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Part 1. Look at the question below. Think about it for one minute — don't overthink it. Then share your first honest answer with your partner.

If you had to explain to someone what matters most to you in life — in three words or less — what would you say?

Now discuss:

- Was it easy to answer, or did it feel surprisingly difficult?
- Did your answer surprise you — or feel completely obvious?
- Do you think your answer would have been different five years ago?

Part 2. Choose one option in each pair and explain your reasoning.

People	or	experiences?
Security	or	freedom?
Depth — a few things that truly matter	or	breadth — many things that interest you?
Doing what feels meaningful	or	doing what brings you pleasure?
The life you have right now	or	the life you're working towards?
Being known deeply by a few	or	being liked broadly by many?

Part 3. Read the statements. Say which feel true for you, which you resist, and which feel complicated. Explain why.

1. There is often a gap between what I say matters and how I actually spend my time.
2. I have become clearer about what matters most to me as I've got older.
3. Some of the things I used to think were important no longer are.
4. I sometimes feel pressure to care about things that don't genuinely matter to me.

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5. The things that matter most to me are difficult to explain to other people.
 6. I find it easier to know what I don't want than to articulate what I do.

Part 4. Discuss the following questions.

1. When did you last feel completely aligned — where what you were doing genuinely matched what matters to you? What was happening?
2. Is there something you spend a lot of time on that you'd struggle to say actually matters to you? Why do you keep doing it?
3. Do you think most people know what matters most to them — or do they only find out when something forces them to look?
4. Has a difficult experience ever changed what you think matters? What was the before and after?

Part 5. Look at the list. Do two things: first, circle the five that feel most important to you right now. Then put a cross next to any that you genuinely don't care about — even if you feel you should. Share and explain your choices.

Honesty	Stability	Adventure	Recognition
Connection	Autonomy	Growth	Simplicity
Creativity	Contribution	Loyalty	Ambition
Health	Pleasure	Integrity	Legacy
Family	Spirituality	Justice	Playfulness

Part 6. Match each expression (A–H) to its meaning (1–8). Then choose three expressions and use them to tell your partner something true about where you are in life right now.

A. to lose sight of something	1. an event or experience that forces you to pay attention to something you had been ignoring
B. to be pulled in different directions	2. to bring your actions back into line with your values or what matters most to you
C. to cut through the noise	3. to move gradually away from your values or priorities without making a conscious decision to do so
D. a non-negotiable	4. to identify what truly matters by ignoring distractions and less important things
E. to drift	5. something you are not willing to compromise on, regardless of circumstances
F. to realign	6. to make deliberate choices that reflect what you truly value, rather than going through the motions
G. a wake-up call	7. to stop noticing or prioritising something important because other things have taken over
H. to live with intention	8. to feel pressure to give time and energy to competing demands or priorities

A) 7 B) 8 C) 4 D) 5 E) 3 F) 2 G) 1 H) 6

Part 7. Read each situation and choose the response closest to how you'd actually behave. Then discuss what your choice reveals.

You've been given an unexpected free week — no work, no obligations, no one expecting anything of you.

1. *You feel immediately clear about how you want to spend it.*
2. *You feel a quiet anxiety and find yourself filling it anyway.*
3. *You enjoy the first day or two, then start to feel a vague restlessness.*
4. *You treat it as a chance to do the things that genuinely matter to you.*

You're at a social gathering where the conversation turns to careers, achievements, and status. You feel increasingly aware of a gap between what's being valued and what matters to you.

1. *You join the conversation on its own terms — it's easier.*
2. *You find a gentle way to redirect things towards something more interesting.*
3. *You feel a flicker of self-doubt, then catch yourself.*
4. *You feel quietly settled — you've made your peace with having different priorities.*

A close friend tells you they've made a big life decision — leaving a well-paid career, ending a long relationship, moving abroad — in order to live more in line with what matters to them.

1. *You admire it immediately and feel a small pang of something yourself.*
2. *You worry for them and ask a lot of practical questions.*
3. *You feel genuinely inspired and find yourself thinking about your own life.*
4. *You support them, but privately wonder if they're being realistic.*

Part 8. Read the statements. Say whether you agree, disagree, or partly agree — and push each other on the ones you feel strongly about.

1. Most people spend more time managing their image than living their values.
2. The things that matter most to us are often shaped by loss, not abundance.
3. Knowing what you value is easy. Living accordingly is where it gets difficult.
4. Modern life is deliberately designed to distract us from what actually matters.
5. You can't truly know what matters most to you until you've experienced losing it.
6. It's possible to live a life that looks successful from the outside and feels empty on the inside.

Part 9. One of the most honest questions we can ask ourselves is: 'Is there a gap between what I say matters and how I actually live?' Discuss.

1. Where is the gap biggest in your own life right now — if you're honest?
2. Why do you think that gap exists? Is it circumstance, habit, fear, or something else?
3. Is there something small you could do — not a dramatic overhaul, just a shift — that would close the gap slightly?

4. Do you think the gap ever completely closes, or is it something you keep returning to throughout life?

Part 10. Read the two viewpoints. Which do you find more convincing – and where do you personally land?

Viewpoint A

The things that matter most are essentially personal – they differ from person to person and cannot be prescribed. Trying to tell people what should matter is a form of imposition. What matters is that you live authentically according to your own values, whatever those are.

Viewpoint B

Some things matter more than others, regardless of personal preference. Connection, contribution, growth – these aren't just personal choices, they're human needs. A life organised entirely around comfort or status is not just different from a values-driven life – it's shallower.

Part 11. Think of a moment – a conversation, a decision, a loss, an ordinary Tuesday – that clarified something about what matters most to you. Tell your partner about it.

Think about:

- What happened and what made it significant
- What it showed you – about yourself or about life
- Whether you acted on that clarity, or whether it faded
- How it still shows up in how you live now

Reflection

Complete the sentences in your own words.

1. If I'm honest, the thing that matters most to me right now is...
2. One area where I've lost sight of what matters is...
3. Something I want to give more of my time and energy to is...
4. One small way I could live more in line with what matters is...