

Values Questionnaire

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Introduction

Identifying our values can help us understand “*why*” we do what we do.

Personal values are often highlighted only in times of stress, trauma, learning or change. Much of the time we do not think about our values at all, and in fact some basic ones are simply not easy to express in everyday language.

Without active reflection they may remain as unspoken and unquestioned assumptions.

The social psychologist Milton Rokeach (1973)¹ defined a value as

“an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally and socially preferable to alternative modes of conduct and end states of existence.”

For Rokeach, values are our guides for when we need to make choices in difficult or challenging situations. He divided values into “terminal” one (representing desirable *goals*) and “instrumental” ones (desirable *ways* of behaving or achieving goals). Shalom Schwartz (1992)² proposed ten basic universal motivational values (oriented either toward openness to change or maintenance of the status quo) and concluded that there are dynamic patterns of similarity and difference in our preferences for these.

Most researchers agree that our values are established early in our lives and then develop as we grow up in, explore and are influenced by the world around us. This questionnaire, informed by these views and also in part by Erik Erikson’s concept (1997)³ of the development of values through the life-cycle, is a deliberately open-ended and holistic self-reflective tool.

Identifying your values is a chance to think about what will influence **your** Personal Development. Alignment of these priorities with your career or personal goals will be a useful and insightful part of achieving those aims.

¹ Rokeach, M (1973), “The Nature of Human Values, Free Press (New York)

² Schwartz, S (1992), “Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries”, Experimental Social Psychology (25)

³ Erikson, E (1997), “The Life Cycle Completed”, W W Norton

Instructions

Please note that this is not a standardised test. It is a self-assessment, designed to help you think about what is important for you in your Personal Development.

This questionnaire contains **three** parts. It will be most useful for you to complete Part 1 **before** you look at Part 2.

Part 1 asks you five open-ended questions to get you thinking about what is important for you in your life. Try to write the first thoughts that come to your mind. You can always revise your answers later on.

Part 2 asks you to reflect on a number of concepts which represent core values, indicating how important each one is for you as a guiding principle.

You are then asked to summarise and prioritise your selections in **Part 3**.

Part 1

Question 1

What are the three most important words or phrases in your life?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Question 2

Where did you grow up? How did that place and society shape the kind of person you have become? In just a few words, summarise the key points below.

Question 3

What have been the most important lessons passed on to you by significant other people in your life? Think of parents, grandparents or other family members, as well as friends, teachers or colleagues.

Question 4

Looking back on your life, when have you **most** felt alive and connected to the world? This might be a happy or a sad period, so be broad in your thinking. Again, make some brief notes for yourself below.

Question 5

What is your most valued personal possession (not a person)?

Why is that important to you?

Part 2

Question 6 Instructions: **List A** contains fifteen values, arranged in no particular order. A short description is provided, but you are free to make your own interpretations if you wish. For each, indicate how important that concept is for you on a scale of 1 – 5. If you have a strong feeling against any value, then you may indicate this by marking it as -1.

	List A	-1	1	2	3	4	5
	Value	Opposed to this	Not Important at all		Neutral		Extremely Important
1	Harmony (Balance: being at peace with yourself and with others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Freedom (independence, control over what you choose to do)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Belonging (feeling that you are part of a group, that you have a place in society, acceptance by others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Equality (opportunity for all, without prejudice or discrimination)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Legacy (concern for the future, respect for the past)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Competence (abilities to perform tasks well, recognition of skills by significant others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Humility (modesty, self-effacing, absence of pride)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Aesthetics (pleasure from art, beauty, nature & from visual appearance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Love (strong regard or affection, emotions associated with pleasure, belonging & purpose)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Hope (trust in others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Social Order (stability of a group, predictability in rituals & norms of behaviour, clarity in definitions of power & justice)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Safety (sense of security, absence of danger)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Honesty (integrity, keeping of promises, sincerely not deceiving others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Spirituality (sense of purpose with regard to life that originates from transcendent belief)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Wisdom (acceptance of one's position in the world, perspective of life, concern with nature of life, knowledge accumulated)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 7 Which **three** of the above are the **most important** for you?

Which **one** of the above is the **least important** for you? _____

Question 8 Instructions: **List B** contains fifteen more values, again arranged in no particular order. A short description is provided, but you are free to make your own interpretations if you wish. For each, indicate how important that concept is for you on a scale of 1 – 5. If you have a strong feeling against any value, then you may indicate this by marking it as -1.

	List B	-1	1	2	3	4	5
	Value	Opposed to this	Not important at all		Neutral		Extremely Important
1	Logic (Intelligence, logical thinking, problem-solving)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Fidelity (Loyalty & faithfulness to others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Pleasure (gratification, self indulgence, play)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Healing (interest in well-being & repair of others & of self, wish to see others & self regain health)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Industry (hard work, personal effort, ambition, aspiration)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Status (position in the eyes of significant others, respected, social relation to others, reputation & acknowledgement)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Authority (obedience to & from others, influence over others, power)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Family (social unit, parents, spouse, children, extended family)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Material Wealth (possessions, money, absence of debt)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Ambition (drive to work hard, be seen to achieve success, work toward end goals)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Self Esteem (focus on identity, safety of self-image, regard for the self)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Peace (absence of conflict)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Curiosity (interest in new things, innovation, delight in discovery)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Religion (faith, existence of a deity, requirement to act in accordance with tenets of written or spoken dogma)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Charity (care or concern with the welfare of others)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 9 Which **three** of the above are the **most important** for you?

Which **one** of the above is the **least important** for you? _____

Part 3

Question 10

List the answers to questions 1, 7 and 9 in the table below:

Your 3 most important words, from Question 1	Your top 3 in Question 7 (from List A)	Your top 3 in Question 9 (from List B)
A.	E.	H.
B.	F.	I.
C.	G.	J.

Do you notice any pattern? Do any themes seem to occur, or re-occur?

Question 11

It's likely that you will feel a close attachment to many of these ideas and values, and that is fine, but it is always an interesting exercise to get down to just one thought.

Select the most important **one** from your A-J list in Question 10.

Tip: it might be easier for you to do this ranking by a process of elimination (i.e. by crossing them out, one by one)

Write down that single remaining value here:

Question 12

Finally, think back now to your personal development plans and your ideas on what direction you wish to have in your career. How does this value correspond to that career plan? What about the other values you found as being important?

Write down any reflections or thoughts that strike you.