

Spirit Level Success™ System - Six Secrets of Self-Esteem

Secret #5 STAND – Week 4

S.T.A.N.D.™ – Ascertain your Values

The **A** in **S.T.A.N.D.**™ stands for **Ascertain your Values**. Your values are your moral compass. They let you know what is important to you and what's not. Your values develop over time and come from a multitude of different influences – starting in childhood with how you were treated and your internalisation of what you experienced, being updated constantly by how you saw the important people around you behave, and the deliberate or inadvertent conditioning you received from those people of how to 'be' in the world.

Your values are personal and subjective. You may never have taken the time to specifically identify your values before, and it may never have even occurred to you as something you could do. Or you may not have thought about it in this way before. But nevertheless, you will have gained clues along the way.

The first time you may have realised what some of your values are, is when a situation occurred that challenged your values or jarred against them. You will almost certainly have experienced a strong, and possibly unexpected, reaction to whatever it was that was said or done. But something in your body will have alerted you to the fact that something was wrong. Or didn't feel right for you. And even though you may not have realised at the time why you had such a strong reaction, the likelihood is that it was because one or more of your values was being challenged or compromised. If you think of your values as your moral compass, all feels well in your world when everything keeps pointing North. But whenever a situation occurs that tries to pull you away in another direction, your instinctive and sub-conscious reaction is to always want to pull back to pointing North and keeping everything in line. Because compromising or watering down your values may not be acceptable to you.

What do we mean by values? Literally, this includes anything at all that is important to you, and which you will defend (to whatever extent) if you need to. Some of the more obvious one-word ones you will be familiar with are, for example;

Fairness

Honesty

Integrity

Freedom

Choice
Loyalty
Kindness
Dignity
Respect
Sharing
Appreciation

When you reflect on your own values and think about times in the past when your values have been compromised, how did you know that your values were being compromised? What clues did you get? What was your experience?

Knowing clearly what you value as important, can really help to build your robust sense of self and self-esteem. Because it helps to know who you are, and what you stand for. And when you know this, really know this, it makes any dilemma, problem or challenge much easier to face. It makes decisions far easier to make. And it gives you a sense of assurance in knowing which course of action to take. So you can avoid spending hours or sometimes days mulling things over and going round in circles of ruminative thinking.

Take a few moments now to move to a quiet, reflective space, and think about the things in your life that are really important to you. Think about the decisions you make, and what exactly it is that influences those decisions. What are the injustices that happen in life that you actually or metaphorically want to protest from the rooftops about – yet other things you’ll happily let go of, and let someone else pick up the mantle? These are the things that give you clues about where your values lie.

Write out a list of your 10 most important values here;

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....
- 10.....

Now consider each of these values, and place them in order of priority. There is a simple, methodical way to do this. Start with values #1 and #2. Imagine, you were carrying each of them in a large case. You are on your way to the penthouse suite of a fabulous Hotel, to spend some time living your best, most fulfilling life, showing up with your robust sense of self-esteem and self-worth. You can't wait to get there. When you get to the Hotel lobby, the elevator operator tells you 'sorry, there is only room for you to bring one case'.

You have to choose, which one goes with you?

You might know instantly, or you might have to deliberate. But you do have to pick one. Which one will it be?

And now you know which of values #1 and #2 takes priority for you.

And that means if ever you have a decision to make that brings both values into question, the answer will be easy. For instance, if you value both loyalty and freedom, but loyalty is more of a priority for you – you'll know exactly what to do if you're asked to compromise your freedom in order to demonstrate your loyalty to someone you care about instead.

Now work through all your values in turn, always comparing two of them and deciding which, of those two, you value more. Which case you leave in the lobby, and which you are taking up to your Hotel suite. Start by comparing #1 with #3, #1 with #4, #1 with #5, #1 with #6 and so on. Then compare #2 with #3, #4, #5 etc until every combination of two has been compared.

Write out your list again, in order of priority where 1 is your highest value, and 10 is your least high;

- 1.....

- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....
- 10.....

Now you have an order of priority. Take some time to reflect on what new levels of understanding you gain from this insight and clarity, and how this new understanding could help you deal with some of the challenges or decisions you currently face.

It is really important that you take time during this week to repeat the work covered so far in this Secret.

Value yourself enough and really connect with your motivation, so you can prioritise this and spend *sufficient* time on it, ensuring you make a meaningful emotional connection with each step you take.

This is your time now, and you matter.