

Core Values

When we live a life that's in tune with our most authentic, powerful and true Self, we live a life of resonant joy.

And that is WAAAY easier if we know and honour our own core values.

They give us clarity about who we want to be, deep down.

They give us traction for what Karl Jung called the journey back to the Self.

And they give us a diagnostic tool for when we feel mis-aligned, confused or uncertain, because we can check in and see which core value is not currently being honoured or expressed, and find a way to activate it.

We generally share cultural values with the society in which we live – honesty, loyalty, fair play, kindness, for example. I'm not talking about those.

Core values are those personal values which are so near and dear to your heart that when you can't express them, it makes you deeply miserable. Core values are values which need to be met in order for you to feel satisfied and authentic. Those values are not necessarily shared by everyone. They might include things like beauty, inclusivity, accomplishment, love of nature, fun, freedom, abundance.

Core values change over time, so it's worth revisiting them on a regular basis. I like to check in with mine at least once a year, sometimes twice, because as I mature and change and explore and expand, new core values sometimes emerge and old ones may fall away.

Once we know our core values, our job is to find ways to express and honour them. This resource pulls together several of my favourite methods for you to choose from. You may even like to blend them for extra oomph, or pick one and then use a second one to check in, or to shine a spotlight on anything you've missed.

Aim for between 5 to 8 core values. You might find some of them seem contradictory. That's okay - in fact, the tension between two 'opposing' core values can be incredibly potent fuel for inspiration and creativity.

Mine are accomplishment, discovery, connection, subversiveness, autonomy and pleasure. You can see the contradictions straight away!

As a recovering workaholic, you can imagine that expressing accomplishment has been super easy; while pleasure for its own sake has been tricky. And yes - things flow far more easily for me when I can get aligned to **both** of those, because they're fundamental to who I am, and they provide great reminders to be more conscious.



Understanding your core values can take a little while, so let it be a work in progress as long as needed. Revisit it any time you like. As you unearth fragments, they will help to bring more and more clarity.

With these different techniques, you'll need pen and paper. Here's a great pro tip - use a combo that is physically delightful, for example lovely creamy smooth paper and a pen in a colour you adore. My go-to for this kind of work is thick, unlined art paper and a fountain pen with turquoise ink. Yours will likely be different. But having implements that *feel* good is always a great start.

Good Vibe Method

I love this method, designed by Jeannette Maw, the Good Vibe Coach and shared with her permission.

Cast your mind back, within the last 3 to 6 months, to when you were having a really good time. Think about the details of that occasion and bring it vividly to mind, until it makes you smile. What core values were **present** which made that occasion so shiny? What core values did you witness at play, or express your own self? What feelings came up that you loved basking in?

Connection to nature? Accomplishment? Playfulness? Grace? Generosity?
Connection? Solitude?

Now think about a time you just hated. Don't go and bask in it please! Stand at a distance as the observer, and see if you can spot what values were **missing**.

Privacy? Respect? Spaciousness? Belonging? Kindness?

You can also do the same exercise, by noticing anything which regularly fills you with enjoyment or its opposite.

See if you can narrow down those values, perhaps grouping some together (I have curiosity and learning grouped under 'discovery') until you have about six.

Back to the Past

You can also get inspiration for your core values by going way back to see what kinds of things got you in trouble when you were a kid.

What did you love doing so much, it would habitually make you late for school, or distract you from doing what your parents and teachers wanted you to do?

For me (no surprise here) it was either daydreaming or reading. Ha! These days, pleasure and discovery are still essential to my happiness.

Of course, core values do change.

As a child I was passionate about justice, and in fact for a time as an adult I worked as a union industrial officer, advocating for performers in difficult workplace situations.

That has morphed into 'subversiveness' as I've explored its deeper layers of meaning.

The green-eyed monster

Envy can be a valuable beacon to point to our core values, even though it doesn't feel great.

For many years, I've been a fan of television archaeology documentaries, and for the longest time, I would watch these shows and feel envy for the archaeologists - even when they were covered in mud, baked by the sun, bent down into awkward positions in some cave somewhere, or unearthing something unspeakable from a grave. I could never figure this out, because I have absolutely *no* desire to dig in the dirt, or bake in the sun, or go headfirst down a narrow cave passage to investigate human remains!

Eventually, I realised that the archaeologists' work fulfils many of my own core values: discovery, accomplishment, connection, fun (it was fun for THEM).

These days I activate those values when I take a deep dive into a client's StarMap, which is why I use the term Soul Archaeologist to describe that part of my work. That's what it feels like - digging through layers which relate to each other, to understand and then convey the narrative hidden within.

Prefer a list?

If you'd like to look at a list of potential values for inspiration, you may like the brilliant mini-ebook written by my friend and colleague Anne Bolender, which you'll find at <http://goo.gl/6KqIMS>

Looking at a list can be useful if you're completely stumped for where to start, but I have a very large caveat to wave at you first.

Lists engage your intellect, your logical left-brain.

And that part of you can be firmly rooted in the 'rules' relating to your current life.

If you're a parent, it's harder to pick 'freedom' than 'family' - even if deep down your heart yearns for freedom.

If you're a social worker, it's harder to pick 'wealth' than 'compassion' - even if deep down your heart yearns for wealth so you can make a difference in other ways.

Looking at a list has to be done with this very firmly front and centre of your awareness, please!

Find some things that ping for you, and then sit with them to really check in with your heart. Ask 'does this truly resonate with me?'



Thank you for letting me support you with this resource

One powerful way to get clues to your core values is by looking at the information coded into the moment of your birth.

If you'd like support with that, you may like to consider one of my astrology-based StarMaps, available from my website at janettedalgliesh.com