



INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

Week 41 Transcript: Aspirational vs Actual Values

This week, we continue our exploration of values and take a look at the distinction between our aspirational values and our actual values. Our personal set of values aren't the things we believe we should value, rather they are the things we actually do value that we reflect in our day-to-day actions and interactions.

It's absolutely essential to be driven from a clear set of values and defining our values has become very popular these days. Go to any personal or business development workshop and you'll leave with a glossy list of core values.

But, just because we circled the "right words" on a list of values doesn't mean we are creating habits to support them. And, it doesn't even mean we actually value those things we circled.

We may just believe we should value them from the influence of culture, experience, family or religion. This is what creates a wide gap between what we say we value and how we are actually living.

That's why we need to make a distinction between our aspirational values and our actual values. Aspirational values are what we want to be true about what's most important to us. Actual values are, well, what our actual life expresses is most important to us.

In business, you'll see this example a lot. Oftentimes, you'll find "cutting edge innovation" among the corporations list of aspirational values.

Yet, when they hire a pioneering mover and shaker who comes in and starts to mix things up, their resistance to change reveals they don't actually value "cutting edge innovation" at all. But, it sure does look good on paper.

In our own lives this can be true. If we say we value family, but never spend time with them, it's necessary to get honest about what is actually important to us.

When we find this dissonance between our aspirational value and our actual value, we must ask two questions:



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Honestly, do I actually value this or do I feel that I should?

And, if it is something I truly value, what is getting in the way of me living in alignment with it?

Sometimes we need to acknowledge that we don't actually value the thing we say we do and let that expectation go so we can discover what is, in fact, important to us.

And, other times we really do hold our value in high regard, we've just let life and fear and busyness (or whatever) get in the way of us honoring it.

Here's the good news: our habits determine our values. If we are in a habit of living in a way that doesn't line up with what is most important in our lives, we can do something about it. We can always develop new habits.

Lining up our lives with the things that are most important to us is a process. First we clarify what we value and then we close the gap between how we're living now and how we want to live. Closing this gap is the pathway to create satisfaction, fulfillment and purpose in our lives.

This week we're going to pick one value we want to live more fully, identify what's holding us back and make a plan to practice the habits that will cultivate more integrity with this value. Be sure to download the action guide to support this process and share what you are learning on our group page.