

Personal Visioning

The visioning process helps you to connect with your strengths, your values and what it is you want to achieve, be it in life, in the next few years, or in the process of reaching out to others in your community. Dedicating time to considering what your goals are and how they align with who you are is a great way of staying focused in your actions, of increasing drive and dedication, and of staying inspired. Visioning is also a wonderful way to stay grounded, whatever life may throw at you. Having done some exercises related to visioning it can then be very helpful to summarise your learning, ideas and hopes by writing a vision statement, which you can then refer back to as and when you need to.

It is important to note that having a personal vision statement can mean different things to everyone: some may find their vision change over time, others that vision is something they return to as a source of support. Regardless of the role the vision statement ends up playing in your life, the process of creating one is profound, meaningful, and helps you connect with your values and who you are.

The activities outlined below will help you engage in visioning and take you through the process of writing a vision statement.

This document has been divided into the following sections for ease of reference. You don't need to complete all of the activities listed, do whatever feels right, but if you are struggling with visioning, doing more of them can help you organise your thoughts, feelings and ideas:

Understanding Your Values

Aligning our actions with our values helps us to find meaning in life. It can, therefore, be really useful to try and understand what our core values are. The following exercises are designed to help you do so.

Hypothetical Advice

- Imagine that you are talking to a teenager who is seeking advice because they are concerned and confused. They feel pressure to follow a career that they are unsure about, but they know that pursuing that career will secure them financial stability and will make their family happy.
1. What three pieces of advice would you give the teenager?
 2. Why would you give those pieces of advice?
 3. What do they tell you about what you value?

A Meaningful Memory

- Think back to a moment in your life that has become a meaningful memory. This could be a holiday, an event, an experience, a role, or anything that comes to mind.

1. What was going on during this time?
2. How did you feel? Why?
3. Was there anything in particular that you were able to do or anything that stands out? If so, what?
4. What does this memory tell you about what you value?

The Ideal Day

- Imagine your ideal day from when you wake up to when you go to sleep.

1. What happens at each stage of your ideal day?
2. What do you do?
3. Who do you see?
4. How do you feel?
5. What are you working towards?
6. What does this ideal day tell you about your values?

Your Values

- Using your ideas from the previous activities, write down five values that you think feel important to you.

Identifying Your Strengths and Areas for Improvement

It can be really helpful to think about your strengths and the areas in which you can improve when visioning – the process enables you to create realistic goals that play to your abilities, whilst also encouraging you to think about what it is you would like to get better at. Balancing playing to your strengths, whilst working on areas in which you want to grow can help you reach your potential.

Identifying Your Strengths

It can sometimes be hard to identify our strengths, particularly in cultures that discourage or look down upon self-promotion, but it is important to remember that we all have our strengths and it is not arrogant to identify them or to be proud of them. Strengths come in a range of forms – they might be connected to your values, your roles in life, your outlook, personality or the way you connect with others, and/or your skills.

Use the following prompts to help you identify your strengths:

- Values
1. What values do you possess that you are proud of?
 2. Why are these values something to be proud of?

3. How might these values be a strength?
4. How have they impacted your life?

- Roles

1. What roles do you take on in life?
2. In what ways are you good at these roles?
3. What skills have you developed as a consequence of taking on these roles?
4. How are these skills a strength?
5. How have they impacted your life?

- Outlook & Personality

1. What about your outlook in life or personality are you proud of?
2. Why are you proud of these?
3. How are these attributes a strength?
4. How have they impacted your life?

- Relationships

1. What about your relationships with others are you proud of?
2. Why are you proud of this?
3. How are these relationships a strength?
4. How have they impacted your life?

- Skills

1. What skills do you have that you are proud of?
2. Why are you proud of these skills?
3. How are these attributes a strength?
4. How have they impacted your life?

Now you have identified your strengths in a range of areas, write them down in a coherent list. You might wish to start your list with the line "My strengths are..."

Identifying Your Areas for Improvement

We are not static, we are constantly responding to the environment around us, adapting, learning and growing. Indeed, one of the most magical things about existence is that we have the capacity to improve and to respond to what we learn, be this in developing a new practical skill or in gaining a greater understanding of ourselves and how we relate to people. The point of this exercise is not to make you feel bad about the areas in which you can improve, but to feel inspired about what you can do and how you can grow.

Use the following prompts to help you identify your areas for improvement:

- Outlook & Personality

1. What attributes would you like to develop?
2. Why would you like to develop these attributes?
3. How would developing these attributes impact your life?
4. How might you go about developing these attributes?

- Relationships

1. What about your relationships with others would you like to improve?
2. Why would you like to improve this?
3. How would an improvement in these areas impact your life?
4. How might you go about improving your relationships?

- Skills

1. Which skills would you like to improve or develop?
2. Why would you like to improve or develop these skills?
3. How would an improvement in or development of these skills impact your life?
4. How might you go about improving or developing these skills?

Now you have identified your areas in which you would like to improve, write them down in a coherent list. You might wish to start your list with the line “I would like to grow by...”

Sketching Out Your Vision

When responding to the following prompts, you might want to think about your values, your strengths, and the areas in which you wish to grow.

The Magic Wand

Imagine that you have a magic wand then enables you to shape your future and create the kind of life that you want for yourself and for others around you.

- What would you be doing in the next:

1. Three months?
2. Six months?
3. Year?
4. Five years?
5. Ten years
6. Twenty-five years?

What do your responses tell you about what you would like to achieve in life?

The Wheel of Life

- Creating a wheel of life can be an incredibly useful exercise to help you think about what areas in your life you wish you improve and about where you want to go next.
- Create your own **Wheel of Life**, using this template and reading the accompanying instructions to guide you through the exercise.

A Vision Board

According to the Coaching Tools Company, vision boards are “a way of teaching our mind to focus on the things that are important to us, and can be a great way to connect with our subconscious wants, desires and needs - and make them conscious”.

What is a vision board?

“A Vision Board is simply a collective name for a wide variety of inspirational maps (a collage) that we create from pictures. The map can be WHO we want to be or HOW we want our lives to be, and is a visual representation of our goals and dreams - a powerful way to make our aspirations more tangible and attainable...The very act of CREATING the vision board tells our mind what’s important - and it may just draw our attention to something we might not otherwise have noticed.”

How to create a vision board:

- Find a big piece of paper and some old newspapers or magazines.
- Cut and collect pictures, words, quotes, anything that inspires you or catches your eye, and then stick them on the big piece of paper, arranging them how you want.
- Do not analyse what you are selecting or why, just cut, stick and create: let your mind run free and follow your feelings.
- Use images, use colour, use words that matter to you, make it vibrant and make it inspirational. Your vision board should excite you!
- Allow yourself 1-1.5 hours for this process

Once you have made your vision board, you can either put it away somewhere and return to it in the future, however many months or years down the line, or you can put it somewhere you will see it every day to remind, inspire and focus you. If you do the latter, you may want to allocate a set amount of time to look at the vision board each day, to review it and feel excited by it.

Writing Your Vision Statement

A vision statement can ensure that you keep sight of what is important to you in life; it can provide clarity for the future, whilst allowing you to stay focused in the present and can act as a support when you are feeling distracted, down or uninspired. The vision you create does not need to be perfect nor does it need to be held back by what feels possible where you are right now: be creative, have faith in yourself and don't worry about sketching anything out perfectly. Perfection

doesn't exist and things are always a process.

Vision statements will be different for everyone – some people might write a page, others a paragraph, and others a sentence or two. Do whatever feels right for you. If you want some inspiration, have a read of Oprah Winfrey's vision statement. Her vision is "to be a teacher. And be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be".

To help you get into the right frame of mind for writing your vision, plant yourself in the present, and let go of whatever might be hassling you in your mind by first connecting with your breath. Listen to your breath and focus on your breath, and let your mind clear itself of concerns.

Next, think about the following:

- Your values
- Your strengths
- Your areas for improvement
- Your areas of focus (as identified in your Wheel of Life)

Then start crafting your working vision statement to capture the things that are most important to you and the direction in which you would like to go. You might wish to include references to your values, strengths, areas of improvement and areas of focus; to connect to your passions or interests; and/or to root vision statement in time, thinking about something that you will do daily, as in the five principles of Reiki:

Just for today...

I will let go of anger

I will not worry

I will be grateful for all my blessings

I will work with honesty and integrity

I will be kind to all living beings

Write your statement in the present tense and have it highlight what matters most to you, what you stand for and who you are committed to becoming.

Once you have your draft of your statement, you might wish to put it to the side and let some time elapse before you review it. You might also wish to put it somewhere prominent for you to see, or review it a set time each week to help ground you and remind you about what matters to you.

Whatever your relationship with your vision statement, know that you can refer to it if you ever feel distracted, lost or confused, and that you can update it to reflect any changes in your values or life aims.

Useful Links:

[Ten Great Ideas for Life Visioning and Planning](#)

[How to Use Vision Boards](#)

[How to Craft Your Personal Vision](#)

[The Five \(5\) Principles of Reiki Explained and How to Incorporate them in our Daily Lives](#)
