

**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 Used: Mindfulness, Reflection, Responsibility

Objectives:

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

Definition (provided by suite101.com):

Values are deeply held beliefs that guide our behaviors and decisions. They reside deeply within the subconscious and are tightly integrated into the fabric of everyday living. We make decisions and choose behaviors, friends, employment, and entertainment based, in large part, on our values.

<http://suite101.com/article/development-of-personal-values-a33585>

Further Explanation: To rephrase in my own words, values are the center of who a person is and tie deeply in with one's morals and conscience. When intact, they keep us grounded like

roots of a tree. The deeper our roots, or values, 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 as we grew up and they are still 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 grow fully 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 have a full understanding of what our values are, we have a guide in how to live our lives and the choices we make. In difficult times, this helps ensure that we will always stay in line with who we truly are. Therefore, 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 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 ever looking back with guilt or shame (two very unnecessary and unhelpful emotions!).

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 still there, just as strong as before.

Adventure Meditation:

On this hike, take your journal or a piece of paper and a pencil along with you. Hike as long as you want or until you find a strong, sturdy, beautiful tree that speaks to you.

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!

Questions to ask:

1)

- - What is the first thing you see on the tree? (leaves, branches, bark)
- -What part of the tree don't you see? (Roots)

- -How is this tree like a person? How is the tree like you? (We first see each other physically- face, skin, hair, body, clothes, etc. Until we get to know someone, we don't know his/her inner, spiritual selves. We don't know her personality, her values, what she believes, or what she thinks. Our values are like the roots of a tree, because it is from our values that we grow as humans.)

2)

- What does a tree need to grow? (Sun, rain, nutrients in soil)
- What do you need to grow (in mind and spirit)? How can you feed your roots? (Spending time with people who have similar values, activities/hobbies we take part in, lectures we attend, books we read, etc.)

3) Why is understanding and strengthening your values important? How can your values help you grow?

4) What are your values?

(If you need some help, click on the following link:<http://www.mypersonalimprovement.com/personalcorevalues.shtml>. It lists over 400 values!)

Finally, finish the sketch of the tree by putting your personal values at the bottom as its roots.

