

VALUES CONFLICTS & HOW TO RESOLVE THEM

Bringing compassion and clarity to the parts of you that pull in different directions

Why this practice matters

Once we've clarified our values - what truly matters to us - it's common to discover moments when two of those values seem to collide.

You might feel torn between **freedom and stability, truth and harmony, self-care and service, rest and achievement.**

These tensions can feel confusing or heavy. We can get stuck in our heads, replaying "what's right" or "what should I do?", searching for a perfect answer that rarely exists.

But in **Essence of Being**, we don't treat this as a problem to solve - we treat it as an **invitation to listen more deeply.**

When your values feel in conflict, it's usually because **two meaningful parts of you are both asking to be heard.** Each one carries something precious - a piece of your wholeness.

This reflection helps you slow down, listen to both sides, and move with awareness instead of tension.

You'll begin to see that your values are not rigid rules - they are living directions, guiding you to live more truthfully, more compassionately, and more fully awake.

Step 1 - Identify Where the Conflict Lives

Start by sensing **where** this pull is showing up in your life.

Is it in:

- Your work or studies - the part of you that wants to create, serve, or succeed?
- Your relationships - wanting connection but also space?

- Your self-care - choosing between responsibility and rest?
- Your spiritual path - the desire to surrender vs. the need for control or safety?

Sometimes what feels like a “values conflict” is actually a **time, energy, or boundary conflict**.
For example:

“I want to spend more time with family” vs “I want to grow my business.”

Those aren't opposite values - they're simply both important areas of life that compete for your limited time.

To explore a *true values conflict*, focus within one single area. Ask yourself:

“Inside this domain, which two values feel like they're pulling in different directions?”

For instance, within **work**, you might feel torn between *creativity* (expressing yourself freely) and *reliability* (meeting commitments).

Within **relationships**, it might be *honesty* and *kindness*.

Start with just one domain. Keep it simple.

Step 2 - Name the Two Values in Tension

Once you've chosen the area, name the two values that seem to be competing.
Write them down clearly - this helps make the conflict visible and tangible.

For example:

- “I value **honesty** - I want to speak my truth.”
- “I value **peace** - I don't want to hurt or unsettle others.”

Both are beautiful, meaningful values. Neither is wrong.
And both can exist together, even if at times they seem to clash.

Take a slow breath.

Notice how it feels to hold both in your awareness.

You might even place one hand on your heart and one on your belly - a gesture of balance - and quietly acknowledge:

“Both of these matter to me.”

This simple recognition already begins to soften the tension.

Step 3 - Remember That Values Are Alive, Not Fixed

Values aren't like laws you must obey.

They are **qualities of living** that can take different shapes at different times.

Imagine your values as **continents on a spinning globe**.

When one turns into daylight, another moves into night - but both remain part of the same world.

In one season, courage may need to lead. In another, patience may take the front seat.

This perspective helps you loosen rigid expectations like "I must always be honest, no matter what," or "I must always put others first."

Instead, you begin to sense the fluidity of life - how different moments call for different expressions of the same integrity.

Ask yourself:

"Right now, which value needs to come forward?"

"Which can rest gently in the background for now, knowing it's still honoured?"

This flexibility is what creates inner peace. It's not about abandoning one value - it's about allowing movement and balance.

Step 4 - Explore How Each Value Can Be Lived

Now that you've named your two values, let's explore how each one might find healthy expression - both on its own and together.

Take a journal, or the space below, and brainstorm freely.

Write down small, practical, compassionate ways to live each value in your daily life.

Example:

Let's say your two values are **Honesty** and **Self-Care** at work.

- **Ways to live Honesty:**
 - Speaking truthfully in safe situations.
 - Being honest with yourself about how you feel.
 - Journaling your uncensored thoughts after a hard day.

- Giving constructive feedback with kindness.
- **Ways to live Self-Care:**
 - Taking a break when your body feels overwhelmed.
 - Choosing when and where to speak your truth for safety.
 - Talking with a trusted friend or therapist before taking big action.
 - Eating nourishing food and grounding between conversations.
- **Ways to live both together:**
 - Acknowledging the truth inwardly while caring for your nervous system.
 - Expressing honesty through calm, grounded words rather than reactivity.
 - Remembering that boundaries are a form of honesty - saying “no” can be truth spoken in love.

The aim isn't perfection. It's simply to open up space for creativity and possibility. Often, values that seem to conflict are actually trying to teach you how to live in a more integrated way.

Step 5 - Bring in Self-Compassion

Values conflicts can stir up deep emotion - guilt, fear, sadness, frustration. That's completely normal. It means you care.

When the tension feels strong, pause.
Soften your shoulders. Take a slow, conscious breath.
You might say quietly to yourself:

“This is hard because both things matter to me.”
“It's okay to not know yet. I'm listening.”

Let these words become a small ceremony of kindness toward yourself.

When you bring compassion into the conflict, it stops being a war between parts of you - and becomes a conversation.

Step 6 - When No Clear Answer Appears

Sometimes, even after reflection, there's still uncertainty.

You might not know what action to take, or what "right choice" means.

That's okay.

There is rarely a perfect path - only the next, most aligned step available to you now.

Remember:

- **You can live your values whichever path you take.**
Every choice can hold integrity if it's made with awareness and care.
- Life is constantly moving. If a decision later feels off, you can adjust.
- Awareness itself *is* alignment - the act of pausing, breathing, and seeing clearly is already an expression of your deepest values.

Let this truth free you from urgency. You don't need to rush clarity.

Presence is enough.

Reflection: Seeing the Deeper Gift

When your values feel in conflict, it's not a sign of failure or confusion.

It's a sign that you're awake - that you're paying attention to the complexity of being human.

Every tension holds a lesson.

Honesty may be asking you to speak your truth more clearly.

Care may be asking you to soften your delivery.

Freedom may be asking you to trust life.

Commitment may be asking you to stay grounded.

When you hold these lessons together with compassion, integration begins naturally.

Gentle practice

If you'd like, take a few quiet minutes to complete this short reflection:

1. **The area of life I'm exploring:**
(e.g., work, family, health, creativity, spiritual path)
2. **The two values that feel in tension:**
(e.g., honesty & care, freedom & responsibility, rest & growth)
3. **How I currently express each value:**
(Write a few examples for each.)
4. **Small, real ways I could honour both:**
(Even subtle shifts count - tone, timing, presence, communication.)
5. **What compassion toward myself looks like here:**
(What kind words, gestures, or boundaries would help you stay kind and grounded?)

You can return to this reflection any time life feels divided.

Closing

Values conflicts are not obstacles - they are teachers.

They show you where you are being called to embody awareness in a deeper, more human way.

Let this practice remind you:

- Your values are not there to trap you.
- You are not meant to live them perfectly.
- They are living directions - always moving, always guiding you home to yourself.

Keep coming back to presence.

Keep choosing compassion.

And trust that clarity will unfold as you walk with awareness, one moment at a time.

Essence of Being

Awareness. Integrity. Compassion in Action.

