

The Values Compass

What you say you value is a claim. What your calendar says is evidence.

This room finds your actual north — not the values that sound good, but the ones you'd rebuild your week around. Then it does the uncomfortable part: it checks your claim against your evidence. Working from stated values toward lived behavior is a core move in established approaches like Acceptance and Commitment Therapy; here it's just four honest steps. About fifteen minutes.

Compassion · Freedom · Family · Curiosity · Truth · Adventure · Integrity · Creativity · Security · Justice · Service · Love · Courage · Wisdom · Humor · Beauty · Community · Rest · Learning · Faith · Independence · Loyalty · Health · Honesty · Growth · Peace · Generosity · Craft · Nature · Belonging · Ambition · Simplicity · Tradition · Playfulness · Depth · Reliability · Self-respect · Making things · Being of use · Leaving places better

ONE

Choose ten

From the list above or your own words — the ten that are genuinely yours, not the ten you were raised to say.

TWO

Narrow: ten to five, five to three

Cutting is the exercise. For each cut, notice the flinch — the values that are hardest to cross out are telling you something. Write the five, then the three that survive.

THREE · THE UNCOMFORTABLE PART

Now check the evidence

For your three: what does your *calendar* suggest you value? Your *spending*? Your *relationships* — who actually gets your time and patience? Your *behavior on an ordinary Tuesday*? Write what the evidence says without defending yourself. The gap isn't a verdict on your character; it's a map of where your life hasn't caught up to you yet.

FOUR

Where aligned, where not — and one move

Name where your life already matches your three; give yourself credit for it, because alignment you don't notice erodes. Then name the biggest gap — and one concrete move, this week, that shifts an hour or a dollar toward what you actually value. Not a life overhaul. One hour. One dollar.

If the gap traces to a pattern — always deferring, always earning rest, always rescuing — the Pattern Map knows that terrain. And if the gap is about someone else's claims on your time, the Boundary Builder is

down the hall.

IF IT STIRRED SOMETHING UP

Coming back down

Breathe in through your nose for four, out through your mouth for eight — longer out than in — for a few minutes. Then name five things you can see, four you can hear, three you can touch. Stirred-up feelings after writing like this are common and tend to pass; if they don't, that's information that this deserves more support than a page can give.

If you're in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, please don't work through it alone here. In the US, call or text 988 (the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), or chat at 988lifeline.org — available 24/7. Outside the US, findahelpline.com lists helplines around the world.

A BLESSING ON THIS WORK

This work is a gift. Share it freely with anyone who needs it — print it, copy it, pass it on whole. It is not for sale, by us or by anyone, and it shouldn't be changed. Above all, keep the crisis lines and the words about seeking professional help exactly as they are — for someone, those may be the lines that matter most. It exists to help people heal, and to raise the vibration of the world. That will never cost anything here.

— *Aether & Root* · aetherandroot.com/inner-work