

## **SESSION 2: PERSONAL VALUES EXERCISE**

- **Small Group Discussion:** 15 minutes
  - Discuss the “priorities” questionnaire and your talk with your spouse.
- **View Video #2:** 10 minutes

Values are the bridge between principles and behavior. Our value system acts as the “operating system” driving our everyday thoughts and behavior. God’s principles are external laws that are permanent, unchanging, and universal in nature. Values, on the other hand, are internal and subjective, and they may change over time.

- **Individual Application - Personal Values Exercise:** 35 minutes

### **5-Step Process**

#### **Step 1. Determine your top values:**

Use the list, on the next page, of common personal values to help you get started.

#### **Step 2. Prioritize your top values:**

Jim Collins, author of “Good to Great” said: “If you have more than 3 priorities, you have no priorities.”

#### **Step 3. Reaffirm your values:**

Check your top-priority values, and make sure that they fit with your life and your vision for yourself.

#### **Step 4. Answer defining questions:**

Now it’s time to answer some specific questions about your values in order to start “operationalizing” those values into an action plan.

#### **Step 5. Operationalize your values:**

Operationalizing our values means that we have to live-out our values in our behaviors and skills in a way others can see them and experience them.

## **Step 1. Determine your top values, based on your experiences of fulfillment:**

Use the following list of common personal values to help you get started. Start by circling the top 10 values you feel drive you. Don't overthink it at this point. After you pick your top 10, narrow them down to 5. Walk away from this exercise for a few hours and then come back to it and aim to land on your 3 top values.

### *Values light our way*

Acceptance  
 Accountability  
 Achievement  
 Adaptability  
 Adventure  
 Altruism  
 Ambition  
 Authenticity  
 Balance  
 Beauty  
 Being the Best  
 Belonging  
 Career  
 Caring  
 Challenge  
 Collaboration  
 Commitment  
 Community  
 Compassion  
 Competency  
 Competitiveness  
 Confidence  
 Connection  
 Contentment  
 Contribution  
 Cooperation  
 Courage  
 Creativity  
 Curiosity  
 Dignity  
 Diversity  
 Efficiency  
 Encouragement  
 Enthusiasm  
 Ethics  
 Excellence  
 Fairness

Faith  
 Family  
 Financial Stability  
 Forgiveness  
 Freedom  
 Fun  
 Generosity  
 Giving Back  
 Gratitude  
 Growth  
 Harmony  
 Health  
 Helpfulness  
 Home  
 Honesty  
 Hope  
 Humility  
 Humor  
 Imagination  
 Inclusion  
 Independence  
 Integrity  
 Initiative  
 Intelligence  
 Intuition  
 Joy  
 Justice  
 Kindness  
 Knowledge  
 Leadership  
 Legacy  
 Learning  
 Leisure  
 Love  
 Loyalty  
 Making a Difference  
 Nature  
 Openness  
 Optimism  
 Order  
 Organization

Parenting  
 Patriotism  
 Patience  
 Peace  
 Perseverance  
 Power  
 Pride  
 Recognition  
 Relaxation  
 Reliability  
 Respect  
 Responsibility  
 Risk-Taking  
 Safety  
 Security  
 Service  
 Silence  
 Simplicity  
 Stillness  
 Spirituality  
 Stewardship  
 Success  
 Teamwork  
 Thrift  
 Time  
 Tradition  
 Travel  
 Trust  
 Truth  
 Understanding  
 Uniqueness  
 Usefulness  
 Vision  
 Vulnerability  
 Wealth  
 Wellbeing  
 Wholeheartedness  
 Wisdom

**Step 2. Review your lists and prioritize your top values:**

This step is probably the most difficult, because you'll have to look deep inside yourself. It's also the most important step, because, when making a decision, you'll have to choose between solutions that may satisfy different values. This is when you must know which value is more important to you. Jim Collins, author of “Good to Great” said: **“If you have more than 3 priorities, you have no priorities.”** Using that comment, let’s keep our combined top values down to the Final Three. This step is probably the most difficult, because you’ll have to look deep inside yourself. It also is the most important step, because when making decisions, you must know which value is most important to you.

- Write down your top values, not in any particular order.
- Look at the first two values and ask yourself, *“If I could satisfy only one of these, which would I choose?”* It might help to visualize a situation in which you would have to make that choice. For example, if you compare the values of service and stability, imagine that you must decide whether to sell your house and move to another country to do valuable foreign aid work, or keep your house and volunteer to do charity work closer to home.
- Keep working through the list, by comparing each value with each other value, until your list is in the correct order.

My TOP Priorities:

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**Step 3. Reaffirm your values:**

Check your top-priority values, and make sure that they fit with your life and your vision for yourself.

- *Do these values make you feel good about yourself?*
- *Are you proud of your top three values?*
- *Would you be comfortable and proud to tell your values to people you respect and admire?*
- *Do these values represent things you would support, even if your choice isn't popular?*

When you consider your values in decision making, you can be sure to keep your sense of integrity and what you know is right, and approach decisions with confidence and clarity. You'll also know that what you're doing is best for your current and future happiness and satisfaction.

Making value-based choices may not always be easy. However, making a choice that you know is right is a lot less difficult in the long run.

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**Step 4. Answer defining questions:**

- *What values will help you find your way in the dark?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *Which one creates a direct path to your purpose?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *What value helps me to come alive in a new way?*

**As you consider your top 3, ask yourself:**

- *Do these define me?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *Are these representing who I am at my best?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *Do they make my eyes smile?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- *Can these be used as a filter by which to make hard decisions?*

**Step 5. Operationalizing your values:**

Operationalizing our values means that we have to live-out our values in our behaviors and skills in a way others can see them and experience them. Making them real and actionable promotes trust and supports our relational desires.

*So, take each value you have identified and define 2 actions to make it come alive:*

My **first** value is: \_\_\_\_\_

To make my value an action, *I need to:*

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My **second** value is: \_\_\_\_\_

To make my value an action, *I need to:*

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My **third** value is: \_\_\_\_\_

To make my value an action, *I need to:*

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