The first step toward understanding ourselves is to assess our underlying **values—**qualities we see as most desirable and important—systematically. To do this, work through the following steps:

1. Choose the five values that you hold most dear. Hera are some examples, but don’t necessarily restrict yourself to these: A comfortable life, an exciting life, a sense of accomplishment, world peace, beauty, equality, security, freedom, happiness, inner harmony, love, national security, pleasure, religion, self-respect, fame, friendship, wisdom, work, financial security, risk taking, being challenged.
2. For each value, answer each of these questions below: Why is it important to you, who taught it to you, how has it affected your behavior in the past, and in what ways can you affirm it through your future behavior?

Value # 1\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*Why* is it important?  
*Who* taught it to you?  
*How* it has affected your past behavior?  
*In what* ways you can affirm it through future behavior?

Value #2\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*Why* is it important?  
*Who* taught it to you?  
*How* it has affected your past behavior?  
*In what* ways you can affirm it through future behavior?

Value #3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*Why* is it important?  
*Who* taught it to you?  
*How* it has affected your past behavior?  
*In what* ways you can affirm it through future behavior?

Value #4\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*Why* is it important?  
*Who* taught it to you?  
*How* it has affected your past behavior?  
*In what* ways you can affirm it through future behavior?

Value #5\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*Why* is it important?  
*Who* taught it to you?  
*How* it has affected your past behavior?  
*In what* ways you can affirm it through future behavior?

After you’ve identified your most important values, you’ll be ready to move onto the organize step on developing a Mission Statement: determining what motivates you.