Values
Definition

- Principles or qualities you consider right, important, or good.
- Beliefs that guide your choices in life.
- May be guided by cultural/societal values as well as personal values.
- Are the basis for the goals you set for yourself. (Goals let you put your values into practice.)
Sources of Values

- Parents and other family members.
- Friends and peers.
- Personal experience.
- Religious beliefs and teachings.
- Mentors and other people you respect.
- Media.
- School and the workplace.
Questions to Evaluate Values

- Did I choose this value freely?
- Did I have other options for the choice?
- Did I consider my options carefully?
- Have I made a public commitment to this choice?
- Do I carry out this value on a regular basis?
Other Value Questions

- Did I look at the possible positive and negative consequences of this value and how it will affect my life?
- Is the value mine or the result of outside pressure?
- Can I recognize when I need to change my personal values based on the changes in my life?
Personal values relate to societal values.

A study in 1994 compared East Asian values to American values.

Individuals were asked to choose six societal values they regard as critical.
Most Valued Societal Values

- **East Asians**
  - An orderly society
  - Societal harmony
  - Accountability of public officials
  - Openness to new ideas
  - Freedom of expression
  - Respect for authority

- **Americans**
  - Freedom of expression
  - Personal freedom
  - Individual’s rights
  - Open debate
  - Thinking for oneself
  - Accountability of public officials
Americans’ Six Most Important Personal Values (in this survey)

- Self-reliance
- Personal Achievement
- Hard Work
- Achieving Success in Life
- Helping Others
- Fulfilling Obligations to Others
In this survey:

- About twice as many East Asians emphasized “fulfilling obligations to others” than did Americans.
- Twice as many Americans emphasized “achieving success in life” than did East Asians.
- 69% of East Asians listed “respect for learning” to only 15% of Americans.
- More than twice as many East Asians stressed “self-discipline” than Americans.