Article:

Everyday Values vs Personal Core Values
by Anne Bolender

I was having a conversation with a friend the other day about personal core values and the question came up about how many personal core values an individual could have.

Numbers discussed ranged from two personal core values to 97.

My response, and what I firmly believe, is that 97 personal core values was probably way too many personal core values for one person to have.

It just seems a bit too overwhelming and complicated to make sure that all 97 personal core values were constantly being honored and incorporated into one person's daily life.

On the other hand, one or two personal core values seemed to be too few. At some point in that person's life, the stress and frustration of not honoring all of their personal core values would likely appear and they would be left wondering why, and confused about what was going wrong.

But then I got thinking and realized that the real question that should have been asked was whether there is a difference between *everyday values* and *personal core values*.

There is a significant difference between everyday values and personal core values. For example, I value honesty. I will not tolerate someone lying to me, telling me half-truths, or withholding the truth from me. The more someone does that to me, the more likely I am to end the relationship. But honesty isn't one of my core values.

Honesty is a value I learned as the result of my life experiences, relationships with my siblings, my parents, classmates, the culture I grew up in, etc. Honesty to me is a social self value that has come to mean a lot to me, but honesty still does not mean the same thing to me that, for example, deep wisdom (one of my true personal core values) means in my life. When I honour my core values there is a reaction in my life that maximizes joy, happiness, peace and freedom. For me the value "honesty" is more reflective of my ego and self-esteem – two very strong social self characteristics.

For some people, "honesty" is a true personal core value. To these people, "honesty" is something more than just a concept or a practice that boosts their self-esteem or satisfies their ego (not that either of these is a bad thing). "Honesty" genuinely contributes to these people's overall feeling of joy. Their life feels more in balance, more fulfilled when they honor their need to be honest and for others around them to be honest with them.

So if you are trying to identify your personal core values and are finding you have more than six values, try seeing if some of these values are everyday values that came from your life experiences, rather that the deeper, essential self core values.