

The task: Do your commitments match your convictions?

This week's task comes directly from the article by Sull & Houlder that you have as a reading. So start by reading it as it provides a good introduction to this task and how to get the best out of it.

Then, follow these steps:

1) Take a quick inventory of what matters to you.

What are the things, life domains or goals that you value most and that you are most committed to? Write them down in the left side of the sheet found on next page.

Here are Sull and Houlder's tips on how to write these down:

"It's crucial that you avoid overly vague nouns, such as "money" or "family," and instead use more specific gerunds and phrases. "Money," for example, might be articulated as "providing financial security for my family," "earning enough to retire early," or "making more than my business school section-mates." It's worth spending the time to get the language right. "Children," for example, might be broken out into a few more specific values, such as "raising well-educated, morally responsible children" or "enjoying time hanging out with my kids." These are two different values that have distinct implications for how much time you spend with your children and what activities you do with them."

"Don't be afraid to jot down a value, scratch it out if it doesn't sound quite right, and try again until it does. There is no "right" number of values, but most people find that it takes at least five to cover the multiple dimensions of their lives (for instance, professional, family, social, religious, and individual)."

"Finally, it's important to write what you honestly value rather than censoring yourself or imposing judgments about whether you should want something or not. This is not an exercise in what you (or others) think you should value but in what really matters to you."

2) Using the same sheet, write down how much money, time, and energy you are currently investing in these values.

Go through each value in turn and fill out the columns on money, time, and energy to assess how much effort you put into these values.

See pages 5 & 6 in Sull and Houlder's article for tips on how to do this best.

3) Mind the gap

Take a look at your sheet: How much money, time, and energy are you devoting to each value? Are there some values or goals that receive more attention than others? Do your current investments to the various values reflect how important these values are to you? Or are there some gaps between how much you value something and how much resources you actually invest in it?

4) Make a plan

Take a look at each of your values in turn. Look at how much resources you invest in it now and how much you would like to invest. Think about what kind of commitments, regular habits or changes you could make to ensure that the value in question receives enough attention.

Try to make as concrete plans as possible. Don't only think about what you want to do. Think also when, how, and where you put it into action. Research shows that the more concrete the plan, the more prone you are to actually execute it.

5) Reflect on the exercise and only return that reflection to MyCourses.

This exercise is for you to help you identify your values and ways to invest into them. You should thus make it in your own way, for your own eyes only. So don't return a filled sheet and don't censor yourself.

Instead, after having done the exercise, write a separate half a page reflection on it, and return that to MyCourses. In the reflection, write about what did you learn from this exercise, and you can include (if you want) some examples of your values and how you plan to invest enough resources into them.

Return your max 1/2 page reflection about the exercise to MyCourses before Friday 15th of Feb at 13.00. Take a copy with you to the gathering.

