

## Do You Know your Unique CORE VALUES?

When asked, very few people know what their unique 8–10 core values are. Since life goals and decisions should ideally be based on core values (among other factors), this can be an issue. Knowing my core values gives me a far better chance to live a fulfilled life rather than simply a contented one or even a frustrated one.

Stephen Covey (The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People) has said that core values are critical in laying the foundation from which goals can be set. I have a much better chance to live a fulfilled life if my actions, decisions and goals are in concert with my unique core values. For much of my life, I gave more time to planning a vacation than to determining my values and how to base my life upon them. When this changed, my life changed...dramatically.

Covey has stated that most of us are busy climbing the ladder of a successful life without knowing if we have placed our ladder against the correct wall (for us). In other words, many feel it is better to do the "thing right" than to do the "right thing". Studies indicate that many of us spend too much time on things that are not in concert with our core values (since they are largely unknown), causing frustration and not fulfillment.

**Defining my core values gives me purpose.** When I don't know (or haven't clearly defined) my values, I could end up drifting along in life. Instead of basing my decisions on an internal compass, I make choices based on circumstances and social pressures. I try to fulfill other people's expectations instead of my own.

Trying to be someone else and living without core values can be down right exhausting and can leave me feeling empty and shiftless. Conversely, living a life in line with my core values brings purpose, direction, happiness and wholeness.

**Defining my values prevents me from making bad choices.** Perhaps I have a vague idea about what I value. But if I haven't clearly defined my values, I may make choices that conflict with them. And when my actions conflict with my values, the result can be unhappiness and frustration.

**Defining my values gives me confidence.** When I take the time to really think (or meditate) upon what I value and then write those things down, I'm more likely to have the courage and confidence to make choices based on those values. There's something about actually writing down my values that makes me more committed to living them.

I've gone into detail on this subject here so that you have some idea how important that I think that it is. And, in my opinion, it applies at any age as most of us still have many years to live and OLLI members especially are active people who want to learn and get better. The goal here is to FOCUS on the what's best for me (not multitasking) in order to have a better chance to live a fulfilled life.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me:

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Dates: 6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22  
Times: Mondays 1:00-2:15  
Location: Craig Hall (Gordon 1)