

DO Therapy

What Matters to Me?

When choices feel difficult, emotions run high, or we feel pulled in different directions, it can help to identify **what actually matters to us underneath the situation**. This exercise helps move from reacting to the immediate pressure toward choosing a response that better reflects your values.

NOTICE

Choose a recent situation, decision, or interaction where you felt conflicted, uncertain, frustrated, or pulled in different directions.

Ask:

- What is happening?
- What am I feeling pulled to do?
- What feels important about this situation?
- What am I worried about losing, disappointing, or getting wrong?

Then ask: **“What matters to me here?”**

Possibilities might include:

Connection	Responsibility	Adventure
Honesty	Growth	Health
Family	Loyalty	Stability
Respect	Compassion	Courage
Fairness	Achievement	Authenticity
Autonomy	Integrity	Something else
Security	Belonging	

Choose **one value** that feels especially relevant.

REVIEW THE GAME TAPE

Look at what you have been doing in the situation.

Ask:

- Does my current response reflect what I say matters to me?
- What has been influencing my behavior instead?
- Am I responding from the value—or from fear, pressure, habit, avoidance, approval, or immediate comfort?
- Is there a difference between **what matters to me** and **what I am currently doing**?

Sometimes two important values are competing.

For example:

- **Connection + Autonomy**
- **Security + Adventure**
- **Family + Boundaries**
- **Achievement + Health**
- **Honesty + Compassion**
- **Responsibility + Rest**

The goal isn't necessarily to choose which value is “right.”

Ask: “**How could I honor what matters without pretending the other value doesn't matter?**”

PRACTICE

Turn the value into **one observable action**.

- If I value **connection**, I might initiate the conversation I've been avoiding.
- If I value **health**, I might protect time for sleep or movement.
- If I value **honesty**, I might say what I actually think respectfully.
- If I value **family**, I might intentionally create time together.
- If I value **autonomy**, I might make a decision rather than waiting for someone's approval.
- If I value **compassion**, I might respond differently to someone's mistake.
- If I value **boundaries**, I might say no even though someone may be disappointed.

Ask: “**If this value were visible in my behavior, what would someone see me doing?**”

Choose one action to practice. “**Because _____ matters to me, I will practice _____.**”

BUILD REPS

Look for additional opportunities to practice the same value through behavior.

After a few reps, notice:

- Did my actions feel more aligned with what matters to me?
- What made practicing the value difficult?
- What happened when I acted from the value rather than the immediate emotion or pressure?
- Did another important value need consideration?
- What would I keep, adjust, or practice again?

Values become more useful when they move beyond something we **believe** and become something we **practice**. **What matters to me? → What would that look like in my behavior?**

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NOTICE → REVIEW THE GAME TAPE → PRACTICE → BUILD REPS → TEST & LEARN

Notice what's happening. **Review the game tape** with curiosity rather than judgment. Choose something to **practice**. **Build reps** by trying it more than once and noticing what happens. Then **test & learn**—keep what helps, adjust what doesn't, and try again.

The goal isn't to get it right. The goal is to learn from what happens.