



How to Uncover Your Personal Values and Reinvent Your Life!

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He who has a “why” to live, can bear almost any “how”.

– Nietzsche

What are Personal Values?

Values are a set of standards you have for life. They are the things you believe are most important to the way you live, work, and play.

Some people would even say that values are priorities that show us how we should be spending our time throughout the day.

Values can also be described as labels you give to specific words. These words help represent your emotional experiences, which originate from states of pain and pleasure.

These emotional experiences are often organized into a hierarchy of sorts that helps outline your priorities for life, and for living that life.

Values are the measures you use to figure out whether or not your life is turning out the way you had imagined. Therefore, values act like a compass that helps you stay on track and focused on the most important things in your life.

All this is very important because, when *what you do* and *how you behave* is consistent with your values, then life feels good, and you feel good about yourself and life.

However, when *what you do* and *how you behave* is not aligned with your highest values (priorities for life), then that's when discomfort and pain sets in.

In such instances, you feel unfulfilled, dissatisfied and perhaps even downright miserable. And what's worse, is that you probably don't even recognize why you're feeling this way.

The Importance of Exploring Your Personal Values

The whole point of exploring your personal values is to help improve the results you get from the most critical areas of your life.

For this very reason, it's absolutely crucial that you explore your personal values in meticulous detail.

An exploration of your personal values will help you live a more balanced life based on your highest priorities.

When you come to understand your personal values, you can use them to [make better decisions](#) throughout the day.

This is advantageous as it helps you decide with more clarity and certainty what kind of [career to pursue](#), what kind of [relationships to nurture](#), whether or not you should travel, [take risks](#), [save money](#), start a business, [pursue your goals](#), etc.

All this is, of course, extremely important given the fact that **your values profoundly influence what you focus on, how you perceive reality, how you evaluate things and the behaviors you choose or choose not to indulge in each day.**

Given all this, it would make sense to assume that if your values are not in sync with your daily choices, decisions, and actions, then you will tend to feel a little unfulfilled and dissatisfied with your life.

How Life Transition Impacts Our Values

It's helpful to keep in mind that our values often change as we transition through various stages of life.

For instance, your values will be structured a certain way while pursuing your academic goals. During this period of your life, you might value the acquisition of knowledge above all else.

However, upon completion of your studies, you might value adventure above all other values. And, given your strong inclination for adventure, you decide to take a 12 month trip around the world.

12 months later you arrive home and transition into a career path. As a result, your values shift once again. Suddenly independence and financial security become a top priority.

Down the track, you might decide to start a family, and your values shift yet again. Money might, of course, still be a priority. However, love, comfort, security, and connection may also be on top of your value list.

Then, years later, when it comes time to retire, you might once again value adventure above all else. As a result, you decide to travel the world yet again and make the most of your retirement years.

Major unexpected life events can also significantly transform our values.

For instance, a close family member passing away can shift how you think about your life, your path, and how you feel about others. Moreover, it can change your priorities and how you choose to live your life.

Likewise, being involved in a major accident or going through significant emotional turmoil can also force you to rethink your values and priorities.

Events such as these can shift how you think about things — significantly altering your choices, decisions, and actions moving forward.

Keeping track of your values is a great way to stay in-tune with your deepest needs and desires.

What was once important, may not be important today. As a result, you must consciously alter your choices and decisions to align them with your highest values and priorities.

Failing to take these steps can leave you feeling vulnerable, dissatisfied and unfulfilled.

Why Some Values Never Change

There will, of course, be some values that will stay constant over a lifetime. These values may include health, happiness, loyalty, empathy, selflessness, love and other priorities.

These are the values that lie at the core of who you are. They are the values that determine how you live your life from the deepest recesses of your heart.

These values rarely change and are often ingrained in your psyche at a very young age.

Understanding Different Types of Values and How they Impact Our Lives

There are two types of values that are worth exploring. Both of these value types influence your daily choices and decisions in immeasurable ways.

The first set of values are known as **moving-toward values**, and the second set of values are known as **moving-away values**.

Moving-Toward Values: These are pleasure-inducing values. They are values (emotional states) that you find pleasurable and want to experience time and again. For instance, you might pursue love, [passion](#), health, comfort, adventure, security, freedom, success, etc. These values make you feel good. However, they are not equal. And you will, therefore, pursue some of them at the expense of others, especially if value conflicts exist.

Moving-Away Values: These are pain-inducing values. They are values (emotional states) that you will do almost anything to avoid experiencing. For instance, you might avoid [loneliness](#), humiliation, [guilt](#), [depression](#), [frustration](#), [anger](#), [rejection](#), [criticism](#), etc. All these are examples of intense states. And many times these states overpower our moving-toward values. And this is of particular importance when it comes to finding an ideal balance in life.

Say for instance you value honesty and integrity above other values. These two values naturally awaken a pleasurable response and are, therefore, part of your moving-toward value hierarchy. At the same time, you have rejection high up on your list of moving-away from values.

In this instance, let's say that the pain of rejection is a greater motivating force than the pleasure you gain from being honest and showing integrity.

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Given what we now know about you, what decision are you likely to make when confronted with the dilemma of whether or not to tell someone something that you know will likely cause them pain and lead to rejection?

You will, of course, choose to hold back this information because experiencing the pain of rejection is a stronger motivator than it is to tell this person the truth.

All of your moving-toward and moving-away values are constructed into a hierarchy of sorts that dictates the choices and decisions you will make each day.

On one side of the spectrum, you have a hierarchy of your moving-toward values. These are the things that bring you pleasure.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, you have a hierarchy of your moving-away values. These are the things that bring you pain.

Now, of course, you might not be consciously aware of this hierarchy of values. However, it's certainly there. **It's evident in the decisions you make and the actions you take.**

It's essential to note that **having two polar-opposite value hierarchies is entirely the norm.** It's a part of life. We will always tend to move toward certain things and away from other things. This is how we [find the motivation](#) to do what we do each day. However, **this does become problematic when value conflicts exist.**

For instance, a value conflict exists in our earlier example. You want to do one thing by telling this person the truth. However, you hold yourself back because of the potential pain of rejection you are likely to experience if this person found out the truth.

In an ideal world, there will be a balance and no conflicts. Also in a perfect world, you will naturally gravitate and make decisions based on your moving-toward values. This is, in fact, how extremely happy and fulfilled people live their lives.

Their moving-toward values are so sharp that all their choices and decisions run through this "pleasure-centered" value hierarchy. Yes, of course, they also have a moving-away value hierarchy. However, this pain-inducing hierarchy doesn't significantly impact their daily choices and decisions.

To live life as these people do, you will need to [commit yourself](#) to developing your [emotional coping skills](#). These emotional coping skills will help you to better handle all those pain-inducing values you're afraid of experiencing.

Developing your [emotional coping skills](#) will, of course, take time. However, with a little effort, knowledge, and practice on your part, you will make progress in this area.

And as you make progress, you will subsequently begin to shift your preferences from the moving-away value hierarchy to the moving-toward value hierarchy.

There are Two More Types of Values that are Worth Exploring...

Let's now focus on two more types of values that must be defined before jumping into the value transformation process.

Say for instance you value love, family, security, and money. These values can be categorized in two ways. The first is as a **means-value**, and the second is as an **ends-value**. Let's take a look at the difference between the two value types:

- **Means Values:** These are tangible values such as family and money. They are things you may want to have in your life.
- **Ends Values:** These are emotional values such as love and security. They are the resulting emotional states you desire to experience.

Let's say that for instance, one of your core values is family. This is great, but what you actually want and value comes down to LOVE.

Or, let's say that another core value you have comes in the form of money. This is also okay, but what you actually want and value comes down to SECURITY and FREEDOM.

Your family gives you the love you desire, and the money you earn gives you the security and freedom you want.

Both value types are, of course, legitimate values. However, your ends-values are the only values worth exploring when it comes to building your value hierarchy.

Your ends-values are the things you actually want as a result of acquiring the tangible things that you think you want.

You might, for instance, ask yourself:

What does family really mean to me?

What does family give me?

What does money really mean to me?

What does money give me?

In other words, look for the emotional states you are likely to experience as a result of acquiring these means-values.

All this is very helpful because when you get down to the core of what life is about, it always comes down to our emotional experiences.

It doesn't really matter what we have, what we do, or who we become. All that matters are the emotional states we experience over a lifetime.

It, therefore, doesn't matter whether you're poor, rich, single, in a relationship, healthy or sick. These things essentially don't count.

There are many rich, healthy people in a relationship who are absolutely miserable. And then there are many poor, single and sick people who are remarkably fulfilled living happy lives.

It all comes down to the emotional states we experience each day.

When it comes to life, it doesn't matter what we have or don't have, it's rather how we feel about what we have or don't have. And that, in essence, is the [key to happiness](#).

Therefore, the lesson here is to always try to focus on your ends-values. They are after all the only values that matter.

How do We Create Our Personal Values?

As we already know, our values will often shift over a lifetime due to life transitions, significant emotional events, and other unexpected changes.

The changes in our lives are influenced by the [pain and pleasure principle](#). In other words, they are controlled by what we move toward or push against.

Change can also happen as we collect references from our peers, from our environment, from society, and from personal experience. These references manifest as evidence of our experience that subsequently shapes our opinions, values, and beliefs.

In fact, references often form the building blocks of all your [belief systems](#).

The more references you acquire about something, the more of an idea you will have about that “thing.” And the more idea you have about it, the more likely you are to form an opinion about it.

This, in turn, changes how you think and what you believe about this “thing.” And as your beliefs change, so do your, [habits](#), behaviors, [thoughts](#), and priorities.

Subsequently, all these changes influence your values, which likewise alters the choices and decisions you make each day.

If this process is still a little difficult to understand, then let’s break things down another way. Let’s look at how a “feeling” you have typically matures into a value.

In the beginning, you don't even have any awareness of this "thing" (something in your life). You're not ignorant, you're simply not aware and haven't given this "thing" any thought or consideration.

Suddenly though, something happens that shifts your attention onto this "thing." You now start feeling something about this "thing" in your life. This forces you to think about this "thing," and as you think about it, you begin forming an opinion about it.

This opinion strengthens as you reflect on this "thing" or talk about it with your family and friends. This process of communication with other people builds your references and further strengthens your opinion about this "thing."

Eventually, you are forced to make a choice about this "thing" in your life. After the choice is made, you take action, and this "thing" now becomes a part of your value hierarchy.

This "thing" we're talking about could come in the form of independence, security, adventure, compassion, honesty, [self-control](#), [optimism](#), [perfection](#), [intuition](#), [humility](#), [assertiveness](#), ambition, contribution, [spontaneity](#) or hard work.

This "thing" could inherently manifest as any of your values, and it's something that's occurring all of the time without our conscious awareness.

Yes, all this occurs mostly on an unconscious level of awareness. However, for those lucky few who understand how values are formed and how they shape their behavior and decisions — well, these people hold power to transform their life intentionally and with purpose.

Here's How to Begin Eliciting Your Personal Values

Eliciting your values is worthwhile because it helps you ascertain what's truly important in your life right now.

The moment you become aware of your unconscious priorities is the moment you can make the necessary adjustments to bring more balance and fulfillment to your life.

There are, of course, a number of ways you can begin eliciting your values.

You can, for instance, identify times when you were happiest, most proud or most fulfilled with your life. Thinking about these times will provide you with some valuable insights into what's most important.

Eliciting your values in this way will give you a reasonably good idea of your priorities as they relate to your value hierarchy. However, for the purpose of our discussion, let's begin with a slightly different approach.

Before jumping into the first step of this process, it's imperative to mention that while working through your values that you keep in mind your [Six Human Needs](#).

The need for certainty and uncertainty, the need for significance and connection, and the need for growth and contribution are pivotal here.

These six human needs form the building blocks of all your life experiences. As such, your values, and your value hierarchy must satisfy as many of these needs at the highest possible level — at all times.

If you successfully manage to do this, you will save yourself a great deal of work and effort finding that "life balance" you're after.

We'll, of course, explore this in more detail later on. For now. Let's jump into the process of steps you can use to elicit your values.

Step 1: Discover What You Truly Value in Life

Your very first step is to get to the bottom of what it is you truly value in life.

The best way to do this is to ask yourself a specific set of questions that will help unlock your core values and priorities.

As you ask yourself these questions, be sure to keep your responses to a single word that encapsulates each answer.

Here are six essential questions to get you started:

What would I do if I only had six years to live?

What would I do if I only had six months to live?

What would I do if I only had six weeks to live?

What would I do if I only had six days to live?

What would I do if I only had six hours to live?

What would I do if I only had six minutes to live?

These set of questions are compelling as they begin with a long-term view of your life and priorities, and then progressively force you to take a shorter-term view of your life and priorities.

Your values will, of course, probably be very different with six years to live compared to having only six minutes to live. The difference, however, isn't important.

What's important here is that you outline how your priorities change moving from a long-term to a short-term view of your life.

Once you've identified these values, look for patterns, trends, and similarities. Ask yourself:

What values stand out?

What patterns am I seeing?

The purpose of these questions is to provide you with the insights you need to help you define your core values.

Another approach we could take is to explore the people you admire. Ask yourself:

Whom do I admire?

Why do I admire these people?

What values stand out?

The people you admire are of high significance here. You admire them because they have specific values and beliefs that are important to you and to your life.

As you gain a deeper understanding as to why you admire these people, this will provide you with interesting insights into your own values and desired emotional states.

A final question that's worth asking revolves around how much you're willing to sacrifice to live your values. Ask yourself:

How much am I willing to sacrifice to live my values?

Again, this is an important question because if you're not willing to sacrifice to live your values, then these values are not really priorities in your life.

A real priority is something you will move heaven and earth for. They are the things you will fight for to make part of your life.

If you're having trouble with this final question and can't seem to wrap your head around the sacrifices you might need to make, then this could indicate that you have very strong conflicting moving-away values that are currently influencing your thoughts and behavior.

You will, of course, get an opportunity to work through these conflicts a little later on in this process.

For a comprehensive list of values you could use for this exercise, please take a look at this [list of 400+ values](#).

Step 2: Piece Together Your Value Hierarchy

Let's now piece together your value hierarchy for both your moving-toward and moving-away from values.

First, let's look at your toward-values. These values tend to pull you toward the goals that you would like to achieve.

To piece together your moving-toward value hierarchy, ask yourself the following question:

What do I want most in life? What is truly important right now?

Remember that by asking this question you are searching for **ends-values and not means-values**. You must, therefore, turn any means-values you come up with into ends-values.

Do this by asking yourself:

What would this ultimately give me?

How will that make me feel?

Once you have successfully turned your means-values into ends-values, continue asking yourself:

Why is that important to me? Or...

Why is that feeling important for me?

What does this really mean to me?

How does this make me feel?

What causes me to feel this way?

Why is that important?

What's next most important to me?

What you are attempting to do here is to isolate one core value. This core value manifests as a feeling or ultimate outcome that you would like to experience.

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What you are mostly doing here is peeling back the skin of an onion. All the way back until you reach the core.

Cutting into the core of the onion releases a flood of emotions. And that's where your core value lies.

Having gone through this questioning process, begin again and identify the very next value on your hierarchy. Then keep moving through these questions until you isolate 10 things that have most meaning in your life.

You are searching for 10 things that determine your priorities — that you would like to experience each day. They are your core values.

Now, move these values into an ordered hierarchy of importance. Make sure that the value at the top of your hierarchy is the value you cherish above all others. Ask yourself:

Which of these values is truly the most significant in my life right now?

If I could only experience one of these values, which value would it be?

Which value is the next most important that I absolutely cannot live without?

If while piecing together your value hierarchy you find words with similar meaning, then just combine them into one core value. For instance, achievement and success are two similar values that can be merged together in such a way.

Once you have established your value hierarchy, look at the list of values you have in front of you and ask yourself:

What kind of human being is this person?

How do they live their life?

What are some typical choices and decisions that they would make?

How would they prioritize their life and circumstances?

Do I feel comfortable being this person? Why? Why not?

Asking these questions will provide you with some fascinating insights into the kind of person you are likely to become if you live in accordance with this value hierarchy.

When you're done, check to see if this hierarchy resonates with you. If it does, then lock away. However, if it doesn't resonate with you, then make some changes until you're comfortable with the order.

Remember that **your values must support your beliefs, goals, life's purpose, and above all else your six human needs**. If there are inconsistencies, then you will struggle to find the balance you need to live life in optimal ways.

Step 3: Explore Your Moving-Away Values

Now let's take a look at your moving-away values.

These values will either stop you in your tracks, or they'll push you forward toward the attainment of your goals and objectives.

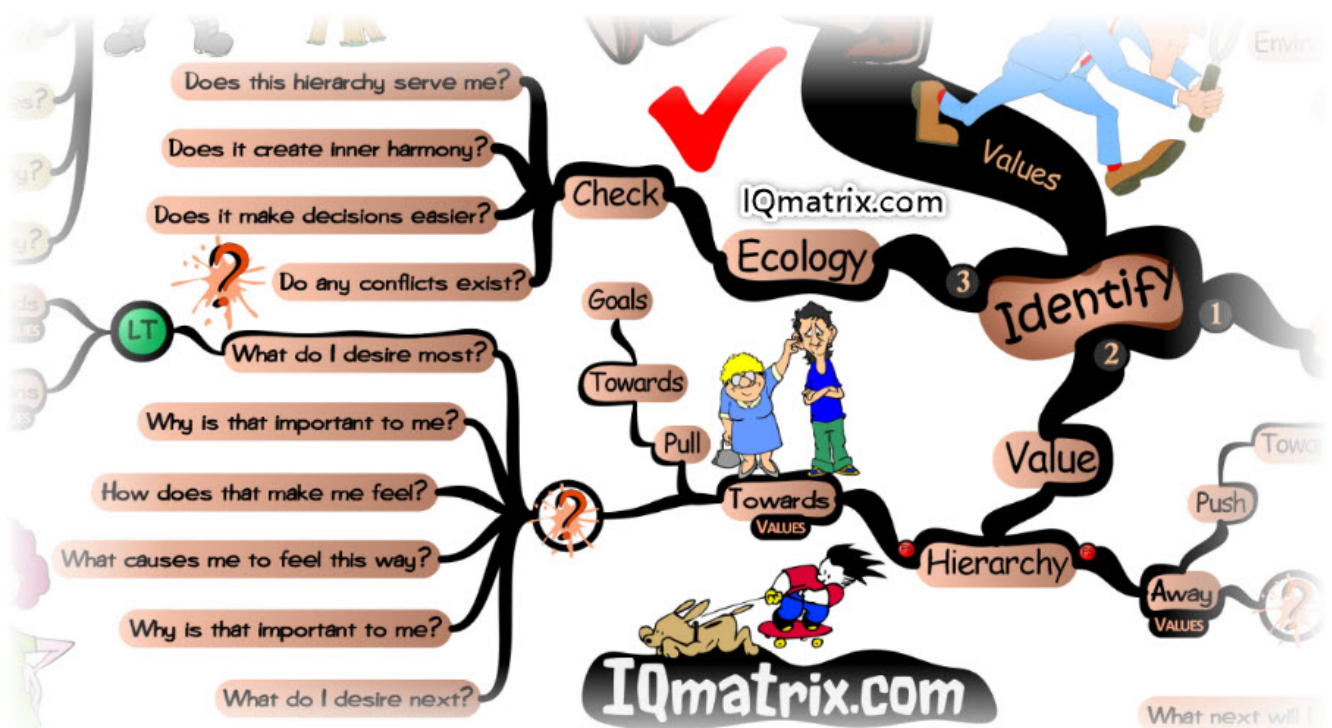
To identify these values and to build your moving-away value hierarchy, ask yourself:

What feelings do I seek to avoid most?

What don't I want to ever experience?

What next will I seek to avoid most?

You will find examples of these values by cycling through all your negative emotional experiences.



Look to your past and have a think about all those incredibly painful emotional moments. They are often the things you rather not experience again.

Whether that's [anger](#), [frustration](#), [rejection](#), [criticism](#), judgment, [fear](#), [stress](#), [loneliness](#), shame, [embarrassment](#), [guilt](#), jealousy, etc., list it all down.

These are all important moving-away values that may very well conflict with your moving-toward values. The greater clarity you have, the easier it will be to work through these conflicts at a later stage.

Step 4: Run an Ecology Check

The final step of this process involves running a quick ecology-check to make sure that your value hierarchy serves your best interests moving forward.

While running this ecology-check, it's essential to take into account the [goals](#) that you're working towards, your [life's purpose](#), your [belief systems](#) as well as your [six human needs](#).

All these factors must align if your hierarchy of values is to serve your higher good. Ask yourself:

Does my moving-toward value hierarchy serve me well?

Does it align with the goals I would like to achieve?

Does it integrate into my life's purpose?

Is it consistent with my beliefs and convictions?

Is it aligned with the kind of person I am seeking to become?

Does it satisfy all my six human needs at the highest possible level?

Does it create inner harmony, fulfillment, and peace?

Does it allow me to make better decisions?

What about my moving-away values? How do I feel about them?

Do any potential conflicts exist?

Have a think about your responses to these questions and evaluate whether or not your current value hierarchy conflicts with either your goals, life's purpose, beliefs and/or six human needs.

If conflicts exist, then you will need to either change the order of your hierarchy of values, or you will need to make adjustments to your goals, purpose, and/or beliefs.

Unfortunately, your six human needs do not change. **Your values must align with all six human needs for you to experience long-term fulfillment.**

Finally, when it comes to your moving-away values, they're ultimately not going anywhere. If they don't cause any major conflicts, then you won't need to make too many adjustments in these areas of your life.

However, if they do get in the way of your moving-toward values and this negatively impacts you, then you might need to make some adjustments to the [psychological rules](#) that govern your moving-away values. We'll discuss this in detail in the next section.

How to Begin Transforming Your Personal Values

So why might you want to transform your personal values?

You might, for instance, adjust your personal values whenever you recognize that they're pulling you off course.

For instance, your values might not be aligned with your goals or your life's purpose. As a result, they're leading you astray.

You might, for instance, experience conflicts or something might just seem to be amiss.

What's missing is the foundational support your goals need from your values. You need this support to help you attain the long-term outcomes you would like to realize.

Let's look at this another way. If you keep living out your current values, then you will continue to manifest the same results over and over again. [Nothing will ever change](#). Things will just stay the same, and you will fail to make the progress you've been hoping for.

You must decide that enough is enough and that you will [commit to a better path](#) — a more consistent path that is congruent with your goals and aligned with the kind of person you would like to become.

It's only when you change your value hierarchy and then consciously act on it, that is the moment when your decisions improve and your behaviors shift — ultimately transforming your results.

Clarify Your Goals

Before delving into this value transformation process, it's crucial that you first gain some clarity about your [life's purpose](#) and the kind of [goals](#) that you would like to achieve.

In addition to this, you must outline the kind of person that you are seeking to become. To help you out, here are several self-assessment questions:

What would I like to do and achieve in life?

What are my deepest passions?

What do I feel is my life's purpose?

What kind of person do I seek to become as a result of fulfilling this purpose?

What goals would I like to achieve that are aligned with this purpose and with the kind of person I would like to become?

Which of these goals are most important to me right now? Why? Pick one or two goals.

Why do I want to achieve these goals?

What are my underlying reasons for achieving these goals?

The more clarity you have in these areas, the easier it will be to make the necessary adjustments to your value hierarchy.

Before moving on, it's important to understand that if you fail to align all your energies with the achievement of your goals, then you will likewise fail to achieve your goals.

You have a limited [window of opportunity](#). If you don't grasp that opportunity now, you may never get that same opportunity again.

You might, for instance, want to earn more money to secure your [financial future](#). However, if your values are not aligned with this goal, then you will continuously [sabotage yourself](#) and subsequently fail to reach your objectives.

Or, let's say, for instance, you want to get married and raise a family. In such a scenario your values will need to shift accordingly. No longer will you value your career over your family or over love. Instead, your values must now support this new goal. Otherwise, conflicts will arise.

The primary reason why many marriages fall apart is that each partner has a different hierarchy of values that push them in opposite directions.

If your value hierarchy does not match your goals, then you will struggle to achieve them or at the very least hold onto them over the long-run.

Your life's values must, therefore, always be aligned with your personal circumstances, with your goals, and ultimately with your life's purpose.

Ignore this rule, and you will experience a life full of regrets, personal conflict, and [unfulfilled expectations](#).

The takeaway from this is to restructure your values whenever you pursue new goals or when your life changes in a significant way.

Don't expect that what's worked for you in the past will also work for you in exactly the same way in the present. You must change with the times, and that change begins with your values.

Identify Potential Conflicts

Having clarified your goals, it's time now to explore potential conflicts that might exist within your value hierarchy.

It's essential to identify conflicts that directly impact your life and the most important people in your life.

To begin working through this process, ask yourself:

What values do I truly desire to cultivate and live each day?

Which of these values are aligned with the goals I would like to achieve?

Which of these values are aligned with the type of person I would like to become?

Which of these values are aligned with my life's purpose?

Which of these values are compatible with my relationship with my partner?

Which of these values are compatible with other important areas of my life?

What has to happen for me to live these values each day?

How could I begin this process starting today?

How must I organize my value hierarchy to ensure that there are no conflicts?

What values must be eliminated or moved down in my hierarchy?

What values must be added or moved to the top of my hierarchy?

In what order must I rank my values to clear the path to my goals?

What benefits does this order of values provide me with?

How will this restructuring process benefit me in the short and long-run?

If you come across conflicts, then you essentially have two options.

You can either change your values and eliminate these conflicts, or you can keep your values and choose a different path for your life. The choice is, of course, in your hands.

It is, however, important that you keep in mind all the short and long-term consequences of your decisions. Moreover, consider the impact that your decisions will have on the closest people in your life.

If after moving through these questions, you're still struggling to let go of several conflicting values, then you might want to do some [pain and pleasure work](#).

This involves associating pain with your current/unhelpful values to diminish their hold over your life. You might, for instance, ask yourself:

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What is it costing me to hold onto my current values?

What will it cost me in the long-term?

What am I potentially likely to miss out on?

What kind of conflict will I continue to experience as a result of holding onto these values?

How will this affect me emotionally, spiritually, financially, physically, and socially, now and in the future?



The more pain you associate with the values you don't want, the easier it will be to let them go. However, this process is far from easy.

It might take time to release these values, especially if you've been holding onto them for many years. Therefore, [be patient](#) with yourself and take your time with this process.

It's not easy letting go of things that feel comfortable and familiar. However, what's comfortable and familiar might not be in your best interests or serve your greater good right now.

How to Move Values Up or Down Your Hierarchy

It's possible that while moving through this value transformation process that you struggled to move some of your values up or down your hierarchy. If this is true in your case, then there is something you can do that will help you work through this process far more effectively.

To move a value up your hierarchy, you will need to increase its emotional intensity. To move a value down your hierarchy, you will need to decrease its emotional intensity.

What this basically means is that you need to associate yourself emotionally with the values you want to move up and disassociate yourself emotionally from the values you want to bring down the hierarchy.

In other words, your emotional intensity (the feelings inside you) must be strongest for the values you are moving up, and they must be weakest for values you are moving down.

This seems relatively easy on the surface. However, it can get quite tricky at times. Nevertheless, there is something you can do, and it all depends on how you make use of submodalities.

Submodalities are the ways in which you interpret and then represent your world using your five senses. They are all about how you visualize things, how you hear things, and how you feel things internally.

Making adjustments to these submodalities can either increase your emotional intensity or decrease your emotional intensity.

As an example, in order to raise the emotional intensity of one of your values you would picture the value large and bright in your mind. You would see it moving and interacting with you, and you would hear the sounds that it makes, while also feeling its energy from all angles and perspectives.

On the other hand, to lower the emotional intensity of one of your other values you would see it as distant, dark and in black and white. There would be minimal movement, it would seem dull, and would feel cold and gloomy.

You can also successfully insert the submodalities of one of your highest values into a value that you would like to move up the hierarchy.

In such instances, you would first identify the kinds of submodalities that distinguish your highest value from all others. Then you would copy those same submodalities into the value that you would like to move up the hierarchy.

If you do this successfully, you will experience both values at the same level of emotional intensity.

Once completed, you could follow up this process with an [anchoring exercise](#) to permanently associate these feelings with your nervous system.

I have certainly not given any justice whatsoever to these two techniques. However, you will find some valuable information about submodalities [here](#), and about anchoring [here](#) and [here](#).

How to Remove Moving-Away From Value Conflicts

Your moving-toward value hierarchy might now seem in order, and you're on your way to living a fantastic and fulfilling life. However, there is one little problem. You also have this other value hierarchy for your moving-away values. And this hierarchy could very well sabotage the progress you think you're about to make.

Your moving-away from values are built upon things that you tend to avoid at all costs. For instance anger, frustration, rejection, criticism, judgment, and [failure](#) are all examples of things that you could potentially move away from.

As such, these are the things that will invariably influence the decisions you make and the actions you take.

You might, for instance, have a perfectly aligned moving-toward value hierarchy that is congruent with your goals and life's purpose. However, as you make progress towards those goals, something always invariably happens — something that stops you in your tracks and prevents you from moving forward.

Yes, you guessed it. **One of those moving-away values always gets in your way, and you unknowingly sabotage yourself.** And there really isn't a magic bullet that will help you overcome this conflict.

How to Uncover Your Personal Values and Reinvent Your Life!

You could, of course, use submodalities and anchoring to reduce the pain that you associate with your moving-away values. This will, however, take some time and will require a little more research on your part to learn more about both techniques.

The other alternative is to simply change the rules of the game.

So how do we change the rules of the game? Well, changing the rules of the game means making your moving-away values hard to achieve, while at the same time making your moving-toward values easy to achieve.

Let's say for instance that one of your moving-toward values is to find love. And so there you are one evening sitting at the pub when all of a sudden the human being of your dreams walks through the door.

What a great opportunity, right? Well, that's what initially crosses your mind.

This could be the love of your life, and you are literally meters away from them. Why don't you just go up and talk? Why don't you just say hi? Or at least give them a little smile, or a wink, or something at least?

Do it... just do it... why aren't you doing anything? What's going on? What's stopping you? Don't you value finding love over everything else? So why aren't you taking action?

Does this sound familiar? You're not taking action because you have conflicting values along both hierarchies.

On the one hand, you have **LOVE** at the top of your moving-toward value hierarchy. However, on the other hand, you have the **Fear of Rejection** on top of your moving-away value hierarchy.

Given what has just transpired, it appears as though the potential pain you will experience — based on your fear of rejection — is a greater motivator than your need for love.

Things obviously shouldn't be this way. That's not how you imagined your life when you laid out your moving-toward value hierarchy, is it? However, the reality is a little different than how we initially imagine things to be.

To overcome this challenge and eliminate this conflict, you will need to adjust your **psychological rules** to make the fear of rejection **difficult to experience**, and the desire for love **easy to experience**. To do this ask yourself:

What needs to happen for me to feel love?

What needs to happen for me to feel rejected?

How can I make the experience of love easier to attain?

How can I make the fear of rejection more difficult to experience?

You might, for instance, feel instant rejection the moment someone fails to make eye contact with you. Or how about the moment they ignore you? Or how about the moment someone tells you **NO** when you ask them out?

Is it practical to think this way? Will you ever find love if you continue to interpret rejection this way? The short answer is obviously **NO!**

Here is the solution: The first thing you need to do is read more about how to understand the [fear of rejection](#) and [how to handle rejection](#).

Once you have completed this background work, your next step is to adjust your psychological rules for experiencing rejection. **Make experiencing rejection as difficult as humanly possible.**

Consider for a moment that high achievers experience a profound amount of rejection. However, they don't allow this to faze them. Instead, they power on. They see rejection as an opportunity to learn and then try again another way.

Successful people simply don't interpret rejection as a negative experience. They instead see it as a positive and helpful experience that helps get them closer to what they want in life. And that's precisely how you must come to interpret things as well.

What we did within this example was [reframe the circumstances](#) of rejection in an empowering and helpful way.

This has hopefully shifted how you think about rejection. It probably no longer has the negative meaning it used to have when you thought about it.

You are now free and can move on with the rest of your life.

Modeling Other People's Values

If after all this you are still having trouble figuring out your moving-toward value hierarchy, then it might be helpful to find a [role-model](#) or mentor who has values that you could potentially model.

Use them as a mirror to your own soul and try to imagine what life would be like living in their shoes for a day.

What would their priorities be like? What would they focus on? And what values would they uphold above all others?

If, however, you're having trouble finding a person who has the ideal set of values you're after, then create the person in your own imagination.

Alternatively, look for guidance from a movie or book character. There are just so many possibilities here.

There is really [no excuse](#) for not "locking in" your value hierarchy.

Concluding Thoughts

Having now worked through the value transformation process, you should now have an excellent understanding of what your personal values are about.

Not only have you built your value hierarchy, but **you can now use this hierarchy to make important decisions in your life**

No matter what surprises life throws your way, you will ultimately make optimal decisions that feel good, that are good for you, that are good for others, and that serve the greater good.

Say for instance something comes up and you need to make a significant life decision.

Initially, you might feel a little confused and conflicted. You're just not sure what to do. However, you quickly realize that you have a value hierarchy in place. And so you turn to this list of values and ask yourself:

What would a person with these values choose to do in this situation?

And just like magic, you find your answer in your value hierarchy. And, what's more, **that answer will always be the right answer for where you are in your life right now.**

Remember that your ultimate goal is to fulfill your highest values, without sacrificing them to the lower values along your hierarchy.

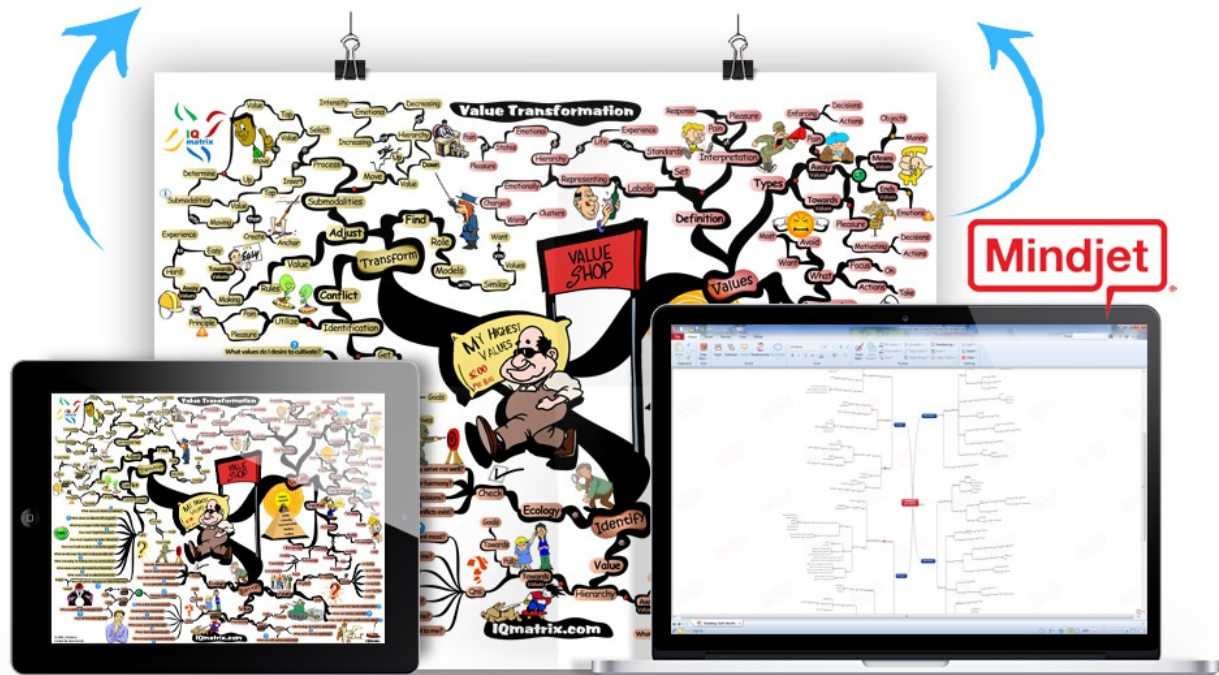
Finally that you have the necessary clarity of mind, it's time to express your values in every decision you make and in every action you take. So take action and go forth and live your life with a real sense of purpose.

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About Adam Sicinski



Adam Sicinski is a qualified life coach born in Poland and raised in Australia. His life coaching work is, however, somewhat unorthodox. It's unique and a little different in the way that Adam uses mind maps and visual thinking principles. Since 2009 Adam has developed hundreds of self-growth mind maps that he calls IQ Matrices. These maps have been used by thousands of people worldwide for life coaching and self-coaching purposes. Discover more at IQmatrix.com.

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