

Identifying and Communicating Your Values

Your values are the lenses through which you view yourself and the world. When you use your values to make decisions, you make a deliberate choice to focus on what is important to you.

1. What is important to you? Observing the decisions you make and asking yourself why you made that decision can help you identify what is important.

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2. Think about a time you felt each of the following. Write down what was going on, what/how you were feeling, how and why that experience gave your life meaning and what values you felt you were honoring.

Happiness

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Anger/frustration

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Pride

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Fulfilled

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3. What patterns or themes do you see in your values?

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4. From the list of values identified in question 2 and the themes identified in question 3, how would you prioritize your top 5 values?

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Great work! You now have a better understanding of what your core values are. Now let's work on applying your values to your care.

1. Which aspects of your health and well-being are most important to you?

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2. How do you define a good quality of life for yourself?

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3. How do you define a good quality of life for your family?

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4. What role do you want your family to have in your decision-making?

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5. What goals do you have for your care?

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6. When it comes to your care, what outcomes do you view as unacceptable?

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Now that you know what your values and goals for your care are, it's important to share them with the people you love and your health care team so they can better support you in making decisions that align with how you want to live your life.

Tips for communicating your values with your loved ones:

- Plan what you want to say ahead of time.
- Speak your truth, even if you think it will be difficult for someone to hear.
- Ask for input. Remember, decisions you make will also have an impact on your loved ones.

Tips for communicating your values with your health care team:

- Ask to review your list of goals and values with your doctor and take note of information you think will be helpful.
- Ask how your care team can support you in achieving your goals in a way that aligns with your values.
- Identify what concerns or fears you have and communicate these openly.