle test 'no' to your name make sure you are using the name you call yourself by e.g. Sandy not Sandra. If you still test negative your energies are scrambled. Tap on your head gently 7 times then run your hands down your body a few times (like stroking a cat) – test again.

** If you are not ready to test truthfully stop. Ask for healing and peace for the part of you that has a strong attachment to one particular outcome. Come back to the issue at another time.

The Best Way to Learn

Like any other skill the more you use it the more useful it will be to you. I suggest the following steps to become skilled and confident. Tell your body you want to learn to work with it this way and ask it to assist you.

- 1. Make a pact with yourself that you will follow your body's advice even if it isn't what you thought you wanted. This will build trust between you and your body which is an essential part of the process. You will progress very fast in all areas of your life if you honour this commitment to yourself
- 2. Start out by testing **obvious yes/no questions** such as your name and the day of the week where you are really confident and clear about the answer.
- 3. Then **practice regularly on trivial things** and then when you ask your body's advice on something significant you will be confident in working together.
- 4. Once you have it as part of your skill base use it as often as you wish.

If you are a professional coaching client I suggest that you ask me about this and we will cover it in one of your sessions.

