

VALUES CARD EXERCISE

Step 1: Find some activity or relationship in your life that you value, but tend to avoid. Maybe it's a relationship you care about deeply, but in which you've been less engaged and distant. Maybe it's an activity you care about, but you aren't taking much action on.

Step 2: Now take out an index card or piece of paper. On one side, write down what you value in that relationship or area of living. Who do you really want to be to that individual? What are some descriptors of how you would like to be in that area of your life? Now turn the card over. On the other side, write down what difficult internal experiences might show up for you when you start taking action toward that value.

For example, one of Kate's cards might look like this:

FRONT OF CARD	BACK OF CARD
<p>DOMAIN: Family/Relationships</p> <p>Values: Loyalty, Community, Fun, Honesty</p>	<p>Pain: <u>Thoughts:</u> <i>It's too hard to see couples together. Why can't that be me? What if I cry?</i></p> <p><u>Feelings:</u> Sadness, Confusion, Fear</p> <p><u>Sensations:</u> pit in stomach, restless, dull</p> <p><u>Urges:</u> be alone, make an excuse to leave</p>

Step 3: Now take that card and put it in your pocket, wallet, or purse. For the next week, take it out and ask yourself: "Am I willing to have that card, both sides of it, in its totality or would I choose to walk away from it?" Because, it's a package deal, you can't have one side without the other.

Values are freely chosen; we get to decide whether we will pick up the card. What we don't get to choose is what's on the other side of the card. Those things just come along for the ride.