



Lifestyle Medicine

Staying Aligned with your Values During Times of Difficulty

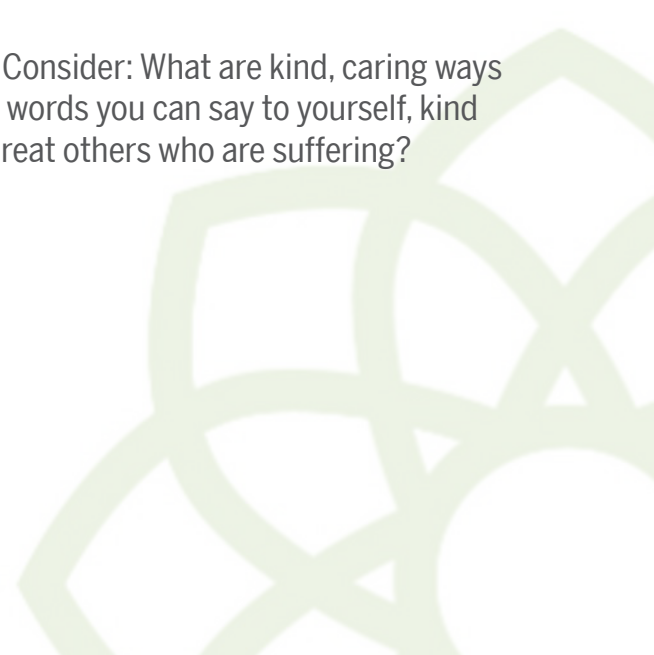
The purpose of clarifying your core values is to find a direction to move in; like studying a map before beginning a trip. This helps guide and motivate you to take action toward what is truly important to you. Values are not the same as goals. Values are directions we keep moving in and goals are what we want to achieve along the way.

Taking steps in a valued direction can help you get through difficult situations. As this crisis unfolds, there are all sorts of obstacles and goals that seem farther away from achieving. When so many things feel out of your control, it is still possible to make choices that are guided by your values and live a vital and meaningful life.

Values can be described as an “inner compass”: they give you guidance, help you find direction, help you stay on track and help you find your way again if you go off track.

Your values might include love, respect, humor, patience, courage, honesty, caring openness, kindness or numerous others. Look for ways to set your compass toward your important values and find ways to add them into your day. Let them guide and motivate your action.

Especially come back to your values of kindness and caring. Consider: What are kind, caring ways you can treat yourself as you go through this? What are kind words you can say to yourself, kind deeds you can do for yourself? What are kind ways you can treat others who are suffering?





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Let's practice connecting to our values:

The following are areas of life that are valued by some people. In each domain, write what you would value if anything was possible and if there was nothing in your way. Your value should not be a specific goal but instead reflect a way you would like to live your life over time. Write a few key words about what is important or meaningful to you in this domain of life: What sort of person do you want to be? What sort of personal strengths and qualities do you want to cultivate? What you want to stand for? How do you want to treat yourself and others? For example, to reach out to a coworker that needs support is a goal; to be a kind and caring coworker might be the underlying value. As you go forward, you may discover that certain domains are very important to you and others are not. That's to be expected; you can skip them. It is also okay if you write the same value in more than one domain.

Domain	Valued Direction (write one or two sentences or a few key words)	Rate it's importance in your life: 0-not at all important and 10- of the greatest importance
Work		
Leisure Activity		
Caregiving (including parenting)		
Family		
Intimate Relationships		
Community Involvement		
Spirituality		
Education and Personal Development		
Health		
Social Network		



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Lets practice aligning your goals with your values:

If your value is the compass point by which you want to guide your life's journey, your goals are the road map that can lead you there. Goals are different from values in that goals can be achieved or "crossed off" and values are an ongoing process.

Just a bonus! If you contact your values and act in the service of them, the likelihood that you will act in a similar way again increases!

Step 1: Choose a life domain

Step 2: Write your values in that domain

Step 3: Choose a short-term goal, behavior or action that is in service to your values

Step 4: Develop a plan or key steps for your goal, behavior or action

