

## Values

It is essential to come to a clear understanding of what is important to you - those core values that you hold as uncompromised principles or beliefs about how you and others should interact and engage in the world around you. It's not sufficient to only avoid conflicts with your values; to be truly at your best, you must actively “live into” those values that you hold to be true above all else.

Your values are part of who you are at your core, and they influence all aspects of your daily life: your career, your family, your friends, your community, your health – essentially your entire sense of well-being. Your values also serve as the benchmark against which you measure your interactions with others and your alignment with team members and other stakeholders. When your actions or other elements of your environment are not aligned with, or prevent you from fully living into your values, you will feel some measure of distress. This is a signal that it's time to look closely at your values and make decisions about what needs to change to allow you to fully honor that which is important to you at your core.

The first step is to identify your core values. The following exercise will help you recognize, articulate and prioritize your most essential, core values.

## Values Exercise

### Identifying Personal Values

Make a list of the values that initially come to mind for you given the description in the paragraphs above. You can build your list from scratch, or use the sample list provided below. If necessary, for additional help in identifying your core values, consider the question prompts at the end of this document.

- Start by listing as many values words as initially resonate with you as important.
- Now narrow your list. Review what you have noted and condense it to 5-7 that stand out as “most important” or “most imperative” to you. Ask yourself, “If I have to live without one of these, which would it be... and why?”
- Now narrow the list even further. From the list of your top 5-7 values, choose which 3 you would like your Practicum teammates to embrace and understand so you can feel like you are bringing your best to the team

## Values List

accomplishment	economic security	inspire	purity
advancement	effectiveness	integrity	quality
adventure	efficiency	intellectual status	recognition
aesthetics	energize	involvement	relationships
affection	enlighten	job tranquility	religion
amusement	equality	joy	reputation
arts	ethical practice	knowledge	responsibility
autonomy	excellence	leadership	safety/security
be awake	excitement	location	self respect
be accepting	expertise	loyalty	service
be connected	explore	meaningful work	spirituality
beauty	fairness	minister to	status
change/variety	fame	money	teaching
close relationships	family	nature	teamwork
community	fast-paced work	nurturing	to be known
competence	financial gain	openness	tradition
competition	freedom	partnership	triumph
completion	friendship	peace/serenity	trust
cooperation	growth	performance	truth
collaboration	health	personal development	uplift
community	helping others	personal power	wealth
contributing	honesty	plan	win
creativity	humor	playfulness	wisdom
creating	ideas	pleasure	work alone
decisiveness	independence	power	
directness	influencing others	privacy	

Adapted from Cheryl Richardson, *Stand Up for Your Life*, Free Press, 2003.

## Questions to Consider

- Note the 2-3 significant experiences you’ve had during your life that helped shape you and make you who you are. What happened and why were those experiences important to you?
- What difficult or significant choices or transitions have you made as a result of these experiences? What was difficult or significant about them? Why did you make the choices you did?
- What are some situations in your life you wish you could do over? What was the situation, and what did you do? What do you wish you had done? What difference do you think it would have made?
- As you think about your responses to the above questions, what values (principles or beliefs) emerge? You can build your list from scratch or leverage the sample list of values included above.