



The Values Clarifier

It can be difficult to navigate your life, to make choices that serve you the most, without knowing what is important to you. Often, when people talk about their values they state ones they think *should* be important, they repeat ones that society, parents, teachers etc., told them were important. This exercise is about you identifying what is important to you. The goal is for you to uncover your top ten values.

I urge you to give this exercise the time and space it deserves. Grab a pen and paper or create a new file on your computer and be willing to go through many drafts of this. You are worth it!

1) Ask yourself **“What’s important to me about life?”** and write down your top answers.

Your list could include experiences, feelings, things... Write your answers quickly, without a lot of mental analysis or editing. Write down whatever comes to mind. Make the list as long as answers come to you.

2) Pause a moment and ask yourself **“What else is important to me about life?”** This will give you a second level of values, those that are less obvious and that you are less conscious of. Often the more important values come out later.

3) Now, think about two or three times when you were really motivated, one at a time, and find the feeling you had right before you became motivated, because it is probably a value.

4) Next, put all your answers into one list, read through it a few times and bold your top 10 values.

5) Then, find out which value is the most important. After you choose which one is most important, compare it to each of the other values, just to be sure, by saying **“If I could have value A, but not value B, would that work?”** and **“If I could only have A or B, but not both, which is most important?”**

Once you’ve compared this top value to all the others, you know it’s the top value. You may compare it to a few and it comes out on top, but something on the list turns out to be more important than the one you thought was #1 (which is why I want you to compare each value to all the others, even though it’s a bit tedious). This actually happens quite often, where your first impulse is not accurate. This is because we often start with what we think **SHOULD** be our top value, but it really isn’t. You have to be honest with yourself about this. It won’t help if you end up with a list of what you think should be your values, in the order in which you think they should go.

6) Once you have #1, pick your candidate for #2, and check it by comparing it to all the remaining values. Then do the same to find 3, 4, 5, and so on.

7) Once you have your hierarchy, write a new clean list of your top 10 values. Look at it and ask yourself **“Is this me?”** and make any other changes, but be very sure you don’t make a list of what you want your values to be. I want you to find out what they really are, now.

One final tip, I find a thesaurus is very helpful to make sure my values aren’t synonyms for each other.



Going Deeper

1) Next, look and see if there are any values that conflict with any other values. Do you have values that seem to contradict each other? Ask **“Can I have Value A and Value B at the same time, or do they conflict with each other?”**

Typical conflicts include money and spirituality, career and family, security and adventure, family and freedom, career and freedom... List any pairs of values that seem to be a conflict for you – not for anyone else, but for you. The same value could appear in several conflicts. You may, of course, not find any conflicts – be honest with yourself.

2) Finally, look at each value, and figure out how much time you spend fulfilling each. Just make a rough guess. Confirm that the top values are where you spend most of your time and focus. Then, decide if the results you’re getting from having those values be the most important is what you really want.

For instance, if you are having health problems, but health is not on your list, or it’s pretty far down the list, that’s a big clue to why you are creating poor health. Health isn’t important! You might want to consider putting it on the list, or moving it up in the hierarchy if it’s on the list but not high enough.

3) Then, look and see if any of your values are actually things you are moving away from rather than moving toward. You determine that by asking **“why is that important to me?”** and listening very carefully for the reasons you give. Are they about what to avoid, or about what to go for. If one of your top values was avoiding pain, for instance, you will be spending a lot of time focusing on avoiding pain, which will actually create pain.

This step changed my initial list a lot. The first time I made my values list I had safety at the top, then I realized that for me, it was based in fear. I wanted to feel safe to avoid other things/feelings/experiences.

4) After doing all of this, you have to then decide if a certain value needs to be more important, and moved up in the list (such as health), or if a conflict must be resolved, or if an away from value needs to be healed in some way.

Note: Our values change over time so I recommend doing this as a yearly ritual.

Bonus Offer **1:1 Clarity Call**

Contact Andy to schedule a free call to discuss what is going on in your life and receive actionable steps to take. Email him at andy@NavitasCoach.com



Example list with the writers' top three values bolded. This is not my first draft, this came after doing this exercise multiple times. Allow your list to be whatever it is. I've chosen to focus my life on my top 3 values (Freedom, Love & Joy) and I make decisions by how much in alignment any choice is with my values. My goal is to have my actions fulfilling my values.

1. **Freedom**
2. **Love**
3. Present
4. **Happiness / joy / bliss**
5. Family first
6. Travel
7. Happy home
8. Strong vibrant positive bonds with my family
9. Authentic
10. Honest
11. Peace
12. Harmony
13. Inner peace
14. aliveness
15. passion
16. abundance
17. creative
18. imagination
19. limitless
20. flow
21. effortless
22. energetic
23. focus
24. silly
25. playful
26. Health
27. play
28. nature
29. beauty
30. money
31. spirituality
32. technology
33. communication
34. community
35. connection
36. Ease
37. Grace
38. Purpose
39. Security
40. Toys