

ACTIVITY: WHAT ARE YOUR CORE VALUES?

An ethical leader is a person who acts with integrity. Thus, ethical leadership entails knowing your core values and having the courage to act on them on behalf of the common good. Of course, “core values” are a deeply personal concept that requires a lot of reflection. The Center for Ethical Leadership created and introduced this activity to KLCC II to facilitate this reflection.

OVERVIEW

This activity guides participants through the self-reflection process to help them identify their core values – those that will always be important to them. You can adapt the activity to examine group values as well (see Roca’s example of this in **Identifying Your Group’s Core Values**).

OBJECTIVES

- To engage your group in a reflection about what is most important to them
- To help group members identify their core values
- To increase group members’ self-confidence

TIME REQUIRED

Approximately 40 minutes

SUPPLIES

You’ll need copies of **Handout 5B** (“Core Values Assessment”) and a pen or pencil for each participant.

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 1: Setting the context	5 min	<p>Pass out Handout 5B to the group members. Tell them, “Identifying your core values is an integral part of being an ethical leader. You may need to do some serious reflection before you know for sure what your core values are.”</p> <p>Have participants review the list of values on the handout. Note the blank lines at the bottom, which participants can use to add any values that are important to them that aren’t on the list.</p> <p>Remind the group members, “Be sure to pay close attention to your inner dialogue as you review this sheet. How you reflect on these values will reveal interesting truths about yourself; you just have to listen.”</p>	<p>Handout 5B</p> <p>Pens or pencils</p>
Step 2: Starring important values	5 min	<p>Tell the group, “Put a star next to all the values that are important to you, including any you added. These are your personal set of values.”</p>	

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WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIALS
Step 3: Narrowing it down	5 min	Tell participants, “Narrow your personal set of values to eight. Cross off the less important values and circle the more important values. Remember, you’re not throwing away the values you cross off; you’re simply narrowing down the list to determine your <i>core</i> values.”	
Step 4: Narrowing it even more	5 min	Ask participants to narrow their list to <i>five</i> values, using the same process.	
Step 5: Keep narrowing...	5 min	Have participants narrow their list of values to <i>three</i> .	
Step 6: Final narrowing	3 min	Finally, have participants choose their top <i>two</i> core values.	
Step 7: Sharing, discussing, and reflecting	15–20 min	<p>Ask that all group members stand and share their core values. Ask the group a series of discussion questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How did you choose your core values? ■ What do your core values mean to you? ■ How do you express your core values? ■ How can you make your core values a more present part of your daily life? (Suggestions might include posting the values on your dashboard, mirror, computer, or refrigerator.) <p>You can also use some of the Values Self-Reflection Questions (Found at the bottom of Handout 5B) to prompt individual or group reflection and discussion.</p>	

HANDOUT 5B: CORE VALUES ASSESSMENT

Peace	Integrity
Wealth	Joy
Happiness	Love
Success	Recognition
Friendship	Family
Fame	Truth
Authenticity	Wisdom
Power	Status
Influence	_____
Justice	_____

VALUES SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How am I practicing, promoting, and living these values?

What is challenging about practicing, promoting, and living these values?

What can I do to really practice and live these values when it's hard?

What individual agreements am I making to bring my core values to my team? What individual agreements am I making to practice these values so that I create a safe space for our young people?

What support would be helpful to me in practicing these values, and whom do I need to talk to?

IDENTIFYING YOUR GROUP'S CORE VALUES

Reflecting on and identifying core values can be a valuable exercise for your group and organization as a whole, as well as for individual members. Roca members reflected on their group's core values and articulated them in writing. We've included their reflections on core values to serve as an inspiration for your group's reflection.

Roca's Core Values

Belonging is grounded in the belief that all young people need to understand that they matter and have a place in the world. It refers to the experience of meaningful connection(s) among individuals, families, and communities. It encompasses the understanding that all people have value, are important, and are worthy of love.

- What we believe:* Every young person counts.
- What we think:* Every young person needs to understand that they have a place in the world and that they matter.
- What we do:* We welcome people, and we bring people together.
- What is the evidence:* Young people show up.

Generosity is grounded in the belief that every young person has a purpose and needs to understand that she or he has something to give. Said somewhat differently, it refers to the development of a sense of purpose and value through giving and receiving, of contributing and experiencing that one's contribution is meaningful.

- What we believe:* Every young person has a purpose.
- What we think:* Every young person needs to understand that they have something to give.
- What we do:* We teach and encourage young people to share and give.
- What is the evidence:* Young people help each other and their communities.

Competence is grounded in the belief that physical, *emotional*, *mental*, and *spiritual* development is important for all people. Acquiring competence means being able to make positive choices, learn skills, share them and teach them, and meet and overcome challenges (and, in the spirit of generosity, help others to do so).

- What we believe:* Physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development is important for all people.
- What we think:* Every young person has the capacity to learn and to make positive choices.
- What we do:* "Each one teach one." – Young people learn skills, share them, and teach them.
- What is the evidence:* Young people move from point A to point B in their lives – young people participate in and improve their lives in the areas of education, employment, and life skills.

Independence refers to the ability to articulate a vision of one’s life and have the competence to undertake what is necessary to achieve it. It involves the qualities of commitment, responsibility, determination, leadership, and accountability – and requires emotional strength to face obstacles, collaborate with others, create realistic plans, and take concrete actions toward achieving one’s vision. Fundamentally, it means **having the capacity to become self-sufficient and live out of harm’s way.**

- What we believe:* Every young person has the capacity to live out of harm’s way and become self-sufficient.
- What we think:* Changing and growing up are part of a life-long process.
- What we do:* We help people develop and act on growth plans, have visions for their lives, and be hopeful for their futures.
- What is the evidence:* Young people graduate from Roca programs, youth can demonstrate a commitment to their own growth, and young adults are on the path to employment.