



ETHOS- CORE VALUES

Welcome to this Module.

Ethos- What are your Core Values?

Core personal values are guiding principles that dictate who we are and the distinct qualities we wish to live our life by. It is our Ethos. Values are connected with our beliefs and convictions that accompany most everything that we do in our life and lead us to the corresponding behavior and action. Businesses, companies, and people all have these values which they aspire to abide by. As a result, values also form the core of our personal mission statement. In this Module we will explore how conscious, are we about what those values are and how true we are in practicing them

Why are values important?

Values are the essence of who we are- our unique identity, our brand- our quality as leaders. Values are the principles that we hold to be of worth in our life and the prism through which we see it. Often, our Values are not chosen, they come from our family, other people's opinions, ideologies and ideas in which we live or grew up in and of course, our past experiences. Whether we experience them consciously or unconsciously, they definitely form who we presently are.

It is important to recognize what our core-values are, in order create the kind of life that is most meaningful to us. This means identifying our present values and tweaking or adjusting them to what we really want. We can choose to change our values if they no longer serve us. In other words, we can re-define ourselves.

Our values can also strengthen over time and become our life habits. This is another reason why we need to check our personal core values to see if they still have meaning to us.

Values have an effect on us emotionally. When the things that we do and the way we behave match our values, life is usually good – we feel satisfied and fulfilled. But when what we do does not align with our personal values, we may feel fear, guilt, frustrated, unstable, weak, disorientated -even sickness may arise. We intuitively feel 'off' or 'not right' about an action or outcome. Sometimes we may try to ignore, avoid or suppress this 'off' feeling and try to continue on as if there is nothing wrong.

Our core values influence every aspect of our life and determine how we handle life's challenges. When we know what we value most, we can begin to align everything with those values. Choosing and abiding by our core-values is the first steps becoming the charioteer in our life. Without clear values it will be difficult to plan and effectively create or achieve the life we want, let alone drive our chariot.

Get in touch with your present set of values to get to know you are. While there are hundreds of different values which we may be flirting with and aspire to, we live our life according to 6-8 key values. In this Module we will explore what these values are and are see they serving us well. People sometimes become inspired by noble ideals, or public opinion of what is ethical and claim them as their own. It is critical to develop our own set of principles and morals, based on who we authentically are and what makes us most happy. This way we can stand firm in what we consciously believe and ground ourselves in our own individual Ethos.

Values can help us clarify and simplify our life strengthening our conviction, beyond fear and indecision. If a person knows what their core-values are, they can use them to accurately assess their actions and behavior. Values are like a compass, always pointing North, which is how personal values work. Where is your North?

In defining our core-values our life becomes simple. We can make decisions around them- honoring and acting upon them. They act like central ruling axis from where our life revolves. This then becomes philosopher's 'metron', the unit of measure, upon which we base our life and course of action.

The result will be, creating personal integrity- our Ethos. Aristotle's system of influence and persuasion on Ethos/Pathos/ Logos depends on the integrity and consistency of the leader. Our integrity and alignment is one of the most valuable qualities we will possess in leading our life and leading others. Here is a simple way to see how our Ethos and our core value work.

Let us take an example of how core-values work. If you don't value competition as a way of life, and you work in a highly competitive professional environment, you are likely to be unsatisfied with your job. If family is one of your core values, but you have to work 80-hour weeks in our job, you are likely to feel internal conflict and stress. Inner conflict and stress are two firm indicators we are not aligned with our core-values.

In these types of situations, referring to or reviewing your core values can really clarify if you are to keep a job or decide to move on. When you know your own values, you can use them to make decisions and have the courage to make changes. Core-values also put our fear into perspective. Sometimes they completely erase it. Things become clearer on life's confusing questions like:

- What career should I pursue?
- Shall I explore alternative methods to my cancer or shall I operate?
- Should I compromise with this firm's way of doing things?
- Should I accept this promotion?
- Should I marry this person or not?
- How will I teach my children right from wrong?
- Do I buy this product or not?

To be Self-aligned and live strongly, we must live and act by our values. Our thoughts also become products of our values. Our values help shape our thoughts and then we play out these thoughts through our actions. This is done both consciously and subconsciously. To build a stronger structure and create an ideal life and business, it is really important to know what our inner foundations are. If your core values are also in the core of your mission statement, then things clarify even further.