VALUES Cards Sort – Brief User Guide

VALUES – Cards Sort (© S. Rochat, 2019)
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Purpose	Values are moral, social, or aesthetic principles considered good, desirable, or important, and used to guide choices and behavior (APA, 2015). They are often stable, although their relative priority may change.
Background	The VALUES instrument is based on the refined model of basic individual values developed by Schwartz et al. (2012), which identifies 19 values: self-direction—thought, self-direction—action, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power—dominance, power—resources, face, security—personal, security—societal, tradition, conformity—rules, conformity—interpersonal, humility, benevolence—caring, benevolence—dependability, universalism—concern, universalism—nature, and universalism—tolerance.
Rationale	The VALUES instrument supports the career counseling process by helping participants to: • Describe their personal values in a flexible way. • Identify the values that should guide their career choices. • Identify potential career directions or sources of tension when their values are misaligned with those of their work environment. Values can also be explored using inventories, but sorting cards encourages dialogue, collaboration, and reflection rather than assessment.
Process	With reference to the 5As model of career counseling, the VALUES instrument is particularly relevant during: • Activating the introspection: promoting self-awareness by exploring what matters most to the participant and opening up reflection on the fit between their values and the conditions of a job, an organizational culture, or professional practices.
Content	The VALUES instrument contains 19 cards, each providing a practical representation of one of the values in the model developed by Schwartz et al. (2012).
Administration	1. Invite the participant to sort the cards according to how important they consider each value to be in their life. 2. Invite the participant to prioritize, among the values they consider important, those that could guide their current career choice. 3. Explore together the jobs or positions that align with these values, as well as potential sources of conflict or dissatisfaction.
Interpretation	The pictograms on the cards can help identify patterns: ⬅●➡ = focus on others; ➡●⬅ = focus on self; ⚖ = openness to change; ⚖ = conservation; ⚖ = self-enhancement; ⚖ = self-transcendence.
Further Reading	• Mapping career counseling interventions (Chapter 5.4). • Les 5As du conseil en orientation (Chapter 4.1).
References	American Psychological Association. (2015). *APA dictionary of psychology.* Author. Schwartz, S. H., Cieciuch, J., Vecchione, M., Davidov, E., Fischer, R., Beierlein, C., (…) & Konty, M. (2012). Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(4), 663–688.