

Story Work Healing Intensive

Additional Resources for Personal Values Work

The following resources will support you in gaining insights on your values, which—as we discussed in Week Three—are integral to our healing story work. Having clarity around your values and how they’ve shaped your experiences, both past and present, can reveal new possibilities and narratives, helping you reconnect with your creative power.

Personal values are also known as:

- Personal convictions
- Guiding principles
- Core beliefs
- Inner priorities

Personal values are important because:

- They clarify what matters to us
- They fuel our motivation and sense of purpose
- They help us make decisions that are in line with our authenticity
- They shape our creative vision

There are various creative ways to discover and refresh your values. The Peaks and Valleys exercise from Week Three is one method. Read on for a few more.

List of Values

When I am looking for examples of values, I often refer clients to [this list by Brené Brown](#).

From the website:

Living into our values means that we do more than profess our values, we practice them. We walk our talk—we are clear about what we believe and hold important, and we take care that our intentions, words, thoughts, and behaviors align with those beliefs.

Authentic vs Artificial Needs

One way to explore our values is through the lens of authentic and artificial needs.

When we satisfy our **authentic needs**, we feed our souls and put ourselves in alignment with our inner power. Authentic needs are the **concepts, habits, and practices** that reflect and uphold our core values. Authentic needs are expressed as how we act on our values.

Alternatively, an **artificial need** is something you desire to satisfy your ego. If it has anything to do with acceptance, validation, reward, or external power of any kind, it is an artificial need. We experience inner conflicts, creative blocks, and short-lived satisfaction when we try to create with artificial needs in mind.

You can experiment with this concept by thinking about your creative callings.

For example:

Some of my values include **creative expression, learning, and community**. These are a few of the key elements that I build my personal and professional life around. In the table below, I am sharing both authentic and artificial needs that spring from these values.

Keep in mind that there is nothing objectively wrong with artificial needs, but they are invitations to go deeper. When we don't seek the authentic need that they point to, we are tapping into a limited source of motivation that can lead us astray.

Authentic needs (long-term fulfillment)	Artificial needs (short-lived satisfaction)
Writing for self-discovery and sharing my story for personal and collective healing	Writing with a fixation on attention, rewards, and recognition
Taking classes and furthering my education to feed my curiosity to learn and to serve with what I learn	Getting degrees and certifications to add labels to my name and feel more accomplished
Leading and being a part of various communities	Wanting to be part of a group that I think will give me validation or worthiness by association

What values are central to your creative work? What authentic and artificial needs come to mind when you think about these values?

[Connective Threads: Core Values Through a Creative Lens](#)

This is a workshop series that I started this year in my writing community. This resource is most helpful if you want to explore your values in connection to your creative expression. Part One includes an enlightening exercise for identifying the values as well as the interests, gifts, and challenges that influence your creative work.

In this workshop, participants are prompted to identify their core values, interests, gifts, and challenges through questions and exercises. The prompts for discovering your values include:

- Think about peaks and valleys in your lifetime. What made the highs high and the lows low?
- Who are your heroes? Living or dead, fictional or real, who do you look up to and/or connect with? What are the qualities you admire in them?
- What tugs at your heartstrings and motivates you to take action?
- What is your most common disagreement? When you're with your friends, family, or strangers, what topic gets your blood boiling and launches a debate?
- What do you consider to be your biggest flaws, and why do you feel that way? What problems in the world bother you the most? Why? (When we ask ourselves why, we can find the value behind the feeling.)

After reflecting on these and other questions, participants are then asked to connect these personal elements to their creative endeavors, using them as a guide for idea generation, project development, and finding their unique voice.

Part Two of the guide includes examples and templates to help participants apply the "connective threads" concept to their creative projects, both specific and overarching. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing patterns, motivations, and translating inner experiences into external creative outputs. This part also highlights the distinction between themes (universal ideas) and topics (specific events or situations) in creative work and encourages participants to explore both in their projects.