Values and goals

The difference between a value and a goal, and how to turn one into the other.

People often mix the two up.

Values

- A direction, like heading west
- Never finished
- Available right now, in any situation
- About how I act
- "Being a caring friend"

Goals

- A destination, like a town on the way
- Can be ticked off
- In the future
- About what I achieve
- "Ring Maeve on Friday"

Why the difference matters

- **Goals without values feel empty.** You reach one and wonder why you bothered, or you chase the next.
- **Values without goals stay vague.** Good intentions that never turn into action.
- **Values are always available.** You may not be able to reach a goal today. You can always take one small step in the direction of a value.

From value to goal to action

Value	Being a present, involved parent
↓	
Goal for this month	A regular evening with each child
↓	
Action this week	Board game with Seán on Thursday, phone in another room

A check for any goal

1. Which of my values does it serve?
2. Is it something I can do, not only something I hope will happen?
3. Does it say what I will do, not only what I will stop? ("Stop shouting" and "not drink" only say what to avoid. Turn them round: what will I do instead?)

A value that matters to me, and a goal that would serve it

The first small action, and when

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