Values Card Sort

ACT: Finding What Matters Most to You

A values card sort helps you find what matters most to you by sorting a set of values into piles. Psychologist William R. Miller and his colleagues created the Personal Values Card Sort in 2001 and placed it in the public domain. Therapists use card sorts in motivational interviewing and in acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT). The cards below are our own shorter list, so add any values that are missing for you.

1 Make your cards

Cut along the lines to make a card for each value, or simply mark them on this page. Use the blank cards for values of your own.

Acceptance	Adventure	Balance	Beauty
Belonging	Caring	Challenge	Comfort
Community	Compassion	Courage	Creativity
Curiosity	Fairness	Faith	Family
Freedom	Friendship	Fun	Generosity
Gratitude	Growth	Health	Honesty
Hope	Humor	Independence	Justice
Kindness	Learning	Love	Loyalty
Nature	Patience	Peace	Purpose
Respect	Responsibility	Security	Self-respect
Simplicity	Success	Tradition	Wisdom

Why does this work? *Values are the qualities you want to bring to how you live. Sorting makes you choose, which brings the few that matter most to the top. Once you know them, you can check whether your days line up with them and pick goals that fit. Noticing a gap between what you value and how you spend your time can also help you decide what, if anything, you want to change.*

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*

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2 Sort into three piles

Read each card and place it in one of three piles. Go with your first reaction. Most people put lots of cards in the middle pile, and that is fine.

Very important to me	Important to me	Not very important to me

3 Your top five

From your very important pile, choose the five that matter most. Rank them, with 1 as the most important.

Rank	Value	What it means to me
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Which of your top values are you living by right now? Which one would you like to make more room for?

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