

By simply pondering and affirming your deepest values you'll improve the health of your brain, you'll protect yourself from burnout at work, you'll reduce your propensity to ruminate about failure, and you'll be less reactive and defensive when someone confronts you with uncomfortable information.

Complete the following exercise at the same time of day every day, preferably soon after waking, for 10 days.

Step 1

Get a pen and piece of paper and read the instructions below to the end before taking any action. Once done start taking action from **Step 2**.

Step 2

Take a few minutes to ground yourself by slowly yawning, stretching and breathing deeply and gently. When you are fully relaxed ...

Step 3

Decide which ONE of the following questions will be your focus for 10 days and then ask yourself the question;

- ❖ *“What is my deepest, innermost value?”*
- ❖ *“What is my deepest, innermost relationship value?”*
- ❖ *“What is my deepest, innermost communication value?”*

Step 4

Close your eyes for at least 60 seconds. Listen to your inner voices paying attention to whatever thoughts and feelings float through your mind. Then open your eyes and write down a single word, or brief phrase, that captures your deepest innermost value.

If nothing occurs to you, close your eyes again and stay focused on the question for another couple of minutes until a word comes to mind. If you still don't get anything, smile and try again tomorrow.

Step 5

Record your word(s), along with any feelings or reactions you have relating to doing this exercise.

Step 6

Repeat **Steps 3 - 5** several times, and make sure to write down any new words.

Step 7

Look at your list of words and circle the one that feels the truest for you at this moment.

Step 8

Close your eyes once more and repeat the word or phrase to yourself, silently and then aloud. Notice how it feels to say it, and then compare it to the other words you wrote down.

Step 9

On day 11 briefly answer the following seven questions using only a single sheet of paper. Be spontaneous in your responses, and remember that there are no right or wrong answers. They're only designed to deepen the self-reflective process.

- ❖ What was your initial reaction to this exercise?
- ❖ Was the exercise enjoyable, boring, interesting, annoying, or ... ?
- ❖ How long did you spend each day contemplating your values?
- ❖ Did the exercise have any effect on other aspects of your day, work, or life?
- ❖ How do you define the word "value"?
- ❖ Did you discover anything about yourself?
- ❖ Did the exercise influence the way you think about your work, business, relationships or communication values?

Dialogue with others

Whether it's professional or personal, knowing and honouring the values of both listener and speaker is essential for compassionate and effective communication.

*Speak unto others as you would like them to speak unto you, and
listen to others as you would like them to listen to you*