The Values Compass

Our values are the things that we care about. They are the answer to the question, “What matters to you?” They can be qualities such as patience, kindness, adventure, and they can be roles such as being a parent, or a friend. They are like the directions on a compass, in that they give us direction, but they are not a place where we arrive. For example, if you started in Edinburgh and travelled west by car, the towns you’d pass would be Livingston, then Bathgate, then Glasgow. When we arrive in Glasgow, we have not arrived at ‘west’. West is not somewhere we would ever arrive at, but we would know if we were travelling west, and we would also know if we had been blown off course and were going south, and we could make a course change.

In contrast, the towns, cities, or landmarks that we pass along the way are places we can arrive at. We can think of these landmarks as like goals in life, and they are lined up with valued directions in life. So, for example, you might have a value of being a good friend to someone you’ve known a long time. That’s a value, in that it’s never finished. A goal that is in line with that value might be to meet your friend for a coffee, and an action that is linked to that goal might be to send them a text message suggesting it. We want our values, goals, and actions to be lined up, so that every day we are doing what we most care about.

The compass worksheet below helps you to consider what are the values that are important to you now. Use the boxes to write about what you care about in four different domains in life. Write about how you would like it to be, the qualities that you would freely choose, write about what matters to you, what you care about now. Then in each box write about things you could do that would move you in the direction of that value. The compass below has examples. Some people may find some of the examples difficult, depending on who you have lost, but please try to see past the specific examples to the principle. There is a blank one for you to use overleaf. There is also a table with some suggestions for values, goals, and actions below it. Feel free to use them or make your own. In addition, the worksheet “Ideas about values” also has other suggestions.

**Value**: Being healthy, getting stronger physically, looking after myself

**Goals or actions:** Run two times a week, reduce take aways to once at the weekends.

**Value**: Being fun with my nieces and nephews, playing games with them, being daft.

**Goals or actions:**  Offering to babysit again, plan a trip out maybe the zoo or a pizza?

**Value**: Making a difference to the world with my work as a teacher

**Goals or actions:** Maybe apply for the deputy head role???

**Value:** Being a loving partner, being kind to them, being supportive, listening to them, doing fun things together

**Goals or actions:** Asking how their day was, booking tickets to a theatre show, attending PRIDE

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Here are some examples of values, goals and actions that other people have suggested. After you have used this worksheet, use the “Values, Goals and Actions” worksheet to track how you are doing with them.

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| Value | Goal Ideas | Example Actions |
| Parenting | Playing a board game, crafting, going to a film | Asking if there is a favourite family meal they might like |
| Marriage / spouse / partnership | Arranging a date, talking and listening, going for a walk | Offering a hug, messaging to say you are thinking of them |
| Work | Changing job, taking on a new role or project | Looking at vacancies, updating CV, speaking to managers |
| Hobbies / leisure time | Go back to a hobby, begin a new hobby, spend time outdoors | Look on local notice boards at the sports centre, internet research |
| Health / fitness | Climb a hill, run a 10K race, cold water swimming | Joining a gym, taking a healthy cooking class. |
| Ecological / nature connection | Volunteer with a forest conservation charity | Recycle plastics, wash clothes at 30 degrees C. |
| Friendships | Talk with people you trust about how you have been feeling. | Meet for coffee, phone them, message them |
| Community / citizenship | Bring people together in your neighbourhood | Volunteer for the parent / teacher association, or community council |