



Values: Past, Present & Future

Our values motivate us. We give the most attention, focus and effort toward that which is most important to us, our values. Therefore, so many of our thoughts, behaviors and decisions are based on what we value. The following activity is about exploring our values because changing our values can change our lives for the better.

Directions – Get something to write on and write with. Everyone should make their best effort to come up with a value (something or someone that is important to you) for each item below:

List 1-12 on your paper and come up with something or someone you value for each one:

1. A **family member** whom you value

2. Something that you own or possess has **financial value** or is a source of income (Examples: bank account, stocks, savings account, car, home, jewelry, business, inheritance, etc.)

3. Something **work or career** related that has value (Your education, your job, job training or skills, special license or certification, etc.)

4. A **friend** whom you value

5. Something you value related to **hobbies, interests, or recreation**

6. Something you own that has **sentimental value** (meaningful and carries strong feelings)

7. A **personality trait** or other quality of yours (Funny, loyal, honest, hardworking, resilient, etc.)

8. A **skill or talent** of yours

9. A **personal achievement**

10. A **physical quality** of yours

11. A **moral or principle** that you believe is important (Honesty, loyalty, freedom, equality, respect, love, etc.)

12. **Wild card** – Any other person, thing or idea that you value that was not already selected



Group Discussion and Process:

Part 1 – Values and the Past

- Discuss up to three things on your list that were hurt, lost, damaged, weakened, compromised, etc. as a result of substance use, addiction or related consequences (arrest, jail, arguments, etc.). Share your answers with the rest of the group
- How can successfully managing substance use issues (and mental health), help to enhance, increase, or improve some of these important life areas for you?
- What are you doing today to help make this (previous answer) happen or what do you need to do?

Part 2 – Values and the Present

- You are probably grateful for all or most of your values. Try to pick two or three values from your list that really stand out for you today that you feel especially grateful for.
- How can you show or display gratitude today for these values?
- What are you working on today to take care of, help, improve or maintain these areas of value in your life?

Part 3 – Values and the Future

- What are two or three things on your list that you can see a brighter future for if you keep making positive changes with substance use and mental health (The rewards of recovery)
- How do you see yourself positively changing your behaviors, thinking, habits, attitude and overall lifestyle for the better in order to care for, nurture, support or enhance these life areas that you value?
- Starting today (or in the near future) what is at least one (or more) things you can do or actions you can start taking or decisions you can make to start making to care for or increase what you value in life? (Try to pick something specific)

*Keep your thoughts positive, because your thoughts become your words.
Keep your words positive, because your words become your behavior.
Keep your behavior positive, because your behavior becomes your habits.
Keep your habits positive, because your habits become your values.
Keep your values positive, because your values become your destiny.
Mahatma Gandhi*