

# PURPOSE

Going through stressful life situations is hard. It can take a lot of energy and a lot of positive self-talk to get through it, and—let's be honest—it can be pretty uncomfortable, frustrating, or even discouraging at times.

One of the best ways to help stay on track with your goals and push through even the hardest times is to get in touch with what's most important to you.



## *Let's Get Started*

**The following list can help you get a sense of what values are most important to you.**

You'll probably agree to a certain degree with most things on this list, so try not to think too hard here about your answers. Which word resonates with you on that deeper, gut level? Which words make you go, "Yeah, that one!" Circle the words that make you feel that feeling the most. People tend to pick somewhere between five and fifteen words to start this exercise, to help you as a guide. If you think of a word that isn't here, you can add it yourself.

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|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Accountability</b>     | <input type="radio"/> <b>Effectiveness</b>   | <input type="radio"/> <b>Empathy</b>             | <input type="radio"/> <b>Joy</b>           |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Diversity</b>          | <input type="radio"/> <b>Inner harmony</b>   | <input type="radio"/> <b>Intelligence</b>        | <input type="radio"/> <b>Simplicity</b>    |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Humility</b>           | <input type="radio"/> <b>Selflessness</b>    | <input type="radio"/> <b>Serenity</b>            | <input type="radio"/> <b>Relationships</b> |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Security</b>           | <input type="radio"/> <b>Altruism</b>        | <input type="radio"/> <b>Balance</b>             | <input type="radio"/> <b>Calmness</b>      |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Accuracy</b>           | <input type="radio"/> <b>Efficiency</b>      | <input type="radio"/> <b>Enjoyment</b>           | <input type="radio"/> <b>Excellence</b>    |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Independence</b>       | <input type="radio"/> <b>Inquisitiveness</b> | <input type="radio"/> <b>Intellectual status</b> | <input type="radio"/> <b>Authenticity</b>  |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Self-actualization</b> | <input type="radio"/> <b>Self-reliance</b>   | <input type="radio"/> <b>Service</b>             | <input type="radio"/> <b>Justice</b>       |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Achievement</b>        | <input type="radio"/> <b>Ambition</b>        | <input type="radio"/> <b>Belonging</b>           | <input type="radio"/> <b>Carefulness</b>   |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Financial security</b> | <input type="radio"/> <b>Elegance</b>        | <input type="radio"/> <b>Enthusiasm</b>          | <input type="radio"/> <b>Leadership</b>    |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Ingenuity</b>          | <input type="radio"/> <b>Insightfulness</b>  | <input type="radio"/> <b>Intuition</b>           | <input type="radio"/> <b>Vulnerability</b> |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Self-control</b>       | <input type="radio"/> <b>Sensitivity</b>     | <input type="radio"/> <b>Boldness</b>            | <input type="radio"/> <b>Speed</b>         |
| <input type="radio"/> <b>Adventurousness</b>    | <input type="radio"/> <b>Assertiveness</b>   | <input type="radio"/> <b>Equality</b>            | <input type="radio"/> <b>Challenge</b>     |

- Expertise
- Legacy
- Spontaneity
- Love
- Stability
- Security
- Commitment
- Expressiveness
- Loyalty
- Strategy
- Community
- Fairness
- Making a difference
- Strength
- Compassion
- Faith
- Mastery
- Perseverance
- Structure
- Competitiveness
- Merit
- Success
- Consistency
- Fitness
- Obedience
- Support
- Contentment
- Openness
- Teamwork
- Contribution
- Focus
- Order
- Temperance
- Control

- Freedom
- Originality
- Thankfulness
- Cooperation
- Fun
- Patriotism
- Thoroughness
- Correctness
- Generosity
- Perfection
- Thoughtfulness
- Courtesy
- Goodness
- Helpfulness
- Piety
- Timeliness
- Creativity
- Grace
- Positivity
- Accuracy
- Beauty
- Tolerance
- Curiosity
- Growth
- Nature
- Practicality
- Traditionalism
- Environmentalism
- Decisiveness
- Happiness
- Preparedness
- Trustworthiness
- Dependability
- Hard work

- Professionalism
- Truth-seeking
- Determination
- Health
- Prudence
- Understanding
- Devoutness
- Personal growth
- Helping society
- Uniqueness
- Diligence
- Holiness
- Reliability
- Honesty
- Discretion
- Honor
- Restraint
- Vitality
- Aesthetics
- Playfulness
- Propriety
- Humor
- Education
- Courage
- Respect
- Communication
- Passion
- Flexibility
- Recognition
- Discipline
- Invention
- Responsibility
- Duty
- Kindness

- Knowledge
- Experiences
- Entertainment
- Sacrifice
- Safety
- Empowerment
- Meaning
- Purpose
- Bravery
- Ethics
- Modesty
- Expression
- Solitude
- Family
- Spontaneity
- Fashion
- Collaboration
- Gratitude
- Logic
- Precision
- Unity
- Productivity
- Craftsmanship
- Profitability
- Hospitality
- Wealth
- Imagination
- Wisdom
- Credibility
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# WHAT VALUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?



Once you have your top words circled, focus in on these. Try to pick out your top five—the words that resonated most deeply within you as you read them and thought about them. Rank them below, with number 1 being your most important value.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Think about which of these values you currently have in your life right now. Write down areas in your life that are currently fulfilling or connecting with each of these values.

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about areas of your life that you'd like to grow or develop in the future, and how they might connect to each of your top five values. This could be around certain experiences, achievements, relationships, situations, jobs, volunteering, personal goals, and more.

1

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4

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5

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Next time you are finding it a challenge to persevere in the face of stress, remember your values and what's driving you toward these goals in the first place.





# SMART GOALS

The best way to stay on track even in the face of difficult obstacles is to have SMART goals. SMART goals help us make sure that we have a really clear road map and that we know where we're going. What does SMART stand for?



## S

### *Specific*

If you only have a vague sense of what your goal is, it will make it very hard to achieve it. Something like “I want to be a better person” is so vague, it’s hard to know what that looks like. Maybe what you really mean is that you want to be a more helpful person, for instance. So then think about what specific idea fits with a goal of becoming more helpful. Maybe to reach this goal, you decide you want to start volunteering.

## M

### *Measurable*

While knowing you want to start volunteering is a good start, how do you know if you are meeting a goal? Is volunteering once good enough? Or once a week? Make it measurable—a way that you can clearly tell if you are meeting your own expectations or not. Maybe you want to volunteer for three hours a week. That way you can definitely tell if you are on track for that goal.

## A

### *Attainable*

Make sure you stay realistic about your goals. If you set a goal of wanting to volunteer for ten hours a week knowing that you also have school, homework, chores, friends, and a part-time job—you probably are going to fall short of that goal or burn yourself out. Give yourself something reasonable to try to achieve.

## R

### *Relevant*

Make sure your goal is in alignment with your values and your overall big picture in life. For example, if you volunteer at a charity BBQ with your friends and only chat with them, you may be falling short of your big-picture goal of being more confident. While this may still be a fine thing to do, if you wanted to work on your confidence, it might make more sense to volunteer somewhere without your friends, so that you meet new people and get new experiences helping others.

## T

### *Timely*

Give yourself a guideline on when you want to achieve this goal. The timeline should be realistic—not so tight that you can’t achieve it, but not so far away that you never end up taking action. For volunteering, you might want to give yourself a month to research and contact six different options. Giving yourself one day to figure it all out would probably be too short, but three months seems much too long. If you research and visit two options a week, by the end of the month you can probably get started.

## A SMART GOAL EXAMPLE

**Volunteer for three hours per week for four months at the senior center to help me learn how to talk with people I don’t know and to build relationships with older adults.**