

FACILITATOR GUIDE • SESSION 7

Who Am I at My Best?

The Values Compass

Winter • Monday, January 4 • Session 7 • 90 minutes • Charter output: §1.2 My Compass, part 2 (two Core Values)

Where This Session Sits

Session 7 sits between **Read My Story (S6)** — where men narrated and received their story — and **The Strengths Portrait (S8)** — where they discover what they are equipped to deploy. This morning is the load-bearing middle of the identity arc: a man who has read his story now asks what convictions run through it.

Men arrive having completed substantial pre-work: the Workview and Lifeview essays (Charter §1.2, part 1, with the Life Theme written in sitting 3), the WhyzMen Values Inventory with 3–5 candidate values circled (the Domain Grid and Synthesis are optional), and the VIA Character Strengths survey (free, viacharacter.org) with their top 5 in hand. They do not arrive blank. They arrive prepared but unfinished.

Run every facilitation choice through this question:

"What must a man feel, discover, or decide before he leaves this room?"

FEEL

That the values he has been living — often without naming them — have been governing his best decisions all along. This is recognition, not instruction.

DISCOVER

Which two values function as load-bearing walls — the ones he would not compromise under any circumstances, even when it costs him.

DECIDE

To carry those two values explicitly into his Charter and his second half — not as aspirations but as the operating system he will be held accountable to.

Session at a Glance

BEAT	SLIDES	MIN	MODE
Gather, opening prayer & The Case for Values	1–3	3	<i>Encounter</i>
Callback • The Knapsack — Your Compass	4	2	<i>Encounter</i>
Opening & Pre-Work Debrief	5	5	<i>Encounter</i>
Values Excavation — Threes	6	15	<i>Encounter</i>
Valley-Moment Reflection + Full-Group Debrief	6	10	<i>Encounter</i>

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The Narrowing — Steps 1 & 2	7	8	<i>Encounter</i>
The VIA Echo Check — Step 3	8	7	<i>Encounter</i>
Pairs Sharing	9	10	<i>Encounter</i>
Trade-Off Crucible — Three Scenarios	10 (reserve: 11)	10	<i>Encounter</i>
Crucible Discussion	12	10	<i>Encounter</i>
Charter Anchor — Values List	13	5	<i>Hand-off</i>
Assessment Homework for Session 8	14	3	<i>Hand-off</i>
This Week's Work (one week)	15	1	<i>Encounter</i>
Practice of the Week — Name the value you see	16	1	<i>Hand-off</i>
Total	—	90	—

Deck v5 timing. Two new slides: the Knapsack callback (Slide 4, 2 min) and the Practice of the Week (Slide 16, 1 min). The 3 minutes come from Gather (4→3), the Pre-Work Debrief (6→5, which now opens with the practice check-in) and the Charter Anchor (6→5). Movement 1 still totals 10 minutes and the closing still totals 10, as the arc slide shows.

The Theory Beneath the Encounter

This is the part of the iceberg the men never see. They experience exercises and prompts; you carry the architecture. Four thinkers give this session its spine.

Brené Brown — the instrumental foundation

Brown's twenty years of shame and vulnerability research led to a specific finding about values: only about 10 percent of people actually operationalize their stated values into teachable, observable behaviors. The rest, she writes, produce 'cat posters.' Her two-value framework — deliberately narrow — forces the operationalization question. The WhyzMen program adds the Source Question (C · F · I) and the optional living / drifting sentences as the link between naming and living; the Domain Grid remains an optional second check in the Values Inventory.

The values vs. character strengths distinction is critical for this facilitator. VIA (taken as pre-work this week and used this morning as Step 3 of the Narrowing) does NOT identify values. It identifies character strengths — the pathways through which values are expressed. A man whose value is Faithfulness may express it through Perseverance (a VIA strength). A note on the name: VIA began as Peterson and Seligman's 'Values in Action' classification, but the institute is now simply the VIA Institute on Character, because 'values' misdescribed what the survey measures — six virtues expressed through 24 character strengths. The map is: values tell you where; character strengths tell you how. This distinction prevents the confusion that arises when men conflate the two instruments.

Argyris — the espoused/operative gap

Chris Argyris spent decades documenting what he called the gap between 'espoused theory' — what people say they value — and 'theory in use' — what their behavior reveals they actually value. This gap is the central problem the values session is designed to close. The essays, the peak stories and valley moments, and the trade-off scenarios are all instruments for surfacing theory in use rather than espoused theory. When a man arrives with his essays written and 3–5 values circled where they collide, he has already done significant theory-in-use excavation. Your job is to confirm and compress, not to start from scratch.

The embedded-values insight (now explicit in the Values Inventory framing): many men have been living by values they have never named. The man who always returns the extra change, who stays late to ensure a colleague gets credit — he may have never written 'Honesty' or 'Integrity' on a list. It's the water he swims in. The excavation work surfaces this. In threes this morning, you will hear men recognize something that has always been operating in them. That moment of recognition is the heart of the session.

The Narrowing — why two

Men will ask why only two. Three answers matter:

- Brown's research: the more values a person claims as core, the less any single one actually governs behavior. When everything is a core value, nothing is. A man who carries seven values into a hard decision has a committee meeting, not a compass.
- The Jesus precedent: asked which commandment is greatest, he gave two — not a comprehensive list. Two load-bearing convictions from which everything else flows.
- Charter operationalization: two core values across ten domains produces twenty Charter sentences. Seven values across ten domains produces seventy. The Charter is a living document a man should be able to carry and consult. Precision serves that function; exhaustiveness doesn't.

The domain-to-final-two gap.

A man may find that the values leading in individual domains (Presence for Marriage & Family, Faithfulness for Faith & Spiritual Life, Generativity for Service & Contribution) are none of his overall top two (which turn out to be Integrity and Growth). This is not a problem — it is diagnostic data. It suggests either that his top-two are the organizing principles through which domain-specific values express themselves (Integrity is what Faithfulness and Honesty both are), or that there is a genuine misalignment between stated and operating values worth surfacing. Do not resolve this tension for him. Reflect it back: 'So Presence keeps showing up in your domains but isn't in your top two — what do you make of that?'

The Run — Slide by Slide

Slides 1-3 • Title + Arc + The Case

Slides 1-3

~3 min including gathering

Purpose. Orient the room to what this morning is for and why it matters in the architecture of the program.

F Slide 3 carries the engine/fuel/steering metaphor. Say it plainly and let it land: a man's strengths tell him what he can do — that is Session 8. His story tells him where he's been. Values tell him from what center he must operate. Without the steering wheel, a powerful engine and full tank take him further in the wrong direction. Pause. Do not explain it further, and do not name CliftonStrengths this morning — it is assigned for the first time at the close, on Slide 14.

Do not rush Slide 3. The Brown quote — 'A value is a way of being or believing that we hold most dear' — is the session's definitional anchor. Say it slowly and let men hear it against the context of their pre-work.

Slide 4 • Callback • The Knapsack: Your Compass

Slide 4

2 min

Purpose. Call back the Knapsack from the plane crash and hand the men the compass: values do three jobs, so this morning they narrow to the two that point true north. Place: after The Case for Values, before the debrief.

- SAY: "Remember the plane crash at 8,000 feet? The compass is the one tool that does everything: it gives direction, it makes the food and water worth carrying, and it tells you what to leave behind. Values do the same three jobs."
- DO: Walk the three cards: Direction (clarifies what matters), Multiplier (makes everything else work), Filter (says yes to this, no to that). Then: "This morning we narrow to two. Not the values that sound good at a funeral. The two that actually point true north for you now."
- CLOSE: your Charter will be threaded with these two. Two minutes, then straight into the debrief on Slide 5.

Slide 5 • Opening & Pre-Work Debrief

Slide 5

5 min

Purpose. Surface what the pre-work stirred without evaluating it. Prime the room for honesty.

- Open with the Practice of the Week check-in. SAY: "Tell us one moment with this week's practice: Reflect it back." One moment per man, no commentary. Then the opening question.

Opening question (volunteers only — do not go around the room):

"Before we dive in — did anything surprise you in the pre-work over these three weeks?"

"What value did you most expect to find — and was it there?"

- Let 3-4 men respond. Reflect curiosity back: 'Say more about that.' Do not evaluate any response as correct or incorrect.
- Watch for the man who says his results surprised him — that surprise is almost always the data pointing to an operating value he had not consciously claimed. Name that for him gently: 'What do you make of the fact that it surprised you?'
- Confirm the check-off bar at the bottom of Slide 5 — hands only, done or not yet, thirty seconds: open to §1.2 — the Workview and Lifeview essays; three to five values circled on the Values Inventory; VIA top 5 on the table (taken after Session 5; used at Slide 8). Then let the volunteers answer the opening question through Session 6's two carry-overs:

Genesis 50:20 in one sentence, and which of the Three Questions (which way does my story bend; the loss now read as redemption; the thread through every chapter) is still working on him. Same five minutes. If several men did not complete the pre-work, name that briefly and ask them to work from their peak experience story this morning instead — it is enough. A man who has not taken VIA can still do Steps 1 and 2 and sit in Step 3 as a listener; ask him to take it before Session 8.

Slide 6 • Values Excavation

Slide 6

25 min

Purpose. Surface operating values through story rather than analysis. Values are embedded in peak experiences and valley moments — the exercise excavates them from the narrative layer.

THREES — 15 MIN

- Move quickly into threes. Each man shares one peak experience story (2–3 min). After each story the group asks: 'What values were present in that moment that made it so meaningful?'
- Coach the listeners explicitly: your job is to reflect back what you heard, not to advise or interpret. 'What I heard you say was ____' is the move.
- Tell men to use their 3–5 circled values as anchors — the candidates they identified at home should come into the conversation in threes. The threes are not starting from scratch; they are testing and confirming.
- Watch the clock. 15 minutes for 3 men means 5 minutes per story. Keep it moving.

VALLEY-MOMENT REFLECTION — 5 MIN INDIVIDUAL

- Call the room to individual quiet. 'Take five minutes privately. Look at your valley moments. What values were being trampled or absent in those moments?'
- Name clearly: they will not be asked to share the details of their valley moments. This is private data that informs their selection.

FULL-GROUP DEBRIEF — 5 MIN

"Without sharing personal details — what surprised you about what your experiences revealed about your values?"

Take 3–4 responses. Surface patterns. If three men mention a similar value (integrity, faithfulness, presence), name that convergence: 'Several of you are landing in similar territory. That's worth noting.' Then move.

Slides 7–9 • The Narrowing

Slides 7–9

25 min

Purpose. Move from a working list of candidates to exactly two core values. This is the most facilitation-intensive movement of the session.

Step 1 — Cross-reference the circled values against stories (4 min)

- Ask men to take out their Values Inventory. 'Look at the 3–5 values you circled. Which of these also showed up in your peak experience stories this morning? Which did your essays reach on their own?'
- Give three minutes of individual reflection. The goal is a shorter list — probably 2–3 finalists.

Step 2 — Brown's Three Filters (4 min)

Take each remaining candidate through the three questions one at a time:

- *Does this define me — not what I aspire to, but who I actually am?*
- *Is this who I am at my best — not just comfortable, but most fully alive?*

- *Would I make a hard decision using this as a filter?*

The Tier 2 'Worth Interrogating' issue. If a man names Achievement, Success, Recognition, or another Tier 2 value as a core value, do not redirect him — ask the question. 'If that's a core value, what does it make possible that you truly value?' Help him find the bedrock beneath the surface. These values are not wrong; they often describe where a man has been rather than where he is going, but he must do that discernment himself.

Step 3 — The VIA Echo Check (7 min, Slide 8)

- Ask men to lay their VIA top 5 beside their working two. Frame it before showing the table: 'VIA does not identify values. It identifies character strengths — the distinctive ways you are wired to express what you value. Your values are your compass bearing. Your character strengths are how you travel. Both should point to the same man.'
- Three minutes individually, two questions: Which of your top 5 strengths were present in your peak moment this morning? Do they echo what your essays and circled values revealed?
- Then two minutes with the man beside him: 'Where do your strengths and your two values point at the same man — and where don't they?' A gap is not a failure; it is the most useful thing he carries into pairs sharing.
- Do not debrief VIA further this morning. Session 8 places these strengths beside the CliftonStrengths themes. This morning VIA is a confirming lens only — seven minutes, then move.

Pairs Sharing — 10 min (Slide 9)

- Pair men who were not in the same three. Each man shares his two values using the three frames: 'I chose these because...' / 'I saw these in my peak moments when...' / 'I see these being violated when...'
- Coach partners explicitly: listen, reflect back, ask 'Does that feel right?' Do not critique or advise. Listening IS the work.
- The question 'Does that feel right?' is a precision instrument. It is not 'Do I agree?' It is an invitation for the speaker to test his own conviction.

Slides 10–12 • Trade-Off Crucible

Slides 10–12

20 min

Purpose. Pressure-test the selections through genuine tension. The scenarios are not ethics exercises — they are values-revelation instruments. The point is not what a man chooses but what the choice reveals about what he actually values.

F Critical facilitation instruction: ask men to write their choice privately before any discussion begins. Do not skip this step. If discussion precedes private choice, the first strong voice in the room shapes everyone else's answer. Private writing followed by discussion surfaces individual values hierarchies. Group discussion first surfaces social conformity.

Running the scenarios (10 min, Slide 10; reserve scenarios on Slide 11)

- Run the three scenarios on Slide 10 in order — Time & Relationships, Marriage & Mission, Truth & Harmony. They are the three that reliably produce the richest discussion and map most directly onto the marriage work of Session 4. Do not add scenarios from the reserve slide unless the room is well ahead of the clock.
- For each scenario, give 90 seconds for private writing. Then two men share and explain their choice — no more.
- After the third scenario, pause and ask the group: 'Are you seeing a pattern in your choices?' This is not rhetorical — men often genuinely see a value emerging for the first time at this moment.
- Slide 11 holds the five reserve scenarios (Security & Calling, Self & Service, Legacy & Present, Growth & Loyalty, Integrity & Loyalty). Show it for a moment, name it as optional take-home — only if it calls to him, not counted in the three weeks' load — and move on.

Crucible Discussion — 10 min (Slide 12)

Open the floor with the three questions from Slide 12:

- *Which scenario created the most tension for you — and why?*
- *Did you notice a pattern in your choices across multiple scenarios?*
- *Was there a scenario where you surprised yourself — where you chose differently than you expected?*
- Tension is the data. The scenario that felt hardest usually sits at the intersection of two genuinely held values. Name that: 'The reason that felt hard is that you actually hold both values. The scenario is revealing which one wins when they can't coexist.'
- Surprise is the most honest data. When a man says 'I didn't expect to choose that,' he is describing a value that operates below conscious awareness. That value is almost certainly load-bearing.
- Resist the pull toward consensus. The room does not need to agree. The goal is individual clarity. Close Slide 12 with the bottom banner: 'The goal is not consensus — it is clarity. Each man should be moving toward his own two non-negotiables.'

Slide 13 • Charter Anchor

Slide 13

5 min

Purpose. Complete the identity arc: values named and checked against character strengths (this morning), Charter anchor named, CliftonStrengths and the practice assigned.

Charter Anchor — 5 min (Slide 13)

- Go around the room. Each man states his two values in one sentence, and the Source of each: C, F or I. Write every man's values where all can see — whiteboard, flip chart, or projected list.
- THE SOURCE QUESTION (1 min, before the go-around). SAY: "Before you say your two out loud, beside each value, mark where you first received it: C · from Christ, F · from your family, I · from your industry or career. Only one is

finally authoritative. Most of us carry a mix. A value marked F or I is not wrong. It is a value to bring under C.” This is the Source mark Charter §1.2 asks for beside each Core Value. Do not discuss the marks; just let each man say his.

- Do not rank, evaluate, or comment on any man's choices. Just the list.
- Then ask one discussion question: 'Looking at this list — what do you notice? Where do you see the same values showing up in multiple men?'
- This often produces a moment of genuine recognition — men who named different words realizing they are pointing at the same thing, or men surprised by the diversity. Both are worth brief acknowledgment. Do not extend this beyond 3 minutes.

Charter homework (assigned this slide): §1.2 My Compass, part 2 — about 30 minutes. One item is required; the rest is optional • Going Deeper.

- Required: name two core values, define each in one sentence of his own, and mark each C, F or I (the Source Question).
- Optional: for each domain of life, one sentence showing how the value operates there.
- Optional: one behavioral commitment — ‘I will know I’m living this when...’
- Optional: one early warning sign — ‘I will know I’m drifting when...’
- Optional: name the person who will hold him to these values.

Slides 14–15 • Homework + Send-off

Slides 14–15

4 min

Purpose. Assign CliftonStrengths — the one required assessment before Session 8 — clearly, and for the first time this morning. Then put the one week on one slide (Slide 15): everything due at Session 8, with minutes and a total. Close with the byline.

- Walk through Slide 14. Required: CliftonStrengths Top 5 (\$24, gallup.com — CliftonStrengths Top 5 report; about 60 minutes with sign-up and reading the report), taken this week, before Session 8 on January 11; print or bring the Top 5. Already done: VIA, taken after Session 5 — ask men to bring their top 5 back to Session 8. Optional: Life's Great Question (tomrath.org/contribify, free, about 15 min). The lower-right card has changed: the Values × Strengths Crosswalk and the Skills Harvest now happen in the room at Session 8, in the Session 8 Workbook, which is handed out there. Nothing to do on them at home. The Enneagram is no longer part of the program; if a man asks, say simply that we have taken it out.
- Emphasize: CliftonStrengths and Charter §1.2 part 2 (two values, one sentence each) are due before Session 8. Clifton results go in Charter §1.3 Strengths & Gifts, at Session 8.
- Walk Slide 15, This Week's Work — the one closing list. Name the window: one week to Session 8 (January 11). Required, with honest minutes: Charter §1.2 My Compass, part 2 — two core values, one sentence each (30) • CliftonStrengths Top 5 (60) • Practice of the Week: Name the value you see, 3 • Speak Truly & Encourage (inside the week). About 90 minutes. Bring to Session 8: CliftonStrengths Top 5, VIA top 5, the Charter binder (§1.1 and §1.2). Nothing new to hand out: card P is already in the pocket; the Session 8 Workbook is handed out at Session 8. Optional • Going Deeper, not counted: Life's Great Question; one reserve scenario from Slide 11; the rest of the §1.2 anchor. Gone from this week: the Crosswalk and the Skills Harvest (Session 8 does them in the room) and the field report (this week's practice replaces it).
- Close with the byline after Slide 16. Say it slowly: 'Wise Men Still Seek, Knowing Their Why's.'

Slide 16 • Practice of the Week

Slide 16

1–2 min

Purpose. One to two minutes: name the week's practice and its Toolkit section, then try it once in pairs. Point, don't teach.

- SAY: "Tell someone which value you see them living, and where. One minute now: try it once on the man beside you."
- DO: Read the practice: Name the value you see. Name its skill and section: "It is section 3, Speak Truly & Encourage, in your Toolkit — the card is the menu, the Toolkit is the kitchen." Then one minute, in pairs, right now: Tell the man beside you one value you saw him live this morning, and where. Then swap. Out of time? Each man names the one person he will try it with this week. The tracker is weekly, not daily: "Tried it this week ☐" and one moment line on the card. Rooted in your Values Compass, turned outward. It replaces the field report: a moment with his wife or a close friend is exactly what Session 8 asks for.
- Opening check-in next week: "Tell us one moment with this week's practice: Name the value you see."

The Listening Rubric

F DIAGNOSTIC, NOT DIDACTIC

As men share stories and values, ask yourself silently: Is this an espoused value or an operating value? Does his story confirm or complicate what he's naming? What value is he describing but not yet naming? Do not answer these questions aloud for him. Let your listening sharpen his articulation.

Common Facilitation Scenarios

The man who can't get below ten candidates.

Ask: 'If you could only keep two of these — which two would you fight hardest to hold onto?' The fight criterion usually reveals the non-negotiables faster than analysis.

The man who chose his values based on what sounds good.

Ask him the filter questions, then: 'Would your wife recognize these as the values operating in your marriage right now?' The external validation question often surfaces the gap between espoused and operating values. Do this gently — this is invitation, not confrontation.

The man who is still deciding between two candidates.

Ask: 'If both values were in conflict — if honoring one required you to compromise the other — which would win?' The conflict question reveals the hierarchy without requiring abstract reasoning.

The man who claims too many values, all equally important.

Use the Jesus frame briefly: 'Jesus was asked which commandment is greatest. He gave two — not ten. Not a comprehensive list. Two load-bearing convictions that everything else flows from. That is the target here.' This usually lands well in an NCC context.

The man who pushes back on the two-value limit.

Do not argue. Acknowledge: 'You're right that you value many things. The question isn't what you value — it's what you non-negotiably stand for. Those aren't the same question. The first has many answers. The second has very few.' If he still pushes back, let him name three — but ask which two he would defend if pressed.

Pre-Work Summary for Facilitator Reference

Men complete the following before Session 7. Use this list to calibrate your facilitation based on what actually came in:

PRE-WORK ITEM	PURPOSE & FACILITATOR USE
Workview and Lifeview essays — Charter §1.2, part 1 (with the Life Theme)	Surfaces values from narrative — inside-out approach. The Life Theme (sitting 3) is the thread the values hang on. Use their surprise responses in the opening debrief.
WhyzMen Values Inventory r2 — 3–5 circled	The primary input for Movement 3. Vocabulary and recognition pass, then three to five candidates in the box. Tier 2 interrogation matters — watch for men who claimed Tier 2 values without doing it; surface it gently in the narrowing.
Optional: Domain Grid and Synthesis	Going Deeper in the Values Inventory. A man who did them arrives with a cross-domain count; a value starred in 3+ domains almost certainly belongs in his final two. Do not ask who did them.
VIA Character Strengths (top 5)	Taken after Session 5 (free, about 25 min). Used this morning as Step 3 of the Narrowing — a confirming lens only. Full strengths work belongs in Session 8, where VIA sits beside CliftonStrengths, which is assigned this morning at Slide 14.

CHARTER §1.2 MY COMPASS, PART 2 — TWO CORE VALUES

Session 7 produces part 2 of Charter §1.2. Men complete it after the session, before Session 8 — about 30 minutes. Required is the first item; the rest is optional • Going Deeper:

- Two core values named and defined in one sentence each, in the man's own words, each marked C, F or I (required).

- Optional: one sentence per domain showing how each value operates in that sphere of life.
- Optional: one behavioral commitment — 'I will know I'm living this when...'
- Optional: one early warning sign — 'I will know I'm drifting when...'
- Optional: one accountability person named.

The domain-by-domain sentences are the link from named values to lived values. They are the beginning of behavioral operationalization — which the Behavioral Checklist will deepen. Men receive it at Session 15 as a year-two tool for the triad; do not hand it out tonight.

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

— Proverbs 4:23