

THE VALUES CHECK-IN

A 5-Step Guide to Setting Goals
That Actually Feel Like You



MINDFUL PATH COUNSELLING



The Values Check-In: A 5-Step Guide to Setting Goals That Actually Feel Like You

For when goal-setting feels pressured, and you want a gentler way to begin.

Introduction

January can bring a quiet kind of pressure - the sense that you should be doing more, becoming more, improving faster. But underneath all that noise, what most of us really want is something simpler: to feel at ease in our days, to live in a way that actually feels like *us*.

This reflection guide will help you slow down, notice what matters most, and start from calm instead of pressure.

You don't need to reinvent yourself this year - you just need to remember what you care about.

Step 1: Pause Before Planning

Before you set any goals, take a moment to stop. Notice what's driving your desire for change. Is it comparison? Fear? Expectation?

Now ask yourself:

"If I stopped trying to keep up, what would actually feel meaningful to me right now?"

Write down anything that comes to mind - even if it feels small or uncertain. The pause itself is progress.

Step 2: Reconnect With Your Values

Values are what guide you when goals feel overwhelming. They're not things to *achieve* - they're qualities you want to live by.

Use these prompts to reconnect with yours:



- *When do I feel most like myself?*
- *What moments make me feel proud or peaceful?*
- *If my week felt balanced and true to me, what would I be doing more (or less) of?*

You don't need perfect answers. Just noticing what matters helps bring calm back into focus.

Step 3: Turn Values Into Gentle Action

Once you've named a few values, think about how they could shape your days.

If you value *connection*, maybe it's calling a friend instead of scrolling.

If you value *calm*, maybe it's protecting quiet time before bed.

If you value *growth*, maybe it's reading one chapter of something that inspires you.

These small steps are what create real change - not the all-or-nothing kind, but the steady, **kind** kind that lasts.

Step 4: Make Space for Rest and Flexibility

Anxiety often tells us that consistency means *never missing a day*. But that mindset can quickly lead to burnout.

Try this instead:

- Give yourself permission to rest without guilt.
- Hold your plans lightly - let them change shape if they need to.
- Remember that showing up for yourself looks different every day.

Progress that honours your energy will always last longer than perfection that ignores it.



Step 5: Reflect on What Feels Meaningful (Not Just Productive)

At the end of each week, pause and ask:

- What moment felt most like “me”?
- Where did I act from calm instead of fear?
- What small thing felt meaningful, even if no one else noticed?

These are the quiet signs of progress.

When you start noticing them, the pressure to “get it right” begins to fade - and something softer takes its place.

Closing Reflection

You don’t need to change who you are to start again.

Just pause. Notice what matters. Take one small, kind step.

That’s where real change begins - not with a new version of you, but with a gentler relationship to the one who’s already here.

