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ReEntry 101 - Value Cards Exercise
Adapted from Amber Ballion, Pacific Lutheran University

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PURPOSE:

As mentioned in the "Reflection on Community / Self" document, studying aboard has the potential to completely reshape one's understanding of community, self, and how the two fit together. Furthermore, one's core values can be challenged, reinforced, and/or reevaluated when residing in a different culture. The following exercise will guide you through identifying and reflecting upon the values you find most meaningful; you may again want to complete this activity *both* prior to leaving and after returning from your time away.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Step 1: Print off the accompanying "Value Cards" PDF and cut them out. Place all of the cards face up on a table, desk, floor, etc.

Step 2: Begin by reviewing the entire deck and choosing the ten values you identify with most.

> *Why did you choose these values over the others? Can you identify past experiences or teachings you relied upon to favor these values?*

Step 3: Next isolate your "top five" values out of the ten cards you chose during Step 2.

> *Again, why did you choose these values over the others? Can you identify past experiences or teachings you relied upon to further favor these values?*

DEBRIEF:

Understanding one's values as dynamic and ever-changing can be a disconcerting reality of studying away, but such a realization is also a rewarding one. This exercise encouraged you to think critically about why you accept certain values and reject others; instead of relying solely on blind certainty, you had to make tough decisions about which ones to make finalists and which ones to discard. Picking apart these values might also help in your reflection of what you valued most from the sojourn more generally. Below are some additional questions to consider:

> *Ideally you will have complete this exercise both prior to departing and after returning from your sojourn. Is their any overlap between your selected values beforehand and your values now? Are there distinct differences, and if so, what specifically might have accounted for these differences?*

> *Are their values not listed in the deck that you think should be added? If so, which value(s) would you contribute?*