

Activity 1.6 Understanding Values in Context

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Description

This activity highlights how the ordering of values can change according to context. Often, discussion groups are not in conflict over the existence of specific values, but they are in tension about how these values are ordered differently for different discussants.

Learning Goals

- Understand how we rank and order values based on the context or issue.
- Understand that we sometimes have very different interpretations of a value.

Instructions (45 minutes)

<p>Set Up</p>	<p>Prepare for the Activity</p> <p>As the facilitator, select approximately ten values. Each value will be written on a slip of paper. Provide each participant with a set of common values written on small slips of paper. Sample values include: Security, Community, Prosperity, Responsibility, Inclusion, Equality, Tradition, Opportunity, Justice, Freedom, Innovation.</p> <p>The facilitator should select values that are relevant for the discussion group.</p> <p>Begin by introducing the learning goals of this activity.</p>	
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¹ **Citation for this activity:** Lori Britt (2023), adaptation of Martin Carcasson's Understanding Values in Context. In Hartman and Byrd (Eds), The Interactivity Foundation Collaborative Discussion Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://www.collaborativediscussionproject.com/activities/module-1>

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<p>Step One</p>	<p>Individually Identify and Rank Top 5 Values</p> <p>Distribute the sets of values to each participant. Ask them to rank these values by moving around the slips of paper. Their most important values should be at the top. Ask them to identify their top five values. They will use these five slips of paper for the next steps of this activity.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p>Share and Define Values</p> <p>Ask volunteers to name their top values. Once a few participants have shared their top values and some common themes emerge, invite participants to discuss how they defined these values. This can be done in small groups, if needed. The goal is to acknowledge that common values are often interpreted differently.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>Rank and Define Values in Response to Particular Issues</p> <p>The facilitator will introduce a series of issues, such as: Gun Legislation, Loan Forgiveness, Vaccination, the Death Penalty.</p> <p>For each topic, ask participants to re-sort their values. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did your top values shift? When? Why? • Did you reinterpret what any of the values meant in the context of a particular issue? 	<p>20 min</p>
<p>Step Four</p>	<p>Debrief as a Full Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can understanding that many people share similar values but prioritize them differently help us work together in groups? • How might collaborative groups explore and find common values? 	<p>10 min</p>

Reflection Journal

- Where do values come from? How are they shaped? From whom and how did you learn your values? How was this shown or expressed to you?
- Are there any values that you were taught but you now reject or find less important? What influenced this change of values?

Practice Journal

This week, reflect on your values and how they shape your behaviors and actions. Describe an action that you did this week and how it was informed by your values. If you had different values, how might this action have been done differently?

Dive Deeper: Additional Resources

- [Ben Franklin Circles \(13 Virtues\)](#): *Ben Franklin Circles*. Ben Franklin Circles, benfranklincircles.org. Accessed 25 Aug 2023.
- [Aristotle's Ethics in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#): Kraut, Richard. "Aristotle's Ethics." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman, Fall 2022, The Metaphysics Research Lab, 1 May 2001, plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2022/entries/aristotle-ethics/. Accessed 25 Aug. 2023.

Activity Cluster

[1.5 The Role of Values in Collaborative Discussion](#)

1.6 Understanding Values in Context

[2.2 Embracing Contradictions](#)