

# Your Values: Who Are You?

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This isn't a matter of right or wrong answers, but ways of looking at the world and your place in it. It's vital to know yourself (who you are and who you would like to become) if you are making choices about the direction, content, and quality of your life.

- You are in the process of figuring out who you are, who you want to be, and the kind of life you want to live. What matters most to you? Whom do you know who lives a life that you would like to emulate? Consider what it is about that life that appeals to you, along with the priorities of the people you admire. Then start strategizing how to get yourself there.
- *Money* is a practical reality: everyone needs it, but the emphasis and *value* that people give it varies enormously. For some people it is a means to an end (stability, comfort, opportunity) while for others it is something that provides status, prestige, expensive extras designed to impress. Consider what it means to *you*.
- *Work ethic* matters tremendously to some people, defining their character, level of responsibility, and maturity. Others would just as soon not work any harder than they have to in order to accomplish their goal. Would you mind working long hard hours with adequate pay, mostly for the satisfaction of doing a good job? Or would you need a big paycheck or some kind of social status to justify that effort?
- *Conscience* is something people hear about from the time they are young children. How much does your conscience dictate what you do in life? If the gains are big enough, would you compromise your principles? If so, would you feel any twinges of conscience or would you believe that you were justified? If your answer is "It depends," then what does it depend on?
- *Making a contribution to the community* is important to many people. Does it matter to you? As long as you take good care of your immediate family and you are doing no actual harm to anyone, does helping the larger community really matter?

Do any of your answers surprise you or please you? In what ways? Do you notice a pattern in the kinds of things you value? The point of these questions is to get you thinking about what motivates you and gives meaning to your life. Any big decision should certainly be grounded in what you believe is important. So look at your answers and ask yourself if you like what they suggest about you, and to what extent they could influence your college experience and life as a whole.