



## Overview

THEME	TIME	MATERIALS	SETUP
SELF	50 MINUTES	HANDOUT, PAPER, PENS	GROUPS AT TABLES

**Topic:** Who are you, and what is most important to you

**Audience:** Older adolescents or adults seeking to integrate their personal values with their public work and civic engagement

**Conceptual Objective:** Participants will understand values as principles/concepts tied to actions, the connection between personal values and public actions, and the role of personal investment in change work.

**Experiential Objective:** Participants will explore their own values and assess the extent to which they are living them out. They will consider how their current or desired community engagement aligns with their values.

**Facilitator Prep:** Perform the activity yourself before facilitating. Be familiar with your own values. Consider what you are comfortable sharing about yourself and what you are not and how you will support others' full participation.

**Related Content:** This activity could precede the Public Narrative – Story of Self workshop, as it prepares individuals to understand their own values. It could also pair well with the What's in Your Fish Bowl? activity.

**Materials:** Handout, paper, pens, and music (optional).

## Procedure

### INTRODUCTIONS (3 MIN)

- Presenters introduce themselves, participants introduce themselves to a neighbor.

### OPENING (2 MIN)

"If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." This quote is sometimes attributed to Lilla Watson, but she prefers that credit go collectively to an Aboriginal activist group in Queensland, Australia, in the 1970s.

Your civic and community work does not have to be altruistic, purely for someone else without having any benefit to yourself. In fact, many would say that you can do more good if you are working toward something that your own self depends on too, something you are personally invested in. In order to achieve that, we have to know who we are and what we're about. We have to know our values, so that we can choose to act on them, and find others with whom to act.

Change work is hard and takes time. You may not see great progress happen quickly, but there is also a satisfaction that comes from living out your values through your efforts, and that may sustain you when the going is tough.

### WHAT IS A VALUE? (5 MIN)

For the purposes of this exercise, explain that a value is something that fits the following criteria:

- It is something you chose to value, not something imposed on you.
- You feel good about having the value, and you are willing to tell those you trust about it.
- You act on the value. It is reflected in your life somehow.

Review the example values listed on the handout.

Acknowledge that we hold values to differing degrees. People have many values, and some values will be more closely held than others. Discuss some examples, maybe including a few from your own life and how you live them out.

Look closely, however. Just because you spend a lot of time and effort on something does not make it a value. Friendship might not be as strong a value for you if you invest a lot of energy into your friendships mostly because you feel obligated to do so. Similarly, the values of your family may be your values, but they also might not. Say your parents forced you to practice piano every day. Music is not your value if you don't feel positively about investing lots of time into music.

Find a partner and discuss (without sharing details if you don't want to):

- How aligned is your actual life with what you want your life to be about?
- Where is there alignment and where is there dissonance?
- Where do you have opportunities to increase that alignment?

### VALUES INVENTORY (10 MIN)

Have participants move through the following steps. They will not have to share anything they don't want to.

- Respond to the question on the handout: "If you could have your life be about something, what would it be about?" Make a list. Try to list at least 7 to 10 things. (5 min)
- Rank the list in order of importance to you. (2 min)
- Give each item on the list a score (0/lowest – 10/highest) based on how well you think you are living out that value in your life. (2 min)

### VALUES ALIGNMENT (10 MIN)

Have participants assess how well their values are aligned with their lives. Note that we are looking for satisfaction, not perfection. This is not a test, it is an opportunity to gain insight about how to find satisfaction in our lives.

- Consider how well your list matches, in terms of each value's importance and how well you are living each one out. Note when you value something highly but give it a relatively low score for how you live it out. What might account for that? (For example, your highest rated value could be family, but it might score relatively low because you've been very busy with work.)

### VALUES-DRIVEN ENGAGEMENT (15 MIN)

Use the "1-2-4-All" discussion model to discuss the implications participants' values have for their community engagement: First participants reflect individually (taking notes if they wish), then discuss in a pair, then discuss in a group of four, then come together as a full group.

- Silent self-reflection by individuals on a shared challenge, framed as question (1 min)
  - How does your current or desired work in the community align with your values?
  - What might result in even greater alignment?
- Generate ideas for greater alignment in pairs, building on ideas from self-reflection. (2 min)
- Share and develop ideas from pair in foursomes (notice similarities and differences). (4 min)
- "What is one idea that stood out in your conversation?" Each group shares one important idea with the full group. (5 min)

### CLOSING (5 MIN)

Ask each participant to share their reflections on the activity in just a few words.

If desired, also ask participants to identify one thing they'll do as a result of the exercise.

"Starting with Values" is adapted by Minnesota Campus Compact staff based on Sidney Simon's definition of values.

We welcome your suggestions for improving this guide further for future trainings. We also welcome you to use it and adapt it for your own trainings, subject to the terms below.

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## Start with Values: Handout

Values Criteria (from the work of Sidney Simon)

- It's something you chose to value, not something imposed on you.
- You feel good about having the value, and you are willing to tell those you trust about it.
- You act on the value. It is reflected in your life somehow.

Some examples of possible values:

- |                         |                   |                  |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Family                | • Pleasure        | • Nature         |
| • Friendship            | • Self-respect    | • Art            |
| • Partnership           | • Recognition     | • Fairness       |
| • Intimate Relationship | • Wisdom          | • Security       |
| • Work                  | • Ambition        | • Freedom        |
| • Learning              | • Open-mindedness | • Happiness      |
| • Recreation            | • Competence      | • Inner harmony  |
| • Spirituality          | • Joy             | • Love           |
| • Community life        | • Cleanliness     | • Ideas          |
| • Physical well-being   | • Courage         | • Rationality    |
| • Prosperity            | • Forgiveness     | • Affection      |
| • Excitement            | • Helpfulness     | • Respect        |
| • Accomplishment        | • Honesty         | • Courtesy       |
| • Peace                 | • Imagination     | • Responsibility |
| • Beauty                | • Independence    | • Discipline     |

### If you could have your life be about something, what would it be about?

- 1) Make a list. Try to list at least 7 to 10 things.
- 2) Rank the list, in order of importance to you. Give each item on the list a score (0 – 10) based on how well you think you are living out that value in your life.
- 3) Consider how well your list matches in terms of importance and how well you are living the values out. Note when you value something highly but give it a relatively low score for how you live it out. (For example, is your highest rated value family but scored relatively low for how you're living it out because you've been so busy with work?)
- 4) Find a partner and discuss (without sharing details if you don't want to):
  - How aligned is your actual life with what you want your life to be about?
  - Where is there alignment and where is there dissonance?
  - Where do you have opportunities to increase that alignment?
  - How does your current or desired work in the community align with your values?



# Survey for "Starting with Values" Workshop

Thank you for taking time to attend this Civic Agency workshop. We are very interested in receiving your feedback. (Alternatively, you may also complete this survey online at <http://tinyurl.com/ja28zek>). If you have participants complete evaluations on paper, please scan them and send them to [info@mncampuscompact.org](mailto:info@mncampuscompact.org).

**Primary Role:** Student, Faculty, Staff, Administrator, Community Organization Staff, AmeriCorps/VISTA

**Institution** (College, University, Organization):

**Date:**

**Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with the following about your experience with the Civic Agency workshop you participated in.**

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
I increased my confidence in my own ability to lead					
I gained useful leadership skills, strategies, or insights					
I learned about new leadership tools or resources					
I developed new or deeper connections with others					
I both learned from and contributed to the learning of others					
Other participants in the workshop helped me see things from a different perspective					

**Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with each of the following statements about yourself before the workshop**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>					<b>Strongly Agree</b>				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Before the Workshop</b>										
I understood my own identities and cultures										
I understood how identities and culture matter in social/community change work										
I understood how I connect with social issues on a personal level										
I was aware of strategies for fostering collaboration in diverse groups										
I was aware of strategies for effectively leading others										
I was aware of strategies for developing an action plan for social/community change										
I believed I had power to address social/community issues										



Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with each of the following statements about yourself now:

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

**After the Workshop**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I understand my own identities and cultures

I understand how identities and culture matter in social/community change work

I understand how I connect with social issues on a personal level

I am aware of strategies for fostering collaboration in diverse groups

I am aware of strategies for effectively leading others

I am aware of strategies for developing an action plan for social/community change

I believe I have power to address social/community issues

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I understand my own identities and cultures										
I understand how identities and culture matter in social/community change work										
I understand how I connect with social issues on a personal level										
I am aware of strategies for fostering collaboration in diverse groups										
I am aware of strategies for effectively leading others										
I am aware of strategies for developing an action plan for social/community change										
I believe I have power to address social/community issues										

Is there anything you would like to tell us about your experience with the workshop?