



WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES? THE MOST IMPORTANT VALUES TO LIVE BY

Alex Blackwell on September 22, 2008



We face tough decisions every day. As a parent, husband, and business professional I encounter several circumstances each day which test my patience, my character, and my peace of mind. For me, my values guide me and shape my priorities and reactions. They serve as my markers to tell me if my life is heading in the right direction and if it is out turning out the way I want it to.

When our actions and words are aligned with our values, life is generally good and we feel content, confident and satisfied. But when our behaviors do not match-up with our values, we soon begin to sense an uneasiness that begins to swell and grow inside of us.

This uncomfortable feeling tells us that not all is good with the world right now. We feel out-of-whack; out-of-touch and generally out-of-sorts. These feelings can be a source of anxiety and unhappiness.

Making a deliberate and conscious attempt to identify which values are the most important is needed to keep your anxiety low and your happiness and sense of personal worth and self-awareness high.

Regardless, if we recognize them or not, values do naturally exist. Our lives can become less stressful, and more productive, when we acknowledge our personal values – and then make the attempt to live by and honor these values regardless of the circumstances we encounter.

"It is not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are". – Roy Disney

The following values are the ones that resonate with me. These values are the most important for me to live by and the ones I want to pass along to my children and everyone in my life:

- 1. Appreciation. Taking a brief moment to say, "thank you," or acknowledging the exceptional job the restaurant server did when waiting on you is not only encouraging for the beneficiary to hear; it fills your soul with more appreciation too.**
- 2. Belief in Others. It can be your attitude; your resolve, that can lift someone up when they are down. Their doubt can be erased by your confidence. And something else amazing happens, *belief* is contagious – the more you believe in others; the more you will continue to believe in yourself.**
- 3. Caring. Caring for others, as well as self-care, allows you to extend a helping hand and to pass along some unexpected grace. When we take the time to demonstrate we care; we demonstrate the fact there are still plenty of good people left in this world.**
- 4. Commitment. Commitment shows loyalty and it can show bravery and tenacity as well. A commitment is a promise made and an expectation we have created. Honoring our commitments can make the difference between achieving what is most important to us or feeling disappointed and defeated.**
- 5. Compassion. We are all part of this thing called the human condition. No doubt we have different skin colors, religious preferences and political points-of-view, but at the end of the day, we still need to take care of one another.**
- 6. Cooperation. Even the most complex tasks and assignments can be made simpler when we focus on the solutions – together.**

- 7. Courtesy. The next time you are approaching a door, and someone is ten steps or so behind you, wait just one second longer before walking through. Instead hold the door for that one second. It is amazing how something that can happen in a blink of an eye can carry so much lasting value.**

- 8. Dedication. No matter how the circumstances may change, unless you are in a physically or emotionally abusive situation, stay the course and never give up. I would rather be called a failure than a loser. Losers give up when things become too difficult. Failures are folks who have just not found success – but will. So, call me a failure if you like, because it implies, I haven't stop trying.**

- 9. Devotion. Some days are just naturally better than others. It is the same way in our interpersonal relationships and in our faith. Things can get unstable at times but staying devoted to a cause or to a person through the uncertain times is our rock to grasp when our faith and our foundation is shaky.**

