Values versus Goals - Session activity

Facilitate a structured practice of values versus goals with preparation, reflection, and an agreed closing.

Mental health professionals | 30 minutes

Fictional example: Avery values learning and has a goal of finishing a course.

0-5 min | Agree on purpose and fit

Explain the educational scope. Ask what would be useful, check readiness and access needs, and establish choices to observe, adapt, or pass. Use an ordinary example; do not solicit trauma narratives.

5-10 min | Orient with an example

A value can guide ongoing action while a goal describes a possible milestone. Fictional example: Avery values learning and has a goal of finishing a course. Ask what is observed and what remains uncertain.

10-20 min | Practice and compare

Sort chosen qualities, concrete goals, and external expectations into separate groups. Offer quiet individual work, a supported conversation, or an observing role. Compare two possible responses without evaluating people as right or wrong.

20-25 min | Reflect on meaning

Which quality can be expressed even if the milestone is delayed? Ask what fit, what did not fit, and how culture, power, disability access, or external conditions affect the options.

25-30 min | Integrate and close

Invite one optional next step or support request. Orient to the current setting, allow an unfinished question to remain unfinished, and agree how to revisit it. End early or adapt if activation increases.

Adaptations

For a group, use fiction and no compulsory round-robin disclosure. For remote use, allow off-camera reflection and private notes. For brief use, keep one example and one question while retaining opening and closing choices.

Reflection

What adaptation or follow-up is needed?

Scope and adaptation

Values are personally chosen directions, not moral rankings or evidence of worth. Recognize structural barriers, disability access, and culturally varied meanings. Do not turn willingness into exposure to danger, excuse coercion, or prescribe one life path. These original exercises do not constitute a complete ACT protocol.

Original AI-assisted educational draft; independent clinical review pending. Version 1.0. Background: Valuing as a Choice. Full source links and scope: library.morethantherapy.org/recovery/resources/VAL-A01-4