

# How to Discover Your Values: The Card Sort Exercise



## ACTIVITY

How do you identify your values? One practical, hands-on way is to use the **Personal Values Card Sort** developed at the University of New Mexico.

### STEP 1

#### Download the official card sort PDF

- This PDF includes both the values and their descriptions, which are essential—sometimes the meaning of a value is not obvious from the title alone.
- If you can't print, you can **write or copy and paste** the values and their descriptions into a document.

### STEP 2

#### Prepare Your Cards

- Print and cut out the values or write each value (with its description) on a separate slip of paper.
- If you're working digitally, you can copy and paste each value into a spreadsheet or document.

### STEP 3

#### Sort the Values

- **First round:** Sort the values into three piles:
  - Not important to me
  - Important to me
  - Very important to me
- **Second round:** From your "Very important" pile, narrow it down to your **top eight values**. If you have more than eight, keep sorting until you reach your core set.

### STEP 4

#### Reflect and Record

- Take a picture of your eight most important values or write them down and keep them somewhere visible.
- Reflect on what each value means to you. The descriptions can help clarify your understanding.
- Consider how these values show up in your daily life. Are there ways you can honour them more fully?

### STEP 5

#### Use Your Values

- Refer to your values regularly, especially when making decisions or facing challenges.
- Notice how living in alignment with your values affects your stress, fulfilment and sense of purpose.

To understand more about the empowering benefits of values-based living, read our [Living by your values](#) resource.

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