



## VALUED LIVING by Steven C Hayes



Values are guiding principles that lead and motivate us through life. Values are directions we keep moving in and different from goals, which are specific things we want to achieve along the way. For example, a value is if you want to be in a relationship where you and your partner are loving and supportive to each other. If you

or your partner stop being loving and supportive, then you are not living by that value. If you want to run a marathon, that is a goal not a value as it can be 'crossed off' once achieved.











The following domains are typical areas of life that are often valued by people. Everyone is different, so there are no 'correct' values. This exercise is to help you think about what is important to you in your life in terms of general direction rather than goals. Deep down, what is important to you? What do you want your life to stand for? What sort of qualities do you want to cultivate as a person?

<b>Domains</b>	
	<b>1. Family</b> - What sort of family relations would you like to have? What personal qualities would you like to bring to those relationships? What sort of relationships would you like to build? How would the relationships be if they were ideal?
	<b>2. Couple</b> - What sort of intimate relationship would you like to have? How would you interact with your partner if you were the 'ideal you' in this relationship and how would they ideally interact with you?
	<b>3. Parenting</b> - What sort of parent would you like to be? What sort of qualities would you like to have? What sort of relationships would you like to build with your children? How would you behave if you were the 'ideal you'?
	<b>4. Friendships/Social Life</b> - What sort of qualities would you like to bring to your friendships? What sort of friendships would you like to build? How would you like your social life to be?
	<b>5. Employment/Career</b> - What do you value in your work? What would make work more meaningful? What kind of worker would you like to be? What sort of work relations would you like to build?
	<b>6. Education/ Training</b> - What do you value about learning, training, or personal growth? What new skills would you like to learn? What knowledge would you like to gain?
	<b>7. Recreation/ Leisure</b> - What sorts of hobbies, sports, or leisure activities do you enjoy? How do you relax and unwind? How do you have fun?
	<b>8. Spirituality</b> - Whatever spirituality means to you is fine. It may be communing with nature, or participation in an organised religious group. How do you express yourself spiritually.
	<b>9. Citizenship/ Community</b> - How would you like to contribute to your community, for example, volunteering, recycling, supporting a charity or a political party?
	<b>10. Health/ Wellbeing</b> - What are your values related to maintaining your physical and general well-being? How do you look after yourself in relation to sleep, diet, exercise, relaxation etc?



## Instructions - Completing the Domain Table Inventory:

1. Read through the information on the different domains on the pages 1 and 2.
2. Write a few words to summarise your values in each domain in the table below. For example, in the Family domain you may write "loving, harmonious, fun".
3. Rate the Importance of each Domain to you on a scale of 0 to 10 (you do not have to rank them against each other).
4. Rate the Success (on average) you feel you have in living in accordance with your values from 0 to 10 in each Domain.

Domain	Brief summary of how you would live this value?	Importance low 0-10 high	Success low 0-10 high
1. Family 			
2. Couple 			
3. Parenting 			
4. Friendships/ Social Life 			
5. Employment/ Career 			
6. Education/ Training 			
7. Recreation/ Leisure 			
8. Spirituality 			
9. Citizenship/ Community 			
10. Health/ Wellbeing 			



There are a number of ways to assess the results. The first is to look at all domains that have relatively high importance scores (a score of 9 or 10), and also have relatively low consistency scores (6 or less). These are clear problem areas, and I suggest starting your initial work with any one of them. Then you can move on to other areas.

It's also good to calculate your overall score. Multiply the two numbers from the first and second parts for each domain. So if for family, in the first part you scored it as 10 and in the second part you circled 4, for that domain you'd get 40. Add all of those numbers and then divide them by 12 to get your composite score. To get a rough sense of how your score compares to those of the broad public, the average composite result is 61.

Do not begin beating yourself up if your score is lower than that. Practice some defusion from that negativity. This is a discovery process not a critique, and after all, you've embarked on this journey – give yourself some credit for that. You're here to embrace change.

If you scored quite a few of the domains as low in importance to you, you should consider whether you were being fully honest with yourself about them. It is perfectly reasonable to have some domains that are unimportant. You may not care about citizenship, or the environment, and if you do not have children, you may not care about the parenting practices of others, and so on. That being said, research suggests that if many of these domains are unimportant, that's a contributor to psychological distress. Use this assessment as an opportunity to admit your true values to yourself.

Now, with a good idea of the values domain you'd like to start working on, you're ready to get going.

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*Steven C Hayes is Nevada Foundation Professor in the Behaviour Analysis program at the Department of Psychology at the University of Nevada. An author of 44 books and nearly 600 scientific articles, his career has focused on an analysis of the nature of human language and cognition and the application of this to the understanding and alleviation of human suffering. He is the developer of Relational Frame Theory, an account of human higher cognition, and has guided its extension to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), a popular evidence-based form of psychotherapy that uses mindfulness, acceptance, and values-based methods.*

*For more information on Dr Hayes and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy go to his website*

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