



Value-Based Goals

Times have changed - and continue to change rapidly. In recent years, we've seen shifts in the way we live, work, and connect with one another. Whether it's evolving technology, changing workplaces, or global events, the pace of change has been undeniable. Through all of this, one thing has become clear: people are seeking greater meaning and alignment in their everyday lives.

Today, flexible work is the norm, not the exception. Individuals are prioritising balance, wellbeing, and deeper connection - both personally and professionally. As a result, many are rethinking what success looks like, not just chasing achievements, but pursuing goals that are grounded in their core values.

In the midst of constant change, value-based goal setting offers a powerful way to stay focused on what truly matters. Rather than setting goals purely based on outcomes, this approach helps ensure your goals reflect who you are, what you stand for, and the kind of life you want to lead.

What are values?

Values are what is most important to us and give us direction in life – they define the person we want to be. Values can never be achieved, but they influence the quality and purpose of your journey. Take some time to consider your values, thinking about what is important to you, it can help to consider:

Family and Friendships

What personal qualities would you like to bring to these relationships? What sort of relationships do you want to create? How would you interact if you were the ideal you in these relationships?

Work and career

What do you value in your work? What kind of worker would you like to be? If you were living up to your ideal standards, what qualities would you bring to work?

Leisure / Recreation

What sort of hobbies, activities or sports do you enjoy? How do you relax and unwind, or have fun? What activities would you like to do?

Parenting

What sort of parent would you like to be? What sort of qualities would you like to have? How would you behave if you were the 'ideal' you?

Health and Wellbeing

How do you want to look after your health? Why is this important to you?

Spiritual / Religious Beliefs

What does spirituality mean to you? What is important to you in this area of your life?

Once we have defined our values, we can begin to set meaningful goals.

Goal Setting

Goals are the stepping stones we take as we move towards our values. They are the actions we can take every day, that reflect our beliefs.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a psychological therapy model that focuses on teaching us to behave more consistently with our values. ACT recommends setting SMART goals to assist you in living a life based on your values.

Specific – what, when, where and with who

Meaning – goals guided by your values

Adaptive – likely to improve your quality of life

Realistic – is the goal realistically achievable

Time-framed – set a day, date and time

Getting Started

To help you get started, here are some examples of SMART goals that are aligned with a value.

Value: Health and Wellbeing. To value my physical health and wellbeing, so I can lead a healthier lifestyle and have more energy.

SMART Goal: I will be active for at least 30 minutes a day, at least three days a week for a year.

- Specific – includes what's involved and when.
- Meaning – connected to the value of health and wellbeing.
- Adaptive – this goal will improve physical health and improve energy.
- Realistic – setting a goal for three times a week is realistic and achievable.
- Time-framed – set to a specific time limit.

Value: Parenting. To be more available and present with my children.

SMART Goal: To kick a ball with my children for at least 30 minutes, once a week for a year. To create a time to be more present with my children (to talk, connect and enjoy each other's company).

- Specific – includes what's involved, when, who.
- Meaning – connected to the value of parenting.
- Adaptive – this goal will improve the quality of relationships.
- Realistic – setting a goal for once a week is realistic and achievable.
- Time-framed – set to a specific time limit.

Reviewing our Goals

When setting goals, we need to find a balance between those that are overly easy to achieve, versus those that are unattainable. It is important to revisit your goals and assess how you're doing. This can ensure we keep a focus on our values and the process of tracking towards reaching our goals. Review your goals weekly, and set new milestones as needed.

You can track your progress in a journal, and reward yourself when you reach a mile stone. Don't forget to forgive yourself if you miss a day or don't achieve something.

Final Words

Setting goals can help trigger new behaviours, keep us focused and help sustain momentum in life. It can also help improve our mental health and level of personal and professional success. Armed with our values and the behaviours to back them up we can move forward towards living a values-based life.

