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## **Chapter 6 Getting Our Values on Track**

### **MWO 6 Roster**

- 6-1 A Value Conflict Assessment Inventory
- 6-2 What Do We Value?
- 6-3 Determining Our Priorities
- 6-4 How They Affect Us
- 6-5 How are We Value-Programmed?
- 6-6 Follow-up Work-Out Plans for Getting Our Values On Track

### **Prologue**

• • • Joshua Durite is a corporate man, devoted to the pursuit of excellence in his career. Lois Durite is the "volunteer's volunteer," committed to the betterment of mankind in her church and civic club activities. They do not share each other's concerns about the welfare and future directions of society. They resent each other's viewpoints and have little tolerance for each other's opinions • • •

Identifying values and beliefs involved in your relationship is the goal of the exercises in this chapter. Tolerance and openness to the other's opinions, beliefs and values is often lacking in troubled relationships. Taking the time to clarify individual and mutually held values is a way of ensuring an orientation to a successful Marriage Work-Out.

## 6-1 Values Conflict Assessment Inventory

When you two first became partners in marriage, you chose definitions of each of your roles within the relationship. Today your definitions for your roles might be different from when you married. The following are 30 beliefs about the role of spouses in marriage. Read each belief. For each statement you believed in before you got married, put a check on the line under the **Then** column. Now go back and reread the beliefs and for each statement you presently believe put a check on the line under the **Now** column. Do this task independently first. Score your ratings and then compare your results with your partner.

Then	Now	<b>Spouse Role Belief Checklist</b>
		1. The husband should earn the living
		2. The wife should not work outside the home
		3. Both husband and wife should be wage earners
		4. The husband should manage the money since he earns it
		5. The wife should manage the money since she has more time
		6. The one who is best at managing money should take care of paying the bills and budgeting the money
		7. When people are angry, they should say so and also say what it is that is angering them
		8. When people are angry, it is better to keep quiet and cool down
		9. Angry words by partners undermine a love relationship
		10. Sometimes it is good to do things independently from one another
		11. Couples should always try to do things together
		12. It is not the man's place to vacuum, iron, clean the bathroom, or do the laundry
		13. The husband should take care of the yard and the wife should take care of the house and cooking
		14. Household responsibilities should be shared equally and assigned intentionally
		15. A home that is untidy is comfortable
		16. A home should be neat and clean all or most of the time
		17. Personal appearance around the house isn't very important
		18. It is important that couples live their religious faith in a similar way
		19. It doesn't matter if one person in a marriage is less interested in religion than the other.
		20. It is better not to go to church. Too much institutional religion is hypocritical
		21. Families should go to church together
		22. It is important to contribute regularly to the church

		23. Marriage without children can be as satisfying as one with children
		24. It is good for a couple to get away from the children occasionally in order to have a day or two just for themselves
		25. Fathers should do as much parenting as mothers
		26. Husbands should not be with their wives during child delivery
		27. Families should have a schedule and members should keep to the schedule
		28. Members of a family should ordinarily tell others where they are going and when they will return
		29. Marriage partners should belong to the same political party
		30. It doesn't matter if one marital partner is a "liberal" and the other is a "conservative" in social and political outlook

To obtain your score on this inventory, add up the number of beliefs for which you have only one check in either the **Now** or **Then** column. Do not count a belief if you have a check under both columns for it.

My individual score is: \_\_\_\_\_  
 My Partner's individual score is: \_\_\_\_\_

Your score is the number of spouse role beliefs which you have changed since getting married. The ratings are as follows for both scores:

Individual Score	Rating	Interpretation
0-3	Outstanding	You are experiencing little turmoil of conflicting values or beliefs personally within yourself.
4-8	Good	You personally have gone through a lot of changes since you first married. You have challenged your initial beliefs and values and experienced some conflict inside yourself in the process.
9 or more	Fair	You are still identifying within yourself areas of previous belief or values which are in conflict with your current reality and beliefs and values. You are experiencing some internal tension this conflict creates.

### Suggested Discussion Questions

1. How have our beliefs about spouse roles differed from when we first dated?
2. How have these beliefs interfered in our marital health?
3. What do these beliefs say about our values?

4. How have our religion(s) affected our values?
5. How have our values about marriage been influenced by the education we have received?
6. What impact on our marriage is the internal value conflict we are currently experiencing?
7. How important is it that our values be similar to one another's?
8. How do we handle our different beliefs and values in our marriage?
9. How comfortable are we in discussions about our values or beliefs and the impact they have on our married life?
10. How have our family backgrounds affected our values and beliefs around marriage?

**In your Journal Record Your Personal Notes on this Exercise**

### 6-2 What Do We Value?

Read the list below. This is not a semantics exercise, so feel free to cross out the descriptive words in parentheses that have no meaning to your personal definition of the term capitalized. Insert others if you wish. Check each item's level of importance to you at this time and place in your life. After completing the ratings, pick out and list in the spaces provided the five (5) items which are most important to you, and the five (5) items that are least important to you.

Compare your top five (5) and bottom five (5) lists with your partner.

Value	Not too Important	Important	Very Important
<b>Adventure:</b> Exploration, risks, danger, doing something new and/or untried			
<b>Beauty:</b> In the arts and nature and being able to share it with others			
<b>Emotional Well Being:</b> Ability to recognize and handle inner conflicts			
<b>Ethical Life:</b> Responsible. living towards self and others, personal honor, integrity			
<b>Family Happiness:</b> Mutual caring among family members			

<b>Forgiveness:</b> Being willing to pardon others, bearing no grudges			
<b>Honesty:</b> Being frank and genuinely yourself with everyone			
<b>Law and Order:</b> Respect for authority and property of others			
<b>Love:</b> Warmth, caring, giving and receiving of respect and affection			
<b>Meaningful Work:</b> Sense of purpose, doing something that is relevant			
<b>Money:</b> Enough of money for things you need and want in life			
<b>Personal Freedom:</b> Independence, making one's own choices			
<b>Personal Power:</b> Having influence and authority over others			
<b>Physical Appearance:</b> Attractiveness, neat, clean, well groomed`			
<b>Pleasure:</b> Excitement, satisfaction, fun, joy, exhilaration			
<b>Recognition:</b> Being important, being well-liked, being accepted			
<b>Religion:</b> Religious belief, relationship with God (Higher Power), meaning of life			
<b>Service:</b> Devotion to the interests of others though volunteer activities or financial donations			
<b>Skill:</b> Being good at doing something important to me and//or to others			
<b>Wisdom:</b> Mature understanding, insight, application of knowledge			

<b>My Top Five Values</b>	<b>My Bottom Five Values</b>
<b>My Partner's Top Five Values</b>	<b>My Partner's Bottom Five Values</b>


### **Suggested Discussion Questions**

1. How do my Top Five Values compare with your Top Five Values?
2. If any of my Top Five Values are on your Bottom Five Values, what implications for conflict are there?
3. How do we conduct our lives based on our Top Five Values?
4. Is there something on your list which surprised me? If yes; in what ways?
5. What value areas on this inventory do we most frequently have disagreements over?
  1. 6.
  2. 7.
  3. 8.
  4. 9.
  5. 10.

Why do we disagree so frequently over these? Are any of these on your or my Top Five or Bottom Five Values lists? What can we do to reduce our differences in these areas?

**In your Journal Record Your Personal Notes on this Exercise**

### 6-3 Defining Our Priorities

There are thirty-four items listed below. Rank order them from 1 to 34 in terms of their importance to you. If they are highly important they are something which you want to obtain or achieve. If they are low on your list they would be something not desirable for you. Once you complete this, compare your rankings with your spouse's list and record them.

Item	My	Spouse's
1. To rid the world of prejudice		
2. To serve the sick and needy		
3. To become a famous figure (author, politician, businessman, etc.)		
4. A project that will triple our family's income this year		
5. A year of daily massage and the world's finest cuisine from the world's best chef		
6. To know the meaning of life		
7. A vaccine to make all persons incapable of lying		
8. The opportunity to set my own working conditions		
9. To be the richest person in the world		
10. The Presidency of the United States		
11. To love and be loved by someone very special. to me		
12. A house overlooking the most beautiful view in the world, in which I may keep for one year, 40 of my favorite works of art		
13. To be considered as the most attractive person in our community		
14. To live to 100 years of age with no illness		
15. To know all about me, and know for certain who I am		
16. A center of learning with all the learning aides available for private use		
17. An audience with the spiritual leader, either past or present, which I most admire		
18. To rid the world of unfairness		
19. To donate \$1 million to my favorite charity		
20. To be voted Outstanding Person of the Year and praised in every newspaper in the country.		
21. To master the profession of my choice		
22. A year with nothing to do but enjoy myself, with all needs and desires automatically met		
23. For one year to be the wisest person in the world, and to make only right decisions		
24. To sneak "honesty serum" into every water supply in the		

world		
25. To do my thing, my way, without any hassling		
26. A room full of hundred dollar bills		
27. To control the destinies of 500,000 people		
28. To live in a world where all people gave and received love		
29. Unlimited travel and tickets to attend any concert, play, opera, or ballet for one year		
30. A total makeover: new hair style, all new wardrobe from the designer of my choice, and two weeks at a beauty spa		
31. Membership in a great health club		
32. Anti-hangup pill		
33. My own "know-it-all" computer, for any and all facts I might need to make the right decision in all aspects of my life		
34. To spend six months with the greatest religious figure of my faith, past or present.		

Complete the recording of both of your rank orderings. Once you have done that go back and determine which values you hold highest. Each of the 34 items represent a value, use the key below to do this.

Items	Values Represented
1 & 18	Justice
2 & 19	Altruism
3 & 20	Recognition
4 & 21	Achievement
5 & 22	Pleasure
6 & 23	Wisdom
7 & 24	Honesty
8 & 25	Autonomy
9 & 26	Economic Well-Being
10 & 27	Power
11 & 28	Love
12 & 29	Aesthetics
13 & 30	Physical Attractiveness
14 & 31	Physical Well Being
15 & 32	Emotional Well Being
16 & 33	Knowledge
17 & 34	Religion

List the five (5) values you and your partner hold highest as reflected by both of your five (5) highest priorities you selected. Then list the five values you and your partner hold lowest as reflected by both of your five lowest priorities you both selected.



<b>My Top Five Highest Values</b>	<b>My Partner's Highest Values</b>
<b>My Five Lowest Values</b>	<b>My Partner's lowest Values</b>

Next compare your own and your partner's five Highest and five Lowest on this exercise with the Top Five and Bottom Five on the previous "What Do We Value" exercise, 6-2.

1. How do our choices on this exercise reflect our stated Top Five and Bottom Five values we professed to hold on the previous exercise?

2. What significance do I see in the differences in our responses between the two exercises?

3. How did my lists on this exercise compare to yours?

4. If we were forced to come up with the Top Ten (10) ranked items on which we both agree, they would be

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6.  |
| 2. | 7.  |
| 3. | 8.  |
| 4. | 9.  |
| 5. | 10. |

5. How do our individually held values block our couple communications?

6. How do our value priorities influence our life together for the good and/or for the bad?

7. What steps can we take to address our value differences?

8. How do our mutually held values affect our couple relationship with other couples?

9. What pressure do we as a couple feel to conform to the values of our friends?

10. Why do we tend to play down the importance of values in our married life?

**In your Journal Record Your Personal Notes on this Exercise**

### 6-4 How They Affect Us

Rate the following situations as to how strong your feelings are about them. Then compare your results with your partner's. Check the column for the number of the value of your emotional response most appropriate for you, for each item

Situation	Very Strong	Strong	Mild	I could care less
1. The lady who gave out apples to Halloween trick or treaters with razor blades imbedded in them.				
2. The Halloween pranksters who propped a bottle of dog urine against your door and rang the bell-so that when you opened the door, it spilled all over your new rug				
3. The male college freshmen English teacher who thought that the freshmen female students should be introduced to sex, has made it his mission to seduce as many of them as possible				
4. The girl 's high school physical education teacher who was concerned about the students getting pregnant and therefore gave out birth control pills				
5. The mayor who talked integration in his speeches but belonged to a segregated club				
6. The president of an industry who made sure during the day his furnaces were carefully regulated so that very little visible pollution showed from the smoke stacks, but during the evening when it wouldn't show, he had his furnace run full blast				
7. The two 19 year old boys whose idea of fun on a Saturday night was to go downtown and find a "queer" and punch him up				
8. The teenagers who at 3:00 a.m. had a drag race with the squealing of tires in front of your house. Then they came back around the block and repeated the procedure				
9. The high school student who was a "pot missionary." He tried to convince others to use pot because he sincerely thought that it was the way to go, He was not interested in making money, in fact, in many cases, he gave it away,				

because he thought it was really good for people				
10. The first grade teacher who had a youngster who appeared in class for the third time without his homework done. She was so perturbed that she smacked him across the face				
11. The father who walked into his teenage son's room and caught him masturbating. He became very angry and really chewed out the son and took away the use of the car, etc.				
12. The doctor who made \$600,000 per year and declared \$300,000 on her income tax				
13. The neighbor who reported this doctor to the IRS				
14. A married couple looked for excitement joined a mate swapping club				
15. The girls' high school physical education teacher who was concerned about population growth and vocally supported legalized abortion				
16. A financially successful bachelor in his thirties found American women too aggressive and independent; therefore, he took a trip to Europe to find a sweet old-fashioned girl				
17. John Smith had it with his neighbors. He proceeded to build a very high fence which isolated him from the neighborhood				
18. The politician who had his television tapes edited differently in different parts of the country so that the real meaning was distorted				
19. The high school math teacher who believed in shedding hypocrisy and joined a local nudist colony				
20. The school board member who was in favor of busing students for integration purposes but joined a segregated private club				
21. A mother who scalded her baby but the child was treated 72 hours later at a hospital				
22. A rapist was killed by the victim and the victim was jailed three years for manslaughter				
23. A school counselor assisted any black student get an abortion who requested one				

24. A criminally insane man was given an experimental drug at the court's direction				
25. A priest was relieved of his parish duties because he allowed female priests to preach and give communion				
26. The plug was pulled from a life-saving respirator of a mentally handicapped Mexican child who had been on life support for three years				
27. A known child molester in your town had just been acquitted for the third time for molesting a child due to insufficient evidence				
28. A special education teacher placed students who were behavior problems in a coffin as punishment				
29. A policeman shot a nine year old child in the back as the child was running away from him				
30. A famous actor announces that he is dying from AIDS				

Now that you have rated these thirty situations, choose the top five situations that you feel most strongly about and list them in rank order.

**My Ranking of the Top Five Situations**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**My Partner's Ranking of the Top Five Situations**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Suggested Discussion Questions**

1. What do both of our top five have in common?
2. What values are most involved in our top five situations?
3. What does this say about your or my primary value orientation?

4. Would our lists have been different five years ago?
5. Would our lists have been different ten years ago?
6. Was my list similar to what you expected it to be?
7. How strongly do we both feel about our values?
8. Why is it easy to recognize our values when the situations are so exaggerated?
9. How easy is it to practice our common held value beliefs and convictions in real life?
10. How willing are we to openly speak up when we witness something which is offensive to our belief systems?

**In your Journal Record Your Personal Notes on this Exercise**

## 6-5 How are We Value Programmed?

Sociologists have held to the belief in what is called “values programming.” Values they say are programmed into each generation while they grow up. In this value programming we can see the basis for many of our current reactions to our family, friends, jobs, world events, etc. This belief posits four categories of values programming. They are:

- **Traditionalists:** grew up in or were value programmed in the values of the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's
- **In-Betweeners:** grew up in or were value programmed in the values of the late 1940's and early 1950's
- **Challengers:** people most influenced by the values of the mid 1950's through the early 1970's
- **Synthesizers:** most influenced by the values emerging from the 1970's to present

The following are descriptors of these four value programming orientations. Read the descriptors and check only those which describe you best. Then check those that best describe your partner.

Descriptors	Me	Partner
1. One must give an honest day's work for a day's pay		
2. Open acceptance of an authority figure's direction and authority		
3. Institutions are more important than the people who comprise the institution		
4. Places importance in people working together and being a member of a group and seeks approval of such groups.		
5. Holds to the belief that "The Family that Prays Together Stays Together"		
6. Fathers are the central authority figures in families, they are the primary breadwinner and the family is financially dependent on him.		
7. Holds to the belief in a prescribed way for people to relate in social situations using much formality and etiquette.		
8. Holds a restrained and regimented approach to life reinforced by religious dogma, social taboos, lack of sex education and austere work ethic.		
9. Values a social order with everybody in her/his place but "looks the other way" at bias and prejudice.		
10. Dominated by the need to work hard and build a better life with a need for stability and reluctant to alter the status quo.		
11. Purchases a number of "answer" books of the self-help		

type: how to find yourself, how to be happy, etc.		
12. Accepts the importance of group efforts but also feels that individual rights and needs must be taken into account.		
13. Recognizes authority, but seeks participation in the decision making process.		
14. Raises questions about decisions and directions, not in direct defiance, but rather to examine the rationale.		
15. Believes "rules" have a basis in reason, but may defy strict dress codes, in an expression of individuality within boundaries.		
16. Swings between formality and informality in all aspects of life.		
17. Struggles between personal responsibility and personal freedom.		
18. Frequently struggles with sexual freedom.		
19. Attempts to understand the values of those who are younger.		
20. Shifts between conformity on the job to individual expression in personal life.		
21. Uses embarrassing questions like "why" and demands better answers than "That's the way we have always done it," or "We have never done that before."		
22. Places emphasis on personal psychological satisfaction emphasizing equality, happiness, fulfillment, creativity and communication.		
23. Holds to the belief in self as a unique individual.		
24. Demands acceptance of self - based on own merit rather than depending on membership in a group.		
25. Does not accept conformity to group demands, standards, rules and regulations unless such conformity coincides with personal goals.		
26. Frequently doesn't care what other people think.		
27. Displays little conformity in dress, behavior, and leisure.		
28. Pays little allegiance to the company, the organization, or the nation.		
29. Rejects the notion of "sticking it out" and very accepting of the concept of divorce and re-marriage.		
30. Expects and demands participation in family and job decisions so as to achieve emotional security, a feeling good about self, and fun and pleasure in what is being done.		
31. Tends to be skeptical of others' belief systems.		
32. Concerned but relatively pessimistic about future so tends to be conservative in approach.		

33. Recognizes the reality of shrinking resources, rising energy costs and out-of-control inflation and sees the world's resources declining in a quantitative sense.		
34. Although has hope that quality of life will improve, sees signals that a new "restricted" life style is inevitable.		
35. Recognizes that contemporary problems are complex and that simplistic solutions and techniques are not the answer.		
36. Believes that the system is part of the problem since it created the current situation.		
37. Sees a need to use the best of old techniques and then use the best of new techniques and apply them to all demands of today's world.		
38. Although fashionable, reverts to more conservative modes of dress and grooming.		
39. Adaptable and accepts change as a norm.		
40. Willing to provide a solidifying and mediated solution to value conflicts of older generations.		

So what is your Value Programming? The following key is to be used to determine where you and your spouse lie in the Four Value Coding Categories.

Item Numbers	Value Programming Code
1-10	Traditionalist
11-20	In-Betweeners
21-30	Challenger
31-40	Synthesizer

The Value Programming category which has the most checks is your primary code. The one with the next most checks is your secondary code.

My Primary Value Programming: \_\_\_\_\_

My Secondary Value Programming: \_\_\_\_\_

My Spouse's Primary Value Programming is: \_\_\_\_\_

My Spouse's Secondary Value Programming is: \_\_\_\_\_

### Suggested Discussion Questions

1. Do we have different value programming? If yes, how does this affect our marital relationship?

2. How would it feel to be living with a partner who rejected my value programming?



3. What can we do to ensure that we accept our value programming as an asset in our relationship?
4. How are we (or will we be) value programming our children?
5. How does our value programming explain how we problem solve in our relationship?
6. How does our value programming influence how we settle conflicts in our relationship?
7. How does our value programming influence how we communicate in our relationship?
8. How does our value programming influence how we as a couple relate to other couples?
9. How does my value programming influence how I approach my work?
10. How does our value programming influence how we approach our marriage?

**In your Journal Record Your Personal Notes on this Exercise**

## 6-6 Valuing You

The following are a series of Marriage Work-Out topics which should assist you to get to the core values binding you two together. Spend at least fifteen (15) minutes on each topic taking turns to respond.

1. Describe five things your partner does well and which you admire a lot.
2. Describe your "psychological" home which is the place where you feel "most" at home with yourself and others.
3. Describe three events which you believe were the "3 Biggest Successes" in your life.
4. Describe the three people who had the most influence on your life.
5. Describe what you would do if you only had one year to live.
6. Describe five things about which you are most proud.
7. Write a "Memorial" article about yourself. Include in it what you most want people to remember about you after you die. Be sure to include in the article what you think key people in your life would say after you are gone. After writing the article read it to your partner.
8. Describe to your partner what you would miss or regret most if your partner were to die unexpectedly.
9. Describe what you are currently doing to get your "home" in order to prepare for your own death.
10. Prepare a will and plans for your own funeral and share them with your partner.

**In your Journal Record Your Personal Notes on this Exercise**

## **6-7 Follow-up Work-Out Plans for Getting Our Values on Track**

As a result of our exercises, discussions, and efforts in this chapter of our Marriage Work-Out on Values, we have come up with this action plan to continue and follow up the health enhancing what we have just completed.

### **I. Our Value Needs**

The following are needs which we still have to address to fully achieve full health in the valuing aspect of our marital relationship:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### **II. Strategic Steps towards Growth in Our Values**

The following are specific steps we will take to address our needs to improve handling our values:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

### **III. Personal Responsibility Taking**

The following are the things I will specifically do to ensure that we as a couple continue to grow in dealing with our values:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

### **IV. Evaluation of Action Plan for Our Values**

We will know we have achieved our goal to grow in handling our values by the following measurable behavioral changes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10

We agree to the above Marriage Work-Out plan on our values.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**My signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**My partner's signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**