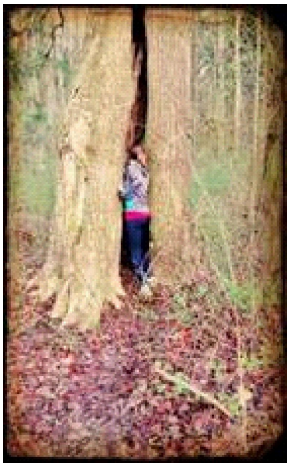
Step 2: Know Your Roots: Growing from Your Values



"A tree with strong roots laughs at storms." -Malay Proverb

"There are two gifts we should give our children; one is roots and the other is wings." -Anonymous

Tools: Mindfulness, Reflection, Responsibility

Objectives:

- To uncover one's own personal values
- Examine how these values make up who we are and help us grow
- Review the role that our conscience and morals play

Definition:

Values are deeply held beliefs, principles, and constructs that influence our decisions and guide our lives. They may be conscious or subconscious, nevertheless intertwining with our personal self. Our values impact our relationships, lifestyle, work, and how we show up in the world.

F**urther Explanation**:

To rephrase slightly, values are the center of who a person is and tie deeply in with one's morals and conscience. When intact, values keep us grounded like the roots of a tree. The deeper our roots, the stronger we become and the higher we can grow.

Most of us developed our values in childhood from parents, religious groups, schools or friends. If we weren't around people with good values, we may have had to weed them out as we grew up. On the other hand, we may have picked up some not-so-great values ourselves growing up, and

they may still be clinging to us, weakening our true selves and suffocating our lives.

This is where self-reflection comes into play. If everyone takes time to look at their beliefs and what truly matters to them and why, we can rid ourselves of any negative things we picked up on, and continue to blossom in a positive direction.

Summary:

In order to grow high and full, extending all our branches, we must first know and deepen our roots, or personal values. When we obtain that deeply-rooted understanding of our values, that understanding can serve as a guide on how to live our lives and make the choices that are right for us. In difficult times, this helps ensure that we will always stay in line with who we truly are. We can always stand tall with whatever important life decisions we make, because we know that decision came from our very core. I'm not saying everything will always work out the way we want it to, but knowing we made the right choice for us, at that time, can keep us from looking back with guilt or shame (two very unnecessary and unhelpful emotions!). *2025 Note: In therapy, I view shame and guilt as protection mechanisms.

Picture a tree with shallow roots in a flood. It easily gets swept away by the raging water. Then picture a tree with roots that go deep into the ground. When the flood passes, it is still there, just as strong as before.

Adventure Meditation:

On one of your runs this week where you have a little extra time, either take your journal or a piece of paper and a pencil along with you in your pack, or have the items ready in your car. Run the given mileage, either returning back to your car or or until you find a strong, sturdy, beautiful tree that speaks to you on your route.

Spend a few minutes sketching the tree in your journal, leaving space at the bottom for later on. It doesn't have to be perfect!

J**ournal Questions:**

Part 1:

- What is the first thing you see on the tree?
- What part(s) of the tree don't you see?
- How is this tree comparable with a human? How is the tree like

you?

Part 2:

- What does a tree need to grow?
- What do you need to grow? How can you feed your roots?

Part 3:

- Why is understanding and strengthening your values important? How can your values help you grow?
- What are your values?

(If you need some help, click on the following link for Brene Brown's list of values: https://brenebrown.com/resources/dare-to-lead-list-of-values/)

Finally, finish the sketch of the tree by putting your personal values at the bottom as its roots, and hanging it up where you can be reminded of it often.

*I know some of these questions seem very basic, but if you play with them metaphorically, you can go quite deep with this work.

