

Personal values and the wheel of life

Many if not most of my coaching clients complete these two exercises very early in our coaching journey. They help clarify what you stand for, how you want to grow, and what you'd like to bring to our coaching sessions.

Values

Our personal values are the fundamental beliefs and principles that guide our actions, decisions, and priorities in life. We're often not aware of the values that guide us or resonate most strongly with us, but when we are, they can help us to become more aligned, at ease, and to act with intention.

On the next page is a list of values. It's not exhaustive so you can add more of your own.

First identify the ten values that most resonate with you (or fewer if you can't think of 10, that's OK). How do your ten values sit alongside and relate to one another? Can you see any patterns emerge? Are there any potential tensions where one value conflicts with another? What might you need to do about that?

It can be insightful to artificially limit the number of values we can choose, even temporarily. This can highlight what really matters or where values might be in tension with one another. Narrow your values down to five. Don't take too long over this.

Finally, narrow these down to just three. Again, don't take too long.

Take time to reflect on what these are and what led you to choose them. What makes them more fundamental or important to you?

Think about how you can remember your values and draw on them when you need to act with integrity and purpose.

Achievement	Determination	Individuality	Quality
Adventure	Discipline	Innovation	Recognition
Appreciation	Diversity	Inspiration	Relationships
Autonomy	Empathy	Integrity	Reliability
Balance	Enthusiasm	Joy	Resilience
Being the best	Ethics	Kindness	Responsibility Risk
Boldness	Excellence	Knowledge	Safety
Brilliance	Fairness	Learning	Security
Calmness	Family	Love	Service
Caring	Friendships	Loyalty	Simplicity
Challenge	Freedom	Making a difference	Spirituality
Charity	Fun	Mindfulness	Success
Cheerfulness	Generosity	Optimism	Teamwork
Community	Grace	Originality	Trust
Commitment	Gratitude	Passion	Uniqueness
Cooperation	Growth	Peace	Wealth
Contribution	Happiness	Perfection	Wellbeing
Creativity	Health	Performance	Wisdom
Courage	Honesty	Personal development	
Curiosity	Humility	Popularity	
Daring	Inclusiveness	Power	
Dedication	Independence		

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Wheel of life

The wheel of life helps you to reflect on important areas of your life. What these are is up to you to choose, but you might include some or all of:

- Health
- Fitness
- Relationship
- Family
- Social life
- Fun and recreation
- Money
- Career
- Personal growth
- Volunteering/contribution
- Faith/spirituality

You might want to include specific things that matter, like travel or cooking, rather than lump them in wider categories.

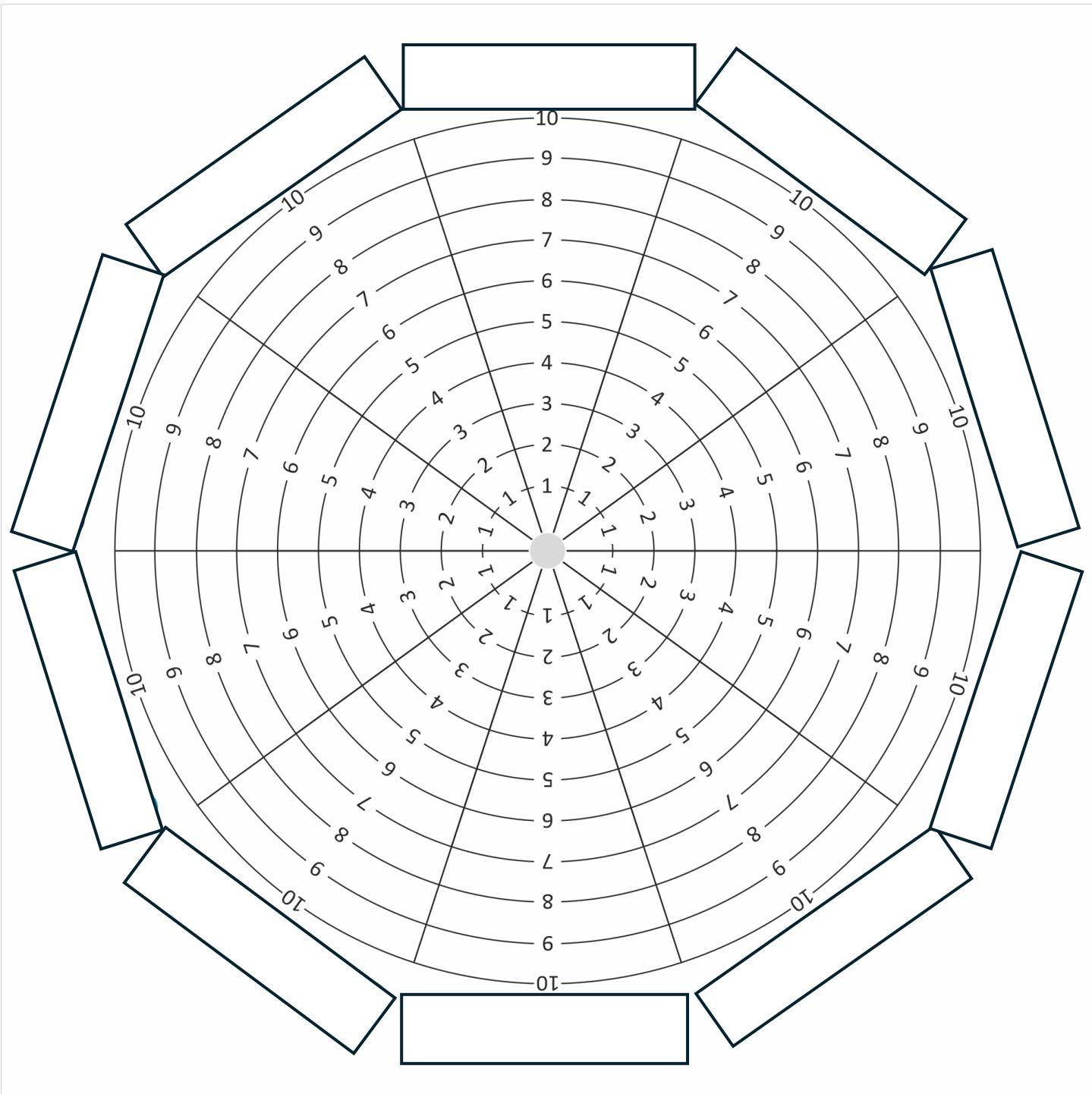
Choose which areas you want to reflect on. You don't need to create a complete wheel.

Reflect on each area of life and rate how well it's going for you right now. Mark this by circling one number in each segment. This is an intuitive score, so try not to overthink it or look for measurable criteria too much. Then, join each circle to the others with lines, to create a web that visualises how well each area of life is going relative to the others.

Then, in a different colour, rate how well you want it to be going for you. Not every area needs to be 10/10. It's up to you and this step can help you to identify the relative importance of different areas of life. Again, join your circles with lines.

Take some time to notice what your scores are telling you about how each area of life is going, how you'd like it to be, and their relative importance.

Think about what actions or goals might help you to move each area closer to optimum for you. These can become topics for coaching, if you wish, or just areas to plan.



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Values and the wheel of life

Once you've completed it, you can use the wheel of life to explore how and where your values are showing up in each important area of your life.

Remind yourself of what values you identified.

Around your wheel of life, note when or how well each area of life currently lets you express each value. You could rate this, or just note that it's present.

Now think about how you want or need each value to show up in each area. For example which ones matter in your career, versus in your relationships? (We don't necessarily need all of our values to show up in all areas of our life, by the way.)

As before, take some time to notice any gaps or tensions. What are these telling you?

Values and actions interact: our values can guide our actions, while our actions express our values. We're at ease when both of those things can happen.

Look back at the actions or goals you identified on your wheel of life to move each area of life closer to optimum: how can your values help you to do the right (or most important) things, and how can your plans help you to express the values that matter in each area?

Goals can be important and helpful but each of us just gets up each morning and takes life one day at a time. These days are made up of the different aspects of life you choose to add to your wheel, and so this exercise can help you to focus your energy and attention on the things that matter. We're each a process and we're the result of all the things that we consistently do. If those things let us express our values and lead us towards things that matter, even if each day is the same, it feels and becomes more meaningful. So success or contentment can more helpfully be thought of as daily states of being, rather than destinations to reach.