Setting Value-based Goals while in Self-isolation (or during Social Distancing)

Why set goals?

For a lot of people having to self isolate might feel like a massive barrier to achieving important goals. You might not be able to work, or attend lessons or training classes, and things you've been organising may have been cancelled. However, this creates an opportunity to set new goals, and having goals is important in order to stay motivated and stay active, both of which underlie good mental health.
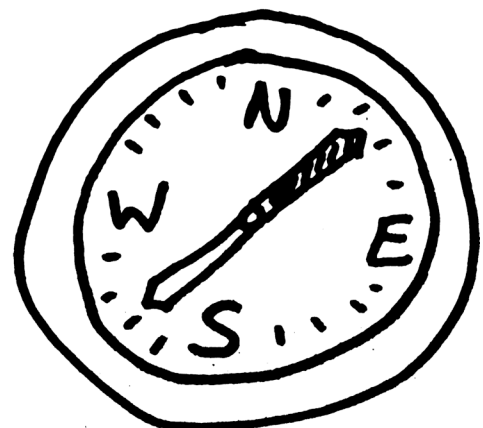
Values and Goals
In order to make sure that our goals are meaningful, we need to set ones that are in line with our values.

Values are abstract concepts that guide our ambitions and behaviour.

Here are some examples of common values:				
Authenticity	Community	Fun	Learning	Responsibility
Achievement	Competency	Hard work	Love	Security
Adventure	Contribution	Honesty	Loyalty	Self-improvement
Authority	Creativity	Humour	Openness	Service
Autonomy	Curiosity	Influence	Optimism	Spirituality
Balance	Determination	Justice	Peace	Status
Beauty	Fairness	Influence	Pleasure	Strength
Bravery	Faith	Kindness	Popularity	Tolerance
Compassion	Family	Knowledge	Recognition	Trustworthiness
Challenge	Friendships	Leadership	Respect	Wisdom

Values are like directions on a compass- they tell you what direction to go in, but there are different paths you could take to get there. You can never 'achieve honesty' just like you can never 'get to East', but you can keep going in the right direction and set landmarks along the way to help with this.

Goals are more like landmarks. They ensure we don't stray from our valued directions, but in themselves can be 'reached' or 'achieved' unlike the guiding value.

To set value-based goals it is usually helpful to start by thinking about what your top values are.

Can you think what your top 3 values are? If you need ideas there is a list at the end of this document!
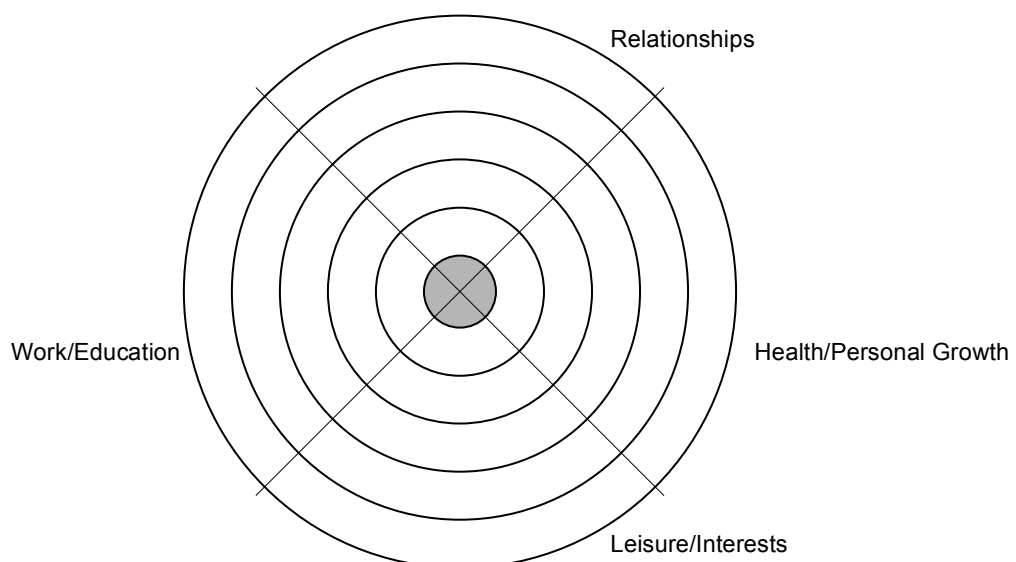
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Often people's values fall largely into these **four main categories:**
- Work/education
- Personal growth/health
- Leisure/interests
- Relationships

Which categories do your 3 top values fall into?

For example, honesty, kindness and independence would all fit under relationships, whereas adventure, reading or creativity might fall under leisure. Success, hard work or learning might fall under work/education, whereas fitness or spirituality might fall under personal growth/health.

Below is a target, like one you'd shoot arrows into in archery. **Put an X** on the target in each section to mark how important each area is to you (the centre is for 'extremely important' and the outside is for 'not so important').

Now take another coloured pen (or draw a different shape) and **mark on** how much you have been living in line with your values in each area over the last 2 weeks (the centre of the target is 'totally in line with value' and further out means living less in line with our valued directions).

Notice in which section you have marked that you are living furthest away from your values. Often people find that the values most important to them are the ones they are least in line with. **Is this the case for you?**

Bearing all of this in mind it is time to pick some landmarks, or set some goals, that will bring us closer to living in line with the values that are most important to us. Remember that goals are things we can reach or 'tick off' once we have achieved them (unlike values). To make sure we can reach our goals we should keep them:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time limited

For example, 'being more organized' is not a smart goal as you can't tick it off, but 'sorting through my paper drawers and putting everything into files or the recycling by Tuesday afternoon' is.

Now it is time to set those goals!

Remember that the purpose of setting these goals is to keep you motivated and busy even while in self-isolation or doing social distancing. Therefore you should pick things that are based on your values (so they are meaningful), but also things that you **want to do** and that will **make you feel better** once you've done them, eve if they're hard work or not much fun at the time.

- Are there any skills you've been wanting to learn that you could start on from home?
- Do you want to improve your physical fitness- running and cycling and home workouts are all possible in isolation!
- Do you have an old hobby that you've dropped because you've been so busy?
- How could your skills be helpful to others in this time?
- How often do you want to be getting outside and how can you safely?
- Are there jobs in the house you've been meaning to do for ages and not got around to?

On the next page there is space to plan your top 5 goals for self-isolation. You might have more than this (depending on how big or time-consuming your goals are), in which case use a separate sheet of paper to write down your others! For each goal there are a few questions to answer to ensure that your goals are **SMART.**

My goals for self-isolation/social distancing:

Goal 1:

When will I have achieved my goal by?

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

What barriers might get in the way of me achieving my goal?

What will I do to overcome these barriers?

Goal 2:

When will I have achieved my goal by?

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

What barriers might get in the way of me achieving my goal?

What will I do to overcome these barriers?

Goal 3:

When will I have achieved my goal by?

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

What barriers might get in the way of me achieving my goal?

What will I do to overcome these barriers?

Goal 4:

When will I have achieved my goal by?

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

What barriers might get in the way of me achieving my goal?

What will I do to overcome these barriers?

Goal 5:

When will I have achieved my goal by?

How will I know when I have achieved my goal?

What barriers might get in the way of me achieving my goal?

What will I do to overcome these barriers?

One very common barrier to achieving goals we set is remembering about them! Try writing your goals down in a **list** or on **post-it notes** and put them somewhere where you will see them regularly during your self-isolation period or time at home social distancing.

Looking forwards...

Finally it's important to remember that **self-isolation is not permanent.** Set yourself some goals for when you get out of isolation or once social distancing measures are relaxed again. What aren't you able to do that you would really love to be able to do? Go back to your top 3 values that you wrote down on page 1.

Can you set one post-isolation goal that fits with each value?
        Remember to keep them SMART!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____