



**Module 03.**

**Understanding Your Values**

# Understanding Your Values

“It’s not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are.” –  
Roy Disney

## Introduction to This Module

If I was to ask you what your values are, would you know what they are?  
And more importantly, would you know how to utilise them?

When it comes to living your best life, ***understanding your values is a fundamental building block.***

Your values influence your behaviours, your choices and your emotions.  
Your values influence your habits, your lifestyle and your social experiences. Your values are your motivators and give you purpose for getting up in the morning.

When I ask the above question to individuals, most responses I hear are pretty vague. People have to think them through or people just say things that they *think* are their values or that they *want* their values to be as they are seen as desirable traits to have. However, are the values that you *want* to have really your values?

This section will help you understand what values are, the benefits of understanding your values and you then you will go through a process of eliciting your values to help you in your goal-setting and decision-making.



## Values explained

So what are values?

Values are such a broad topic and can't really be summed up in a single sentence, but I'll put it as simply as possible. **Your values represent what is important to you.** As mentioned above, they are the driving force behind why you get up in the morning, the choices you make and the behaviours you display every day.

Examples of values are success, honesty, belonging and health. Some people suggest that other activities such as reading, swimming or socialising are values, however these would be symptoms of your values. For example, if you feel reading is a value, it is probably more accurate to assume that your actual value is learning, or relaxing or something of a similar nature. Think about the actual reason as to what it that led you to read? Similar to swimming, is this truly your value or is it that you value

health, wellbeing or success? Perhaps you socialise while swimming and your true value is friendship. These are the reasons that made you choose to go swimming.

Understanding exactly what it is that you value is the perfect starting point for understanding yourself and understanding your motivators.

## Benefits of understanding your values

If you want to gain **tremendous clarity** around your life, your decisions, what matters most to you and ultimately live a happy and successful life, then understanding your values is fundamental.

Ultimately, you will be able to **prioritise effectively, make consistent decisions** and take action in a way that leads you to success and happiness in the areas you pursue.

Why does this matter? For three primary reasons:

- 1) Time is the most limited resource
- 2) Our decisions are often inconsistent with our goals
- 3) You want to achieve success and happiness

Firstly, time is a limited resource. The fact that you're reading this suggests to me that you want to *maximize your life*, an outcome of maximizing your time. Understanding your values and prioritizing helps you achieve this. **Your decisions will be more aligned to what you want to do**, ultimately helping you to spend your time and energy in a more effective way.

Secondly, the decisions you make are far more consistent when you understand your values. When you know what is most important to you, you can prioritise and make consistent decisions to progress you towards

your goals. Consistent decision-making aligned to your values **helps you progress at a much faster rate** towards where you want to go.

Thirdly, you are on a journey living your best life. If you want to achieve success and happiness, understanding your values is a sure-fire way of gaining tremendous focus and clarity of your goals, and through clear prioritization and consistent decisions, you will get there, *faster*. **It's hands-down the most important thing you need to understand.** When you don't know your values you don't know who you are.

## Your Values Hierarchy

Not only is understanding your values important, but understanding the *hierarchy* or rank of your values is very important.

Let me explain to you in this video the importance of understanding the hierarchy of your values with an example of how it may affect your life.

## When you are not in harmony with your values

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony."

-Mahatma Gandhi



We now know that understanding your values can help lead you **make better decisions** through clearer prioritisation and consistency in decisions, leading to better use of time. Through these actions, **understanding your values leads to more success and more happiness.**

When you make choices that are aligned with your values, you experience harmony, a feeling that leads to satisfaction and happiness. Re-read that quote above by Mahatma Gandhi, the preeminent leader of India who inspired movements for non-violence, civil rights and freedom across the world. This quote sums up how the heart, mind, body and soul work in unison. The heart is what represents your values, the things that are most important to you.

But what happens when you are not aligned with your values?

When other parts of your being are not aligned to your values (eg you make a different choice or you take a different path) you experience disharmony which can lead to **feelings of frustration, confusion, guilt, emptiness or unhappiness.**

### **Let's look at an example.**

You might value your **health**. If this is a strong value for you then how do you feel after going to a birthday afternoon tea and instead of opting for the healthier option, you realise that you have stuffed yourself with sweet slices, fluffy cupcakes, sugar-coated lollies and soft-drinks? I'm pretty sure you would be feeling a strong sense of guilt, perhaps angry with yourself about your choice.

You immediately get a sense that something is 'wrong'. **You're experiencing disharmony** – a conflict between your values and your behaviour. This feeling would differ depending on how strong you value your health.

Let's take another example.

You might value **fairness**. How would you feel if you had one gift to giveaway but had to choose between two people who both really needed that gift. It would be an extremely tough choice for you because no matter your decision, one person will miss out. You will experience feelings of discomfort as this goes against your value of fairness.

When you experience disharmony between your values and your behaviours, **subconsciously you will automatically take action** to correct the situation and rectify your feelings. If you ate yourself silly at the birthday afternoon tea you might make the decision to hit the gym and sweat even harder during your next session or set yourself up on a new diet. This will realign your decision and action with your value for health. If you gave the gift to one person, you might go out of your way to do something for the other person to ensure harmony between your values and actions.

Have you ever had that feeling when you are feeling down and you really have no idea why? There is a good chance it's because you have done something that is not aligned to your values.

The more clarity you have of your values the more rapidly you can identify why you are experiencing disharmony and realign yourself to feelings of happiness. Ultimately, understanding your values helps you make choices to experience congruency, success and happiness.

### **Answer these questions:**

- When have you had the feeling of disharmony?
- How did you recognise this feeling when it happened?
- What can you do that ensures your actions and behaviours are aligned with your values?

Spend 10 minutes answering the above questions

**Open 03. Understanding Your Values.pdf** to answer.



Now that you understand what values are and why they are important, do you actually know what your values are? In the next section you will have the opportunity to elicit your values and look into how to best utilize them for goal-setting and decision-making.

Take the time to think through the above questions before continuing to the next section where you will elicit your values.

## **Actions Summary:**

- ✔ *Understand why knowing your values is fundamental to your success*
- ✔ ***Open 03. Understanding Your Values.pdf** and answer the 3 questions fully and honestly*