**Reflecting on Your Life Priorities**



**Introduction**

Taking a moment to reflect and write down your life goals or priorities can help you gain perspective about your current journey in your academic, professional, and personal life. In this exercise, you will record, sort, and prioritize your life goals. You will also have an opportunity to reflect on your findings and think about how these goals are connected to your experience of this course.

**For this exercise, you will need:**

* Pieces of paper; index cards or post-it notes work well for this activity.
* A pen or pencil

**Step 1: Identifying Your Priorities & Goals**

On the pieces of paper, write down the aspects of your life you value most deeply, along with any future goals that you want to achieve in your life. Try to write at least 15 of these priorities – putting one on each piece of paper.

Some examples could include:

* family
* pursuing my art
* work/ life balance
* high salary
* comfortable lifestyle
* having my own family
* fundraising for cancer
* mentoring kids
* having animals in my life
* travelling extensively
* protecting the environment
* running a marathon.

Spread the pieces of paper out in front of you and read them over.

**Step 2: Selecting Your Most Important Priorities**

Now, if you had to give up five of these, which ones could you give up most easily? Set these aside.

Review your remaining priorities. Some of these may conflict with each other. E.g., travelling extensively may be difficult to do with having a family.

* How could you reconcile these?
* Is one more important than the other?
* Which could you give up most easily?
* Is there another way to resolve this?

E.g., you might place different priorities for various times in your life or having a high salary might enable you to take your family with you when you travel?

When you’ve done this, choose the values and goals you think will be most important to you over the next five years and set the others aside for now.

**Step 3: Rank Order Your Priorities**

Look at your top five life priorities and place these in order of importance. Enter your list here:

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**Step 4: Reflect**

Now that you’ve identified what, at this point in your life, you anticipate as being your top five life priorities for the next five years of your life, think about how these might intersect with this course and your degree.

Ask yourself:

* How do my current studies align with my life priorities/goals?
* Are there potential clashes?
* Is there anything that feels like it doesn’t fit?
* What am I enjoying in my courses that seems ‘disconnected’ from my greatest priorities?
* Why doesn’t it fit?
* What does this suggest about what may be missing from your top five list?
* Would you like to revise your list?

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***If you have done this exercise before:***

If you have done this exercise in another class, go back to what you wrote before and compare it to your responses this time. Have you realized anything of importance to you since you last completed this? What do you need to add to your top five? Is there any you would demote to a lower tier? Is there anything from your original list that should now be in your top five?

**Export your Goals:**

Take a photo of your original index cards or post-it notes in case you want to re-examine at another time! Otherwise, you will be able to export a document of your goals, goals assessments and reflections here.