



Value-Based Goals

every connection matters™



What are Values?

Values are what is most important to us and give us direction in life – they define the person we want to be. Values can never be achieved, but they influence the quality and purpose of your journey.

Take some time to consider your values, thinking about what is important to you. When thinking about values consider:

- **Family and friendships:** what personal qualities would you like to bring to these relationships? What sort of relationships do you want to create? How would you interact if you were the ideal you in these relationships?
- **Work and Career:** what do you value in your work? What kind of worker would you like to be? If you were living up to your ideal standards, what qualities would you bring to work?
- **Leisure/Recreation:** what sort of hobbies, activities or sports do you enjoy? How do you relax and unwind, or have fun? What activities would you like to do?
- **Parenting:** what sort of parent would you like to be? What sort of qualities would you like to have? How would you behave if you were the 'ideal' you?
- **Health and Wellbeing:** how do you want to look after your health? Why is this important to you?
- **Spiritual/Religious Beliefs:** what does spirituality mean to you? What is important to you in this area of your life?

Once we have defined our values, we can begin to set meaningful goals.

Goal Setting

Goals are the stepping stones we take as we move towards our values. They are the actions we can take every day, that reflect our beliefs.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a psychological therapy model that focuses on teaching us to behave more consistently with our values. ACT recommends setting SMART goals to assist you in living a life based on your values.

- **Specific** – what, when, where and with who
- **Meaning** – goals guided by your values
- **Adaptive** – likely to improve your quality of life
- **Realistic** – is the goal realistically achievable
- **Time-framed** – set a day, date and time.

Getting Started

To help you get started, here are some examples of SMART goals that are aligned with a value.

Value: Health and Wellbeing. To value my physical health and wellbeing, so I can lead a healthier lifestyle and have more energy.

SMART Goal: I will be active for at least 30 minutes a day, at least three days a week for a year.

- **Specific** – includes what's involved and when
- **Meaning** – connected to health and wellbeing
- **Adaptive** – this goal will improve physical health and improve energy
- **Realistic** – setting a goal for three times a week is realistic and achievable
- **Time-framed** – set to a specific time limit.

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Value: Parenting. To be more available and present with my children.

SMART Goal: To kick a ball with my children for at least 30 minutes, once a week for a year, as well as to create a time to be more present with my children (to talk, connect, and enjoy each other's company).

- **Specific** – includes what's involved, when, who
- **Meaning** – connected to the value of parenting
- **Adaptive** – this goal will improve the quality of relationships
- **Realistic** – setting a goal for once a week is realistic and achievable
- **Time-framed** – set to a specific time limit.

Reviewing our Goals

When setting goals, we need to find a balance between those that are overly easy to achieve, versus those that are unattainable. It is important to revisit your goals and assess how you're doing. This can ensure we keep a focus on our values and the process of tracking towards reaching our goals. Make sure you review your goals weekly, and set new milestones as needed.

You can track your progress in a journal, and reward yourself when you reach a milestone. Don't forget to forgive yourself if you miss a day or don't achieve something.

Final Words

Setting goals can help trigger new behaviours, keep us focused, and help sustain momentum in life. It can also help improve our mental health and level of personal and professional success. Armed with our values and the behaviours to back them up, we can move forward towards living a values-based life.



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