

# Contents

PG. 4 - 15 MIN

## **What are Personal Values?**

Learn what counts as a personal value, and what makes a good one through a series of examples

PG. 20 - 1 HR

## **A Rough Draft**

Uncover your personal values with a series of simple prompts

PG. 42 - 1 HR

## **Filtering out the Noise**

Add nuance and specificity to your values with a series of prompts

PG. 58 - 15 MIN

## **Values in Real Life**

Decide how to incorporate your values into your life

# What do I do with all this stuff?

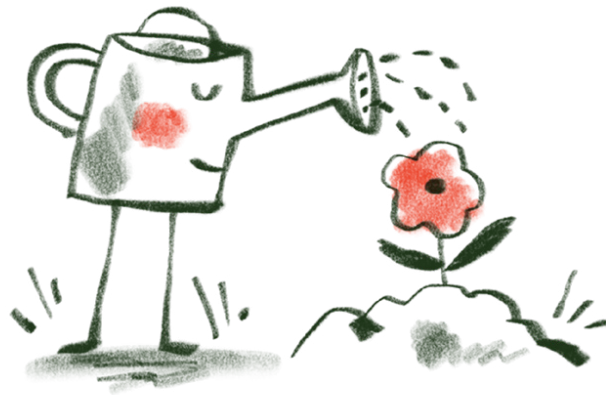
Here's what an end-to-end experience of using Hamony Toolbox looks like.



## STEP ONE

### **Complete this book**

You'll walk away with a set of personal values to get started with.



### STEP TWO

## **Put your values to work**

Use your personal values in your daily life to make decisions, start or stop habits, or something else.



### STEP THREE

## **Revisit your values**

Update your values as they play out in your real life. Repeat step two.

What are  
personal  
values?

# **Contents**

PG. 6 · 2 MIN

## **The why**

PG. 7 - 5 MIN

## **What are personal values?**

PG. 9 - 10 MIN

## **What makes a good personal value?**

PG. 14 - 10 MIN

## **Some things that are not personal values**

# The Why

You're living by someone's values. By default, it's society's values. How to be a "good kid", a "good student", a "good parent", the list goes on. These values might inspire you to do great things, or they might leave you feeling hopeless or uninspired. In any case, it's up to chance whether society molds you into something you actually like.

But it doesn't have to be that way. You can choose to live by **your** personal values.

When you live in harmony with your values, life feels meaningful. When you don't, everything feels harder. Time feels wasted. You don't like your daily life, but you might not have clarity on what to do instead.

That's not to say life is perfect when you live in harmony with your values. There are still highs and lows, but you feel a sense of direction through it all. When you feel bad, you understand why, and you make adjustments to your daily life easily. Things

you do during the day give you energy to do the next thing. You go to bed looking forward to the next day.

It can be fun to live by your values, but it isn't always easy. This workbook will help you sift through the noise of what society tells you to care about, to uncover what you actually care about in its purest form.

## **What are personal values?**

In short - personal values are the things you care about. Let's start with some good examples, because those are easier to understand than abstract concepts.

### **EXAMPLES**

**Learning** - when I can see myself doing things I couldn't do before.

**Being selective with how I spend my time and money** - so I can take risks and invest in the things I care about.

**Embracing my weird** - when it makes me feel proud and inspired by what makes me, me.

These might look obvious or simple at first glance, but it's deceptively hard to hone in on what your personal values are. Let's dive deeper into the anatomy of a personal value. Looking at these examples, there's two obvious parts to each personal value:

**Learning<sup>1</sup>:** when I can see myself doing things I couldn't before.<sup>2</sup>

**1 ➤ Value stem:** A way of being or concept that is important to pay attention to.

**2 ➤ Boundary:** The details of when living by this value makes you feel fulfilled.

Now you have a good understanding of what a personal value is, but how do you know if you've done a good job with figuring out your personal values?





# What makes a good personal value?

## 1 ➤ It's not a social norm

The most important aspect of a personal value is that it is specific to you. Now, that doesn't mean that two people can't have the same value. Rather, it means that if someone walks around living by values they don't actually care about deep down, they will probably feel disappointed in their life.

Why's that? It's because everyone in the world, knowingly or unknowingly, contributes to social norms. That's eight billion people, all sending messages about what you should care about. That's a lot of noise. Your job as a values practitioner is to separate the signal from the noise.

### EXAMPLE

**Person:** A 22-year-old copywriter working their first job at an ad agency in New York.

**Value:** Working hard, when I can show everyone I can do anything I put my mind to.

**Possible social norm at play:** Only people who are the best at what they do are worthy of celebration.

**My Advice:** It's worth questioning whether this social norm is secretly driving the value. If so, it might be smart to reject the value entirely, or at least re-think the second part of the value. For example, maybe the more true-to-themselves version of this value is: "Working hard, when I feel proud of my skills and energized"

What makes this problem particularly thorny is that the same social norm could be rooted in a true personal value for one person, but not another person. After all, social norms can only emerge when a lot of people care about the same thing. More about this in the next section.

## **2 ➤ It's not someone else's value**

Sometimes you might have articulated a value well, but it's just not **your** value. It's someone else's. This is similar to #1, but instead of a group of people, it's just one person.

## EXAMPLE

**Person A:** An entrepreneur running a healthy snack startup.

**Person B:** A retired sculptor who makes steel monkey statues.

**Value:** Creativity, when it empowers me to be the best.

**My advice:** While both people likely care about creativity, the sculptor is probably more interested in self-expression. Whereas the entrepreneur might genuinely want to be "the best" in the cutthroat context of the commercial marketplace.

Now, it may be the case that both people **do** have this as a genuine value. Maybe Person B is an unusually competitive sculptor! The only way to know for sure is to grow awareness of your values through reflection over time, which we will set you up to do in **Values in Real Life**.

There's another subtle lesson here - there's no such thing as an objectively "wrong" value. While some people's

personal philosophy might look down on competition, others could see it as an important part of their life. Don't be afraid to list something you care about, even if you feel a bit ashamed about it.

The important part is that it's true to who you are. Then, you can decide if it's something you want to accept about yourself or change. But you can't get there until you have a clear picture of who you really are first.

### **3 ➤ It's specific**

To quote my uncle "a river with no boundaries is a flood." That's why values should always include **context** or **boundaries** for when they work for you.

#### **EXAMPLE**

**Value:** Learning

**My Advice:** With a value articulated like this, it's impossible to know when to stop. If they were staying up until 2am every night reading wikipedia articles and had no energy the next day is that good or bad? For some people,

that might be "the good life" - but for others, it's anything but.

**Refined value:** Learning - when I feel the excitement of falling down the rabbit hole.

Values with no boundaries are called "toxic values" because they can easily get out of hand and erode your boundaries and mental health – like acid.

#### **4 ➤ It's simple**

Personal values are tools to help you make decisions and interpret your feelings. Like all tools, the simpler the tool, the better.

Think of chisels, paintbrushes, and pencils. A simple tool is more versatile than a complicated one. Our lives are very complex, and require versatile tools to navigate them.

#### **EXAMPLE**

**Value:** Self expression - when I'm at a party and I get to feel like I'm the life of the party

## EXAMPLE CONTINUED

**My Advice:** While I have no doubt that it feels amazing for this person to be the life of the party, I'm quite skeptical that self expression is only important to them at parties. When else might they benefit from expressing themselves?

When your values are simple, you can easily remember them, and use them in life's many different situations.

## **Some things that are not personal values**

You might find yourself wondering "Is a personal value the same thing as a mission statement? Or a belief?" This section covers some things that are similar but not the same thing as personal values.

## 1 ➤ Constraints or Situations

While values play an important role in our decisions and habits, they aren't the only forces that influence us.

### EXAMPLE

**Constraint:** A poor person who buys cheap unhealthy food probably isn't doing it because they value convenience. They are likely doing it because they can't afford anything else.

### EXAMPLE

**Situation:** A person stumbles upon a bear, and runs away. This doesn't mean they value peace over self-preservation. They had a fight or flight response. Their brain chemistry took over and called the shots.

There's no benefit in attempting to reverse engineer values from every life event.

At a given moment, we might have a high or low amount of choice in how we act. Personal values are most impactful and

revealing in the moments with a higher degree of choice.

## **2 ➤ A personal mission or purpose**

This is a kind of a goal or objective. This is the **what** of your life, but Personal Values describe the **how**.

### **EXAMPLE**

**Personal mission:** Improve the quality of mental health education in the United States.

Personal values, by contrast, are a way of being. They describe a process. A personal mission is related to that person's values. Taking the above example, here's a value they might have:

### **EXAMPLE**

**Value:** Supporting my community, when I can see it foster love.



The mission describes the impact the person wants to have on the world, whereas the value describes how that person should act independent of outcomes.

You can think of a mission as a map with a big X on it where you want to go. Values are more like a compass that points in a direction. What they have in common is that they both tell you where to go.

The advantage of the map is that you can have a specific vision of the future, but where it fails is that if you discover rough terrain on that journey, you might miss out on other equally good alternative destinations.

The advantage of the compass is that it is robust to new discoveries and changing terrain. Its downside is that there is no guarantee you will end up somewhere you wanted to be when you set off on your journey.

### 3 ➤ Beliefs

Beliefs are generalizations about how the world works. They describe how your actions might impact the world, but they don't predict how it will **make you feel**.

#### EXAMPLES:

**Belief:** Science is real.

**Belief:** Murder is wrong.

A good test is to ask yourself if this idea helps you categorize things into "good" or "bad". If so, that's probably a belief and not a personal value.

#### EXAMPLES:

Science is Real ➔ Climate denial is bad

Murder is wrong ➔ Murderers are bad

Taking care of the planet ➔ Could be both. If taking actions to care for the planet makes you feel fulfilled, it may be a value.

Beliefs and values are both useful for making "one and done" decisions. For example, you might decide to vote for a politician who prioritizes science and facts over public opinion if you believe "Science is real."

But if you live your life based on beliefs alone, you run the risk of drifting into a life lacking meaning, because you're not taking your own feelings into account. You're "using" yourself to achieve certain goals, regardless of how it makes you feel.

That said, some beliefs can be revealing of what your values are, if there is something personally meaningful at play.

#### EXAMPLE

"Science is real." → "Staying open-minded, when it helps me make better long-term decisions"

A Rough  
Draft

# **Contents**

PG. 22 • 20 MIN

## **Role models & Anti-role models**

PG. 30 - 20 MIN

## **Time well spent & Time wasted**

PG. 36 - 15 MIN

## **Big feelings**

PG. 40 - 15 MIN

## **Values rough draft**

# Get Started with personal values

Now that you understand what personal values are, it's time to start defining yours. In this section you'll:

- 1 ➤** Follow prompts to uncover your values through short reflection exercises.
- 2 ➤** Write down a working set of personal values to refine in **Filtering Out the Noise**.

## PROMPT 1

### Role models

Who you look up to says a lot about who you are. For this exercise, you'll start by thinking of three people you admire at least one aspect of. Focus on people who you uniquely find special instead of people who pretty much everyone looks up to (e.g. Einstein, da Vinci, Beethoven).

### EXAMPLE STEP 1

Julie Mehretu (the painter)

For each person, write down the specific things that each person does which you want to embody the most.

### EXAMPLE STEP 2

She makes paintings that inspire a sense of awe and abundance that makes me want to spend a long time with them.

Then, summarize that role-model-worthy behavior into a single word or phrase which describes a way of being or concept that you would like to embody in your life.

### EXAMPLE STEP 3

Child-like wonder

These words or phrases are a great starting point for values of your own.

**STEP 1: A PERSON**

**STEP 2: WHAT THEY DO**

**STEP 3: VALUE STEM**

**STEP 1: A PERSON**

**STEP 2: WHAT THEY DO**

**STEP 3: VALUE STEM**



### STEP 1: A PERSON

### STEP 2: WHAT THEY DO

### STEP 3: VALUE STEM

### PROMPT 2

## **Anti-Role Models**

Negative emotions can reveal corners of our personality that we wouldn't think of when only reflecting on positive emotions.

An anti-role model is someone who acts in a way that you don't wish to mimic yourself. The goal here isn't to dunk on people, but to identify what causes a strong reaction from you when you encounter it.

First, write down the person's name.

**EXAMPLE STEP 1:**

My old coworker Bob.

Next, describe what that person does which you really want to avoid doing yourself. Focus on their actions.

**EXAMPLE STEP 2:**

He used to go on facebook all day at work and it made me angry because I don't think it's fair that they could slack off while everyone else is working hard.

Now, distill those behaviors into a single word or phrase which summarizes that behavior.

**EXAMPLE**

Laziness

Now, convert them to their opposites, to translate these into candidates for your own person values.

#### EXAMPLE

Laziness ➡ Action

#### STEP 1: A PERSON

#### STEP 2: WHAT THEY DO

#### STEP 3: VALUE STEM

#### STEP 4: OPPOSITE VALUE STEM

### STEP 1: A PERSON

### STEP 2: WHAT THEY DO

### STEP 3: VALUE STEM

### STEP 4: OPPOSITE VALUE STEM



#### STEP 1: A PERSON

#### STEP 2: WHAT THEY DO

#### STEP 3: VALUE STEM

#### STEP 4: OPPOSITE VALUE STEM

Life wouldn't be very interesting if we only looked at other people for inspiration. Let's shift our focus to something else which can be just as instructive - our experiences.

### PROMPT 3

## Time Well Spent

Think about a time of your life that you think your time was well spent. This could be anything from a moment, to a period of your life. If you had the ability to skip over all the boring parts, which parts would you intentionally not skip over?

Write down the things you did during this time and how it made you feel.

### EXAMPLE STEP 1:

The summer before college I felt completely free to do whatever I wanted. I didn't have a job or any homework so I just cooked and made music. Some of those songs I wrote that summer are my favorite I ever wrote. I felt very free back then.

Next, focus in on the what you were doing during this time. Summarize those behaviors into a word or phrase.

## EXAMPLE STEP 2:

Freedom

Try to focus on moments that are unique to you, and moments that were different from one another.

## STEP 1: A MEMORY



## STEP 2: VALUE STEM



**STEP 1: A MEMORY**



**STEP 2: VALUE STEM**



**STEP 1: A MEMORY**



**STEP 2: VALUE STEM**





#### PROMPT 4

## Time Wasted

Time wasted can also be a great teacher. Think of a few times where if you could, you would have gladly skipped over them.

In other words, if given the choice, you would rather sleep through that time and wake up when it was over. Try to list specific actions you did and how they made you feel.

#### EXAMPLE STEP 1:

Studying for the SATs. Going through the writing examples felt like such a waste of time. I felt angry that I had to go through a cruel experience to prove myself to colleges. I would have preferred to be outside biking or surfing.

Next, distill those memories into a single word or phrase which encapsulates why that time felt wasted.

### EXAMPLE STEP 2:

Boredom

Next, convert them to their opposites, to translate these into candidates for your own person values.

### EXAMPLE STEP 3:

Boredom ➔ Curiosity

### STEP 1: A MEMORY

### STEP 2: VALUE STEM

### STEP 3: OPPOSITE VALUE STEM

**STEP 1: A MEMORY**



**STEP 2: VALUE STEM**



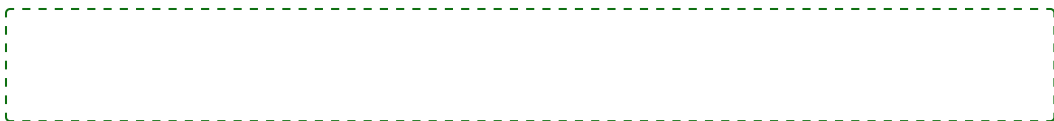
**STEP 3: OPPOSITE VALUE STEM**



**STEP 1: A MEMORY**



**STEP 2: VALUE STEM**



**STEP 3: OPPOSITE VALUE STEM**



## PROMPT 5

# Big Feelings

This is the most open-ended of the prompts. Think of big feelings in your life which don't fit neatly into any of the previous prompts, and write down a brief story or bullet points of what happened.

### EXAMPLE STEP 1:

My brother always withheld approval from my artwork when I was a kid. Until our 20s, whenever I showed him my art he would just say a one-word response, or nothing at all. It made me feel sad. I wanted more support.

Then, translate the memory into a value that was at play.

### EXAMPLE STEP 2:

Connection to others - when I feel grounded in who I am.

This one can be harder than others, so here are some examples of how different emotions can translate into values:

**Anger** ➡➡ Something important to us is being oppressed or silenced

**Fear** ➡➡ Something important to us is threatened

**Shame** ➡➡ We haven't been living up to something important to us

**Sadness** ➡➡ We are missing something that makes us feel whole

**Joy** ➡➡, that we are experiencing something we enjoy

**Love** ➡➡ something we care about is being cared for or cherished

**Satisfaction** ➡➡ We achieved something important to us

### STEP 1: A MEMORY



### STEP 2: VALUE STEM



### STEP 1: A MEMORY



### STEP 2: VALUE STEM



## STEP 1: A MEMORY

## STEP 2: VALUE STEM



# Values Rough Draft

Now that you've spent time thinking about value stems, it's a good time to take a stab at writing your personal values. You will refine these over time, so treat this as a first draft and don't worry about wording.

As a reminder, values have two parts:

**Learning<sup>1</sup>:** when I can see myself doing things I couldn't before.<sup>2</sup>

**1 ➤ Value stem:** A way of being or concept that is important to pay attention to.

**2 ➤ Boundary:** The details of when living by this value makes you feel fulfilled.

This is the first time in this book you're being asked to write values. Some helpful questions to ask yourself are – What can I observe when I'm living by this value? Or, when in my life is it most important to live by this value?



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



Filtering  
out the  
Noise

# **Contents**

PG. 46 · 10 MIN

## **On my own terms**

PG. 48 - 10 MIN

## **Makes me feel**

PG. 50 - 10 MIN

## **Shadow values**

PG. 52 - 10 MIN

## **Origin story**

PG. 54 - 10 MIN

## **Too far**

PG. 56 - 15 MIN

## **Values second draft**

# Under the Lens

Now that you have a rough draft of your values, it's time to refine them. In this section you'll:

- 1 ➤ Follow prompts to add nuance and specificity to your values.
- 2 ➤ Write down a refined set of values to put to work in Values in Real Life.

These pages have space to apply the lenses to a couple of your values, but you might benefit from applying them to all your values in a journal or in a doc.

On the right, there's an example of a lens and an updated value based on that lens. In this example it became less about performing "working hard" for other people, and more about what the person actually cared about, which is reaching breakthroughs.

EXAMPLE LENS:

➡ PG. 49

VALUE:

WORKING HARD - WHEN IT MAKES ME  
FEEL LIKE A CHAMP

TO APPEAR THIS WAY TO OTHERS, I'VE:

WORKED LONG HOURS, LAST TO LEAVE  
THE OFFICE

BUT ON MY OWN TERMS IT MEANS:

TAKING RISKS & MAKING BREAK-  
THROUGHS. INSPIRING MY TEAM.

EXAMPLE UPDATED VALUE:

➡ PG. 56

VALUE STEM:

WORKING  
HARD

BOUNDARY:

WHEN IT LEADS ME TO  
BIG RISKS & BREAKTHROUGHS

## LENS 1

# On my Own Terms

This lens is all about filtering out any social norms that might be lingering in your definition of your value. Try it on values you think a lot of people share.

### EXAMPLE:

**Value:** Taking care of my body, so I can live a very long life.

**To appear this way to others, I've:**  
done marathons and crossfit

**But on my own terms, it means:** some gentle yoga in the mornings.

**Revised value:** Taking care of my body, when it lets me wake up feeling excited about the new day.

It might help to ask yourself "If I already had the unconditional approval of everyone in my life, what would I do?" or "If I lived alone on Pluto, what would I do?"

**VALUE:**

**TO APPEAR THIS WAY TO OTHERS, I'VE:**

**BUT ON MY OWN TERMS IT MEANS:**

**VALUE:**

**TO APPEAR THIS WAY TO OTHERS, I'VE:**

**BUT ON MY OWN TERMS IT MEANS:**

## LENS 2

# Makes Me Feel

This lens is useful for adding an emotional boundary to a value that might easily get out of hand.

### EXAMPLE:

**Value:** Connection with others, so I can be a good friend.

**Living by this value makes me feel:**  
grounded and joyous

**Revised Value:** Connection with others, when it makes me feel grounded and happy

While "being a good friend" is an honorable thing to do, it fails to define a boundary. What if a friend keeps on taking and taking and you keep giving and giving to the point of exasperation, what should you do then? This revised value places a healthy boundary on connection with others.



**VALUE:**

**LIVING BY THIS VALUE MAKES ME FEEL:**

**VALUE:**

**LIVING BY THIS VALUE MAKES ME FEEL:**

**VALUE:**

**LIVING BY THIS VALUE MAKES ME FEEL:**

### LENS 3

## Shadow Values

This lens is all about developing nuance in your values. It's especially helpful for values that seem the most obvious, or values you've had for a very long time.

### EXAMPLE:

**Value:** Being bold - when I take big risks to have massive impact

**The opposite of this value is:** Being a cog in the machine or worker bee

**Which could be beneficial if:**

There was a lot of unglamorous but important work that needed to get done but nobody wanted to do

**Revised Value:** Bold moves - when I can make the best contribution to my communities

The revised value in this example is more nuanced, taking the benefits of being a worker bee.

**VALUE:**

**THE OPPOSITE OF THIS VALUE IS:**

**WHICH COULD BE BENEFICIAL IF:**

**VALUE:**

**THE OPPOSITE OF THIS VALUE IS:**

**WHICH COULD BE BENEFICIAL IF:**

## LENS 4

# Origin Story

This lens is for uncovering the outsized impact of specific events.

### EXAMPLE:

**Value:** Being loyal, when it keeps my relationships strong.

**I decided this value was important when:** my uncle cheated on my aunt and I thought to myself - I'm never going to do that.

**If that never happened, I would:** give myself a bit more leeway to define my relationships on my own terms.

**Revised Value:** Cultivating deep relationships, when it makes me feel love and connection.

This is a good fit for values you haven't questioned for a while, or ones that you find yourself judging others that don't seem to live by this value.

**VALUE:**

**I DECIDED THIS VALUE WAS IMPORTANT WHEN:**

**IF THAT HAD NEVER HAPPENED, I WOULD:**

**VALUE:**

**I DECIDED THIS VALUE WAS IMPORTANT WHEN:**

**IF THAT HAD NEVER HAPPENED, I WOULD:**

## LENS 5

# Too Far

This lens is all about developing more nuance on values that seemingly have no potential consequences.

### EXAMPLE:

**Value:** Taking care of my body, when it lets me wake up feeling excited about the new day.

**Taking this too far could mean:** policing my actions and not letting myself cut loose from time to time when I need it.

**Revised Value:** Taking care of my body, when it creates an energized baseline for me to live my life on.

The revised value in the above example accounts for more spontaneity than the first version, which might make it a better fit for that person.

**VALUE:**

**TAKING THIS TOO FAR COULD MEAN:**

**VALUE:**

**TAKING THIS TOO FAR COULD MEAN:**

**VALUE:**

**TAKING THIS TOO FAR COULD MEAN:**

# Values Second Draft

By now, you should have a much more detailed and personal understanding of your values.

Below is some space to jot down your improved understanding of your values. You can find a refresher on the structure of values on page 40.

**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



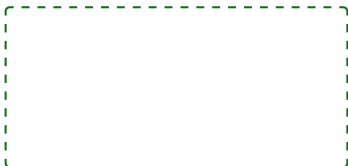
**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**





**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



**VALUE STEM:**



**BOUNDARY:**



# Values in Real Life

# **Contents**

PG. 60 - 5 MIN

## **Defining the Relationship**

PG. 60 - 10 MIN

## **A Seasonal Mentor**

PG. 64 - 10 MIN

## **A Daily Companion**

PG. 72 - 10 MIN

## **Revisiting your Values**

## Defining the Relationship

Just like there are different ways to relate to the people in your life, you can relate to your values in different ways. Do you want to be married to your values and dedicate time in them every day like a spouse? Or would you like to just visit them once a season like a mentor?

The following two sections outline two ways you can use the rest of the tools in Harmony Toolbox to engage with your values in varying levels of depth.

90 MIN, ONCE PER SEASON

### Option 1: A Seasonal Mentor

#### What is it?

Use the **Decision Helper** once every season to pick the right focus. This way, you kick off a season feeling inspired and energized, like the first day of a new semester of school.

TITLE

GO ON SABBATICAL

VALUES IN HARMONY

∞-learning

☺-relax

NOTEWORTHY DETAILS

THE LEARNING FACTOR IS HUGE ON THIS ONE, BUT LITTLE WORRIED IT'S NOT FUN ENOUGH...

TITLE

BACKPACK THROUGH EUROPE

VALUES IN HARMONY

AP - ADVENTURE

☺ CONNECTING W/ PEOPLE

NOTEWORTHY DETAILS

THIS ONE SEEMS THE MOST FUN, BUT LAST TIME I WENT BACKPACKING I GOT BORED AFTER DAY 3

TITLE

STUDY FOR LSATS

VALUES IN HARMONY

∞-learning

☺ BEING STRATEGIC

NOTEWORTHY DETAILS

THIS ONE SEEMS STRATEGIC BUT, IS IT? I'M NOT SO SURE...

HARMONY TOOLBOX

Decision Helper



## **Who should pick this one?**

This might be a good fit for you if you have a nagging feeling you should be "doing something" but fail to understand why or what you would do. Maybe you have some ideas for what you would like to spend your time on, but for some reason guilt alone isn't enough to motivate you, and you find yourself asking why you bothered to do the thing in the first place.

The magic of centering values in this kind of decision making is the stability of these choices. Instead of picking ideas based on simply what you feel on the day you write the ideas down, you're making choices that are fundamentally rooted in who you are as a person. That way when you're in the weeds with your projects and you ask yourself, "why am I doing this?" You can answer, "It's who I am."

## **Instructions:**

**Step 1 ➤** Find some time and space (e.g. a cozy café) for reflection. Grab your Decision Helper and fill out the Title section for all the ideas you can think of for how to spend your time. Keep going until you feel like you've exhausted all your ideas.

**Step 2 ➤** Fill out the rest of each entry. First, mark which values are in harmony or in conflict with that idea. Then comes the important part – "Noteworthy Details". Write why the idea resonates or conflicts with your values. Focus on the 2 or 3 most important qualities of that idea.

**Step 3 ➤** Now it's time to pick a focus. Look through all the ideas you had and decide which align the most with your values. If it feels hard to choose, that's OK! Even when you understand your values, it's still hard to live by them.

90 MIN SETUP, THEN 2-3 MIN / DAY

## **Option 2: A Daily Companion**

### **What is it?**

First, you translate your personal values into chunks of time with the cards in this kit. Then, over the course of a month, you use the calendar to note which of those cards you did, and any patterns you notice.

It's like making a game for yourself where you score points for living a meaningful life.

### **Who should pick this one?**

Choose this one if you want to build your values into your daily life.

This accomplishes that by making it easy to see patterns (e.g. When I live by my values, I feel good. When I don't, I feel bad). Eventually, you internalize these patterns, and it becomes easier to live by your values.





## INSTRUCTIONS:

**Step 1 ➤** Translate your values into chunks of time by filling out the cards in this kit. While a To-Do list tells you what to do, these cards give you options. Feeling tired? Take a "rest day". Feeling inspired? Maybe today could be a "studio day". Feeling spontaneous? Maybe today is an "adventure day".

Each card has a catchy title, the values it resonates with, and a description. The next couple pages have prompts to help you come up with your own.

Use the prompts on pages 68-71 to help you fill out the cards.

**Step 2 ➤** Set up your Harmony Calendar with each activity card as a column. You might like to write down a theme for the month, or a goal.

**Step 3 ➡** Over the course of the month, fill in which cards you did that day.

Jot down notes alongside your calendar - this is how you grow wisdom over time about how your values show up in your daily life.

If you want to go the extra mile, try outlining which days you want to do at the beginning of the day, so you can build a muscle of setting an intention and then doing it.

Once you've completed a month, reflect on what went well and what didn't go well, and anything you learned about yourself and your values along the way. This can feed into the next month and so on. Eventually, you'll develop a sense of mastery over how you spend your time and how you feel about it.

## Looking back

Reflect on your daily life and look for patterns. What are some of the ways you often spend time that seem to be the most connected to your values?

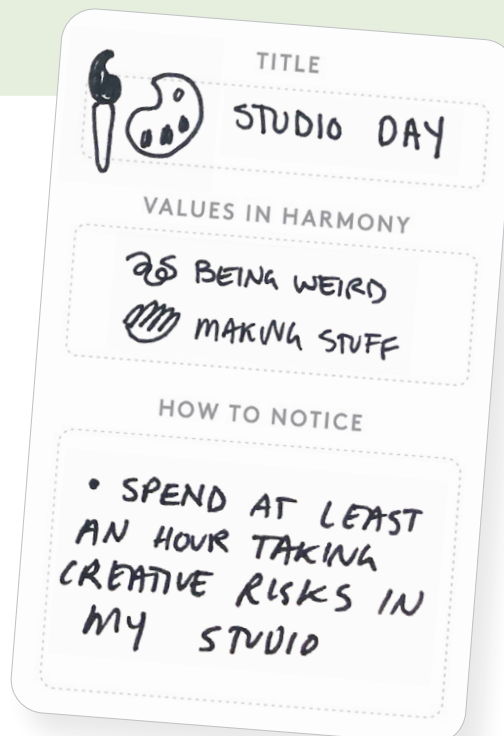
### EXAMPLE:

**Typical Chunk of Time:** Pottery class

**Values in Harmony:** "Making Stuff" and "Being Weird"

**What specifically makes this meaningful:** spending an hour taking creative risks - not just doodling

**Resulting card:**



The card is a hand-drawn template with three main sections. The first section is titled 'TITLE' and contains a drawing of a paint palette and a paintbrush, followed by the text 'STUDIO DAY'. The second section is titled 'VALUES IN HARMONY' and contains two entries: 'BEING WEIRD' with a drawing of a skull and 'MAKING STUFF' with a drawing of a hand holding a paintbrush. The third section is titled 'HOW TO NOTICE' and contains a bullet point: 'SPEND AT LEAST AN HOUR TAKING CREATIVE RISKS IN MY STUDIO'.

TITLE
STUDIO DAY
VALUES IN HARMONY
BEING WEIRD
MAKING STUFF
HOW TO NOTICE
• SPEND AT LEAST AN HOUR TAKING CREATIVE RISKS IN MY STUDIO

**TYPICAL CHUNK OF TIME:**

**VALUES IN HARMONY:**

**WHAT SPECIFICALLY MAKES THIS MEANINGFUL:**

**TYPICAL CHUNK OF TIME:**

**VALUES IN HARMONY:**

**WHAT SPECIFICALLY MAKES THIS MEANINGFUL:**

# Looking Forward

Think of values you wish were a bigger part of your life. What steps are necessary to embody those values that are hard to do? What kinds of games or rituals might make those steps less hard, or at least fun?

## EXAMPLE:

**Value:** Taking care of myself, when it gives me the energy to sieze the day.

**Hard step:** Thinking of an activity that is fun enough that it counts as energizing to me.

**A game or ritual:**  
Going on a jog on the beach or playing tennis

**Resulting card:**



**VALUE(S):**

**HARD STEP(S):**

**A GAME OR RITUAL:**

**VALUE(S):**

**HARD STEP(S):**

**A GAME OR RITUAL:**

## Revisiting your Values

Just as we care about different things as children than we do as an adult, we will care about different things a few months or a year from now than we do today. You might add or remove values, or edit existing ones to take new experience into account.

Revisiting your values every season will make sure that they are accurate and helpful tools.

### EXAMPLE:

**The Surprise:** I spent the whole weekend studying for a test, but I actually felt super drained and uninspired by the end and didn't feel confident before the test.

**Related Value:** Learning, so I can be the best in my class.

**Updated Value:** Learning, when it helps me feel confident and proud of myself.



**THE SURPRISE:**

**RELATED VALUE(S):**

**UPDATED VALUE(S):**

**THE SURPRISE:**

**RELATED VALUE(S):**

**UPDATED VALUE(S):**

## **The End & Beginning**

This is the end of the book! This is only the beginning. Harmony Toolbox is just that - a set of tools. Simply buying a chisel is not the same as creating a sculpture. You will get the most value from these tools if you put them to work in your daily life.

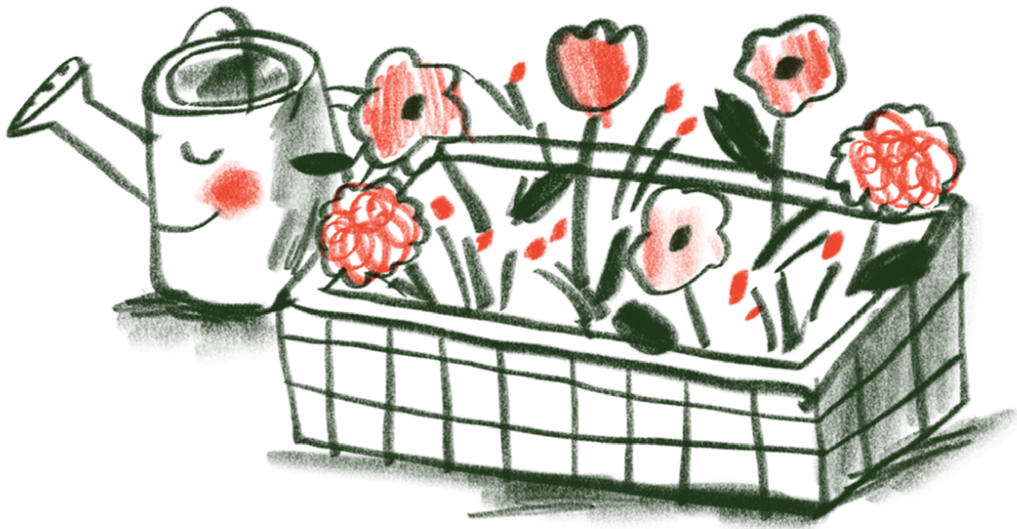
Try to use them for a period of time, and then reflect on what went well and what didn't go well. Over time, you will become quite good at anticipating your feelings and spending your time in a way that leaves you feeling fulfilled.

We also welcome you to join our online community. People who use this kit tend to reach the most breakthroughs when they do the activities with other people. Of course, only join if it's aligned with your values ;)

# Harmony Toolbox Garden

An online community for getting a  
second opinion, asking questions, and  
sharing stories

[HARMONYTOOLBOX.COM/COMMUNITY](https://harmonytoolbox.com/community)



Uncovering your values  
1st edition  
Published by Harmony Toolbox

Written by Ryan Mather  
Edited by a bunch of his friends

This text was created after taking a class with the School for Social Design, led by Joe Edelman. Some of the exercises in this book are based on that course. It's a great course for anyone looking to deepen their design skills. If you are interested in learning more about other similar projects, check out **sfsd.io**

These tools were developed with advice from Dennis Sarkozy and the illustrations are by Fanny Luor. Vicki Tan, Paras Memon, and Milan Moffat were all early testers and gave invaluable feedback. Special thanks also to my Mom, Dad, Jason, and Emily.

The fonts are Gooper by Very Cool Studio and Brown by Lineto