

Cultural Norms & Caregiving



What Are Cultural Norms and Values?

Cultural norms are expectations of how to act and think based on a system of shared beliefs within a specific cultural group.

A common norm for Hispanics/Latinos is for the oldest female sibling to be the primary caregiver of her parents as they age.

Cultural values are core principles and beliefs that are considered important within a cultural group.

A common cultural value in the Hispanic/Latino community is *familismo*. This value describes a person's dedication to the family. People who value *familismo* often do things like put the family's needs before their own needs.

Cultural norms and values influence the way we think, the decisions we make, and the way we act every day. However, even if two people are from the same culture, they might think about cultural norms and values differently. Because of this, your own experience is unique.

There are no right or wrong answers. Reflecting on how cultural norms and values influence your caregiving journey can increase your awareness of your own situation. This can help you use your cultural norms and values as a source of strength.

How Do Cultural Norms Impact You?

Take a moment to write down how cultural norms and values influence your experience as a caregiver.



If you need help getting started, you can use these prompts:

- *The words I live by are... This influences the way I care for someone because...*
- *In my culture, it is important to... This influences the way I care for someone because...*
- *It is common in my culture to... This influences the way I care for someone because...*

Watch the video **Caregiver Conversations: Hispanic/Latino Cultural Values**.
How are your experiences similar or different?



A large, empty, light green rounded rectangular box intended for the user to write their response to the prompt.

This project was supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$255,124.00 with 75 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$85,949.42 amount and 25 percentage funded by non-governmental source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor are an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

What Are Your Values?

Your values are the beliefs that define what is most important to you.

They guide your choices in life. For example, someone who values family might try to spend extra time at home with their family members, while someone who values independence may prefer to spend time on their own. A person's values can change over time and can depend on the circumstances they are in.

Pick your top 6 values. Then, pick the 3 that are most important to you.

- Assertive
- Authentic
- Caring (for others or self)
- Compassionate/
Self-compassionate
- Cooperative
- Courageous
- Creative
- Expressive
- Family/*familismo*
- Powerful
- Free time
- Adventurous
- Freedom
- Recognition
- Nature
- Fair/Just
- Flexible
- Friendly
- Forgiving
- Spiritual/Religious
- Grateful
- Helpful
- Honest
- Independent
- Kind
- Loving
- Open
- Persistent/Committed
- Playful
- Protective
- Respectful/Self-respectful
- Responsible
- Skillful
- Supportive
- Trustworthy
- Trusting

Others: *(add other values that are not included in the list above)*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

My Top 3 Values:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive And Negative Effects of Values

By becoming aware of how and when a value might be negatively impacting you, you can challenge yourself to gain a new perspective.

Doing this can help you find a way to use your values as a source of strength. To hear other caregivers talk about the positive and negative effects of values, watch the video *How Do Values Affect Caregiving?*

How Do Your Values Affect Your Caregiving?

Take a look back at the top values you selected. Then, use this worksheet to reflect on how those values affect you and the care you provide to your loved one.

Values:

Example: Family

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Positive Effects

Example: Prioritizing my family allows me to provide the love and care that my loved one needs.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Negative Effects

Example: Sometimes I feel like I am the only person who can provide the best care. I don't ask for help, even when I really need it. This makes me stressed and anxious.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

New Perspectives

Example: In order to provide the best care for my loved one, I need to understand my needs and take care of myself first.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

This project was supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$255,124.00 with 75 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$85,949.42 amount and 25 percentage funded by non-governmental source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor are an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Why Is It Important to Live by Your Values?

Values give us direction when life feels hard and overwhelming.

They help make sure that we don't sacrifice things that are important to us when we are trying to achieve a goal like keeping a loved one at home, meeting their physical needs, or making sure they are comfortable.

Values are not something we can achieve. Rather, we can set our intention and commit to consistently doing small things every day that are in line with our values.

We can't control every aspect of our lives or those that we care for. There will be times when things do not go according to plan. However, if we act in line with our values, we are more likely to feel fulfilled in the journey of caring for our loved ones and less sadness and disappointment when surprises happen.

Sprinkle Values into Daily Life

Living by your values doesn't have to be done perfectly, and it doesn't have to happen all at once. You can sprinkle more values into your daily life over time.

Each person may have a different way of living by their values and what that means for them. Below are some examples of ways different values can be sprinkled into your everyday life.

Assertive

- Asking for help
- Saying no
- Schedule to take a rest

Caring (for others or self)

- Making healthy food
- Visiting loved ones
- Asking for help

Courageous

- Getting up every day, even when things are hard
- Learning new things
- Asking for help

Creative

- Drawing or painting
- Playing music
- Trying something new

Kind

- Sending someone a kind message
- Giving a compliment
- Acknowledging your own feelings

Responsible

- Arriving to places on time
- Making a schedule
- Asking for help

How Can You Live by Your Values?

Use the worksheet below to write down small ways you can begin to sprinkle in your values throughout your day.

Value: _____

Small things I can do in my daily life to live by this value are:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Additional Support

If you would like to join a support group for caregivers, the links below can help you identify a support group close to you, or online, in your preferred language:



- **Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA)**
<https://www.caregiver.org/connecting-caregivers/support-groups/>
- **FCA Care Support**
<https://www.caregiver.org/news/for-spanish-speaking-caregivers-fca-offers-education-advocacy-and-self-care-support/>
- **AARP**
<https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/life-balance/info-2021/support-groups.html>

This project was supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$255,124.00 with 75 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$85,949.42 amount and 25 percentage funded by non-governmental source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor are an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.