

As a professional coach, I often look for new and interesting ideas to help people determine what is really important to them in their lives.

When helping my clients discover their ideal career, I encourage them to clarify their most important values. Our values play a very large part in dictating our behavior, yet it is not always easy to define them.

The following activity is fun, simple, and quick. It can bring great clarity during a career search. Don't just read it — print it and do it — you might be surprised by what you uncover.

Step 1 Brainstorm a list of the things you enjoy doing. There are no right or wrong answers here. No action is too silly. The idea is to generate as many activities that bring you joy as possible, so write things down as you think of them. There should be a minimum of 20 ideas listed.

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Step 2 Ok, now you can use a little more thought. Out of that list, put a line through the 15 that are least important; you should be left with your top 5 activities.

Continue over

Step 3 Write down those 5 activities below, and alongside write down why you enjoy doing each one, there's no need to be too descriptive, keep it brief.

Example: I enjoy going for a swim. Why? It relaxes me. Or maybe; I like to search for coral — be honest, nobody is looking at this.

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Step 4 Look at the reasons you've listed above. Now, below write down why you wrote your answer.

*Example: Why does it relax me? It gets my body moving and makes me feel healthy.
or: Why do I like to search for coral? Because I am fascinated by my environment.*

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Step 5 Identify the themes you've created above. For the examples shown, the first theme could be health and second could be adventure. This process could reveal many other themes such as: growth, loyalty, challenge, comfort, solitude, belonging, contributing, etc. Write these down below.

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When you've completed this exercise, you will have a better idea of the core values that matter most to you; the things listed above are the things that drive you.

Once you have that knowledge, you'll want to ensure that whatever career opportunities you look at should incorporate those values. This will enhance the probability that you will find a meaningful career that affords fulfilment and satisfaction in your life as a whole.

For guidance on this exercise, or if you'd just like explore other ways of getting what you want from life then contact me — Barbara Heyn — now.

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