

VALUES CLARIFICATION

Life is most fulfilling when we are consistently honoring our most important values. Values are not morals. They are those principles and qualities that matter to us, that are really important to our sense of well-being. In the beginning of our work, it is useful to clarify your top values. This is the first part of a values clarification process which we will continue at our intake session.

1. Identify 4 special, peak moments in your life when life was especially rewarding or poignant and you felt happy and fulfilled. Spend a few minutes writing down some of the details of each moment; what was happening? who was present? where were you?

Now go back and write down the characteristics of each situation that made you feel the way you did about it.

Example: When I was younger, I went on a week-long backpacking trip with close friends. We hiked through an incredibly beautiful area in the Vermont mountains, and we had a great time. I felt physically challenged and strong, close to my friends, and close to nature.

Characteristics: Physical challenge, friendship, beauty, nature, accomplishment, fun.

2. Identify 4 times when you felt angry, frustrated or upset. For each time, briefly write down the feelings and circumstances around the upset. Then go back and write down the characteristics of each event that caused you to feel the way you did.

*Example: In my last job, my supervisor gave me a bad annual review, which I felt was very unfair. When I tried to point out projects that I had successfully completed and areas where I thought that I had excelled, he didn't really listen and would not change the review. I felt angry that I was treated so unfairly. **Characteristics: Unfair treatment, not listening to me, felt devalued, felt that he really didn't see me.***