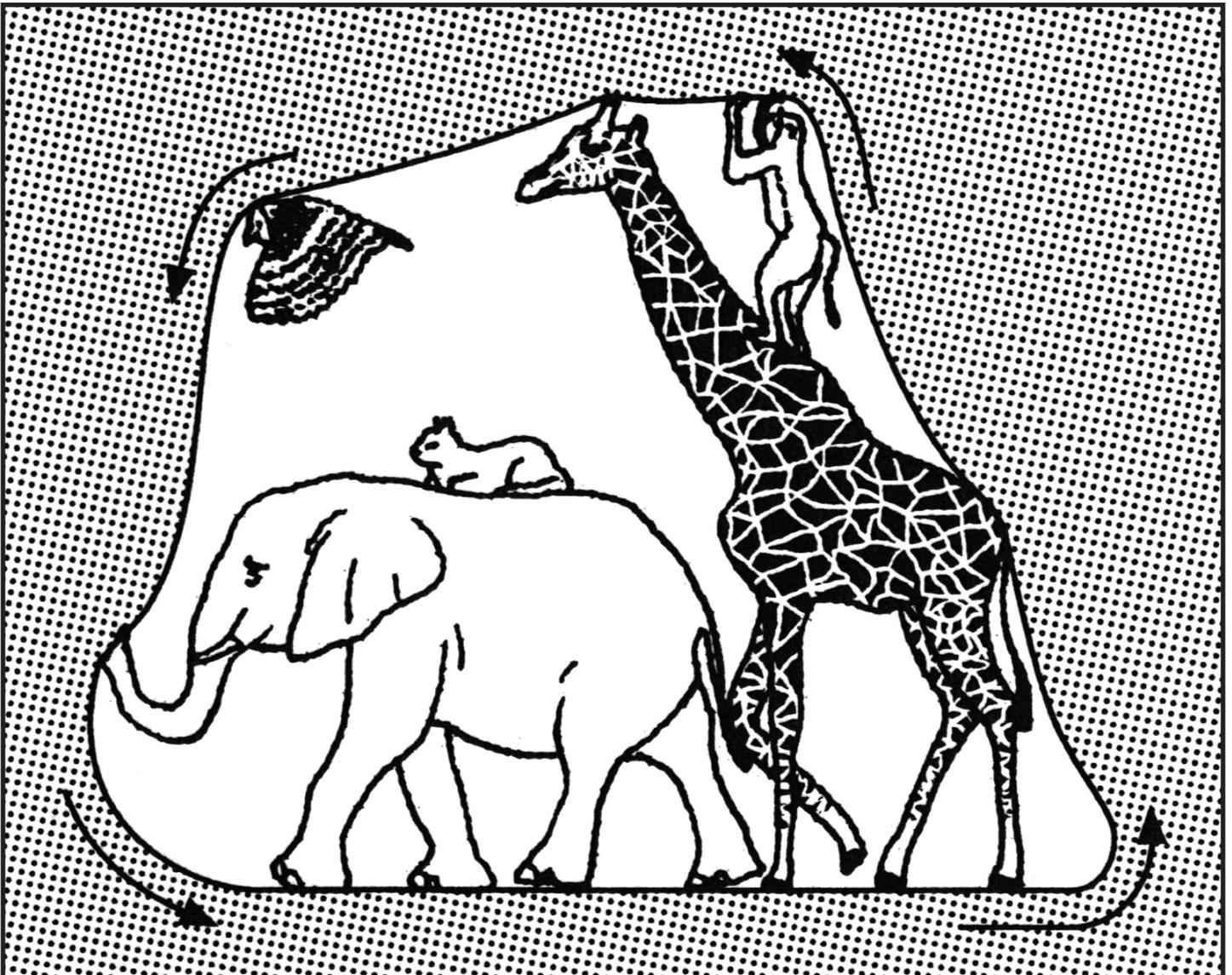


Dropbox Design

# Team Values Toolkit

Activities for exploring values  
and building team alliances



# About Culture Kits

The Team Values Toolkit along with all of our Culture Kits are free, adaptable, and made for anyone who wants to make work better. We're sharing our tools to empower and equip you to shape your own work culture. What will you explore with this Culture Kit? Visit [dropbox.design](https://dropbox.design) for more.

## Contributors

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# Team Values Toolkit

Activities for exploring values and building team alliances

## Introduction

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Co-creating a team contract is a way to align with your team on how you want to work together, communicate, make decisions, share information, and work better together.

Work habits and collaborative norms form organically, often without intentional design. Norms that are formed by most people on a team may not always account for or include everyone on a team. How might we approach this process in an inclusive way? How might we take personal ownership of defining and co-creating partnerships? How might we work to make these norms shared and explicit?

What would happen if we viewed these team contracts as products designed around our needs as a group—engaging in the same discovery, prototyping, testing, and iteration processes that are used to create any product or service?

**This two-part toolkit invites your group to talk about working together, define ideal conditions for teamwork, and document shared values in the form of a social contract.**

Learn more at [dropbox.design](https://dropbox.design)

## Kit Contents

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### Activity One: Identifying Personal Values

- Overview
- Instructions for the Storyteller
- Instructions for the Listener
- Animal cards

### Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values and Documenting Our Alliance

- Overview
- Instructions for the Team
- Question cards
- Alliance worksheet

## Suggested Use

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- Before starting a new project with your team
- Checking in midway through a project
- As you begin to work with new collaborators

### Suggested Time

2–3 hour workshop with follow-up conversations as needed

## Printing Instructions & Assembly

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To print this toolkit, you will need a printer, paper, and scissors. When you're ready to print, make sure that you select these settings on your printer:

- Print at actual size (US Letter 8.5 x 11 inches)
- Double-sided, for cards only (optional)

For pagination, you can reference the Kit Contents section.

**Activity One**

# **Identifying Individual Values**

**Exceptional groups voice and  
take ownership of their values**

## Activity One: Identifying Individual Values

### Exceptional groups voice and take ownership of their values

#### Overview

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Values—our deeply held and non-negotiable understandings and preferences—are a central element of both the formation and transformation of conflict. The act of voicing one’s values can be as important as having them. In conflict and collaboration, people want to use their voice to be heard by others and to reinforce a sense of who they are. Collaboration can be complicated because of the “invisible lines” that make up personal or group boundaries.

Sharing values makes the invisible visible, giving the speaker self-determination, authority, and ownership. For the listener, it opens channels of communication and creates a sense of empathy and understanding. Together, the process of voicing one’s values and listening to another’s can aid in developing relationships, changing norms and behaviors, and legitimizing both similarities and differences.

The purpose of this two-part activity is to reflect and identify your own values in action, listen to and learn about your partner in new ways, and discover where your core values align or diverge.

#### Duration

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30-46 minutes

#### Format

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Conversation in pairs

#### Materials

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- Animal cards
- Timer (optional)

## Activity One: Identifying Individual Values

This two-part activity starts a conversation about what matters most to us when working with others

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### Instructions

Start by dividing into pairs. Each pair chooses someone to be the Storyteller for Part 1. The Storyteller will follow the instructions in Part 1 and share a personal story with the Listener. Then, swap roles so that each person gets a turn as the Storyteller. Move on to Part 2, again making sure each person has a chance to be the Storyteller and the Listener.

There are instructions for both the Storyteller and the Listener. Review these together before you begin.

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### Suggested Modifications

#### 5-minute value exploration:

In this quick version, the Storyteller picks a card and tells their partner, the Listener, a story for Part 1. The Listener's role is to actively listen and ask questions. Set the timer for 5 minutes and explore!

#### Morning value meditation:

This version splits up Part 1 and Part 2 into two sessions. Begin the day by dividing your team into pairs and doing Part 1 of the activity. The next day, your morning begins by picking up where you left off, meeting in the same pairs and doing Part 2. Leave 15–20 minutes for each part; you may find it helpful to use a timer.

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### Activity Reflection

After you've had an opportunity to share, it can be helpful to reflect on where your values or working styles align and where they diverge. If you're doing this work with a larger team, we suggest coming back together at the start of Activity Two to identify a set of shared group values.

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### Instructions for the Storyteller

#### Part 1:

Bring to mind a project or a job where you were working with others to get something done, and the experience felt positive, fulfilling, and full of ease, even if the work itself was challenging.

Select an animal card from the deck that represents something about this experience—the way you felt about it or the way you felt while in it—and tell your partner a story describing how the animal or image connects to this experience.

#### Part 2:

Bring to mind an experience with a project or a job that felt frustrating, where working with others felt hard, even if the tasks were not that difficult.

Like you did before, select an animal card from the deck that represents something about this experience, and tell your partner a story about how the animal or image connects to this experience.

When telling your story, try to use specific examples and include details about the experience and its impact on you.

If the Listener repeats back what they heard you say, make sure to confirm, clarify, or correct where appropriate.

Make sure to tell the Listener about any values you hold that may not have been conveyed in your story, or anything else you want them to know before moving on.

## Activity One: Identifying Individual Values

This two-part activity starts a conversation about what matters most to us when working with others

### Instructions

---

Start by dividing into pairs. Each pair chooses someone to be the Storyteller for Part 1 (see: For the Storyteller). The Storyteller will follow the instructions in Part 1 and share a personal story with the Listener. Then, swap roles so that each person gets a turn as the Storyteller. Move on to Part 2, again making sure each person has a chance to be the Storyteller and the Listener.

There are instructions for both the Storyteller and the Listener. Review these together before you begin.

### Suggested Modifications

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In this quick version, the Storyteller picks a card and tells their partner, the Listener, a story for Part 1. The Listener's role is to actively listen and ask questions. Set the timer for 5 minutes and explore!

#### Morning value meditation:

This version splits up Part 1 and Part 2 into two sessions. Begin the day by dividing your team into pairs and doing Part 1 of the activity. The next day, your morning begins by picking up where you left off, meeting in the same pairs and doing Part 2. Leave 15–20 minutes for each part; you may find it helpful to use a timer.

### Activity Reflection

---

After you've had an opportunity to share, it can be helpful to reflect on where your values or working styles align and where they diverge. If you're doing this work with a larger team, we suggest coming back together at the start of Activity Two to identify a set of shared group values.

### Instructions for the Listener

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Listen intently, keep the conversation focused on the Storyteller, and ask open-ended questions to draw out their story.

**Can you give me an example?**

**Why was that important to you?**

**How was it different from your expectations?**

**Tell me more about X.**

Pay attention to the words, phrases, and metaphors the Storyteller uses—listen for the values that surface throughout their story. What does this person value in a working relationship? Using their words, paraphrase and share back what matters to them—ask for confirmation, clarification, or correction where appropriate.

**What I hear you saying is X. Is there anything I missed?  
It sounds like you value X. Is that right?**

## Activity Two

# Exploring Shared Values

Exceptional groups work together to  
make goals and expectations clear

## Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values

Exceptional groups work together to make goals and expectations clear

### Overview

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The co-creation of goals, narratives, and agreements is a bedrock of interpersonal and intergroup cooperation. The positive impact of forming alliances is recognized by conflict resolution theories and techniques.

Establishing a shared social contract is a task that groups can only achieve by working together. It requires the knowledge and input of all members and inspires a sense of group belonging and cohesion. Negotiating alliances gives group members a sense of ownership, kickstarts important conversations, and reinforces collaborative thinking and behaviors.

The purpose of this two-part activity is to align with your group on how you want to work together, communicate, make decisions, share information, and support each other.

### Duration

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1-2 hours

### Format

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Group discussion

### Materials

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- Question cards
- Alliance worksheet
- Pen
- Timer (optional)

## Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values

This two-part activity starts a discussion about how we want to work together and then guides us as we create a group contract reflecting our shared values

### Instructions

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To begin, we suggest coming back together as a whole group to identify a set of shared values you'd like to adopt. In the group, identify and write down the values you identified in Activity One and place them on a wall or table. From here, have each person in the group cast a few votes using a marker or sticky dots to align on 3–5 values that you'd like to take forward.

With these shared values in mind, use the Question cards to prompt a conversation with the whole group or host smaller breakout groups to explore individual questions. The goal for the conversations is to explore and ultimately align with your group on how you want to work together, communicate, make decisions, share information, and support each other.

We encourage you to document these agreements using the enclosed Alliance worksheet and/or by placing them in a shared team space like an office or digital workspace.

### Suggestions for Productive Discussion

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- Give examples whenever possible.
- Try to keep responses concise, especially in large groups.
- Try to make sure everyone's voice is represented.

### Suggested Modifications

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#### **5-minute collaboration exploration:**

Have a group member pick a question card and read it aloud. Set a timer for 5 minutes and make sure everyone has a chance to share their answers before the timer runs out.

#### **Teamwork power hour:**

Skip Part 2 (Alliance worksheet). Do an hour-long version of Part 1 (Question cards) by giving your team 10 minutes to discuss the questions on each question card (use a timer).

#### **Candid contract:**

Skip Part 1 and start with Part 2. Give your team 30 minutes (or an hour, or 20 minutes) to answer the questions on the contract worksheet and draw up an alliance they can all agree on.

#### **Take a break:**

Lead your group through Part 1, then wait a week (or as long as you want) before picking up Part 2.

## Activity Two: Exploring Shared Values

Exceptional groups work together to make goals and expectations clear

### Contributors

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#### Metaphors

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Is there an image that describes how we are when we're at our best?

#### Working Styles

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How will we create a supportive working environment?

#### Communication Styles

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How will we communicate and share information?

#### Decision-making and Alignment

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How will we make decisions?

#### Confronting Conflict

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How will we respond to and manage conflict?

#### Accountability

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How and when will we review our alliance?

### Additional Commitments

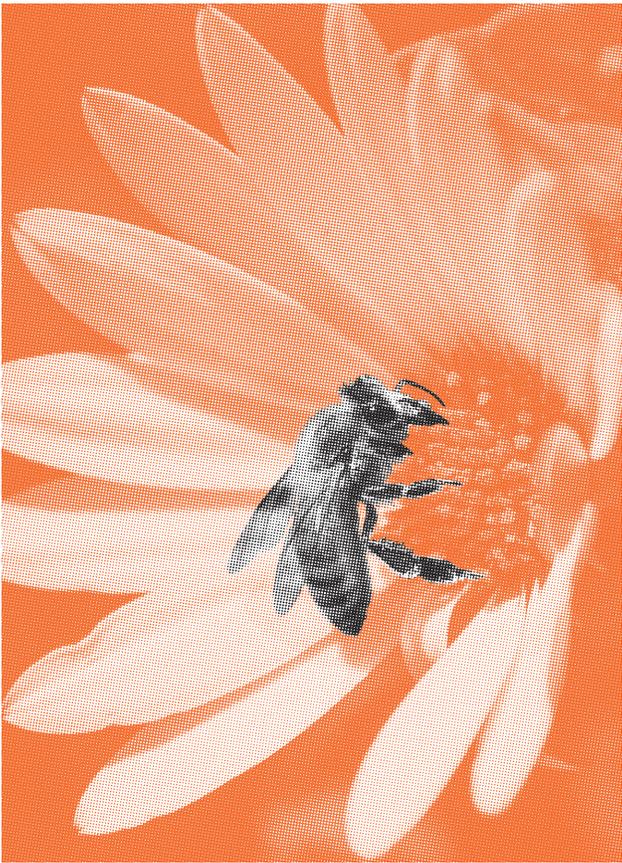
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**Activity One**

# **Animal Cards**

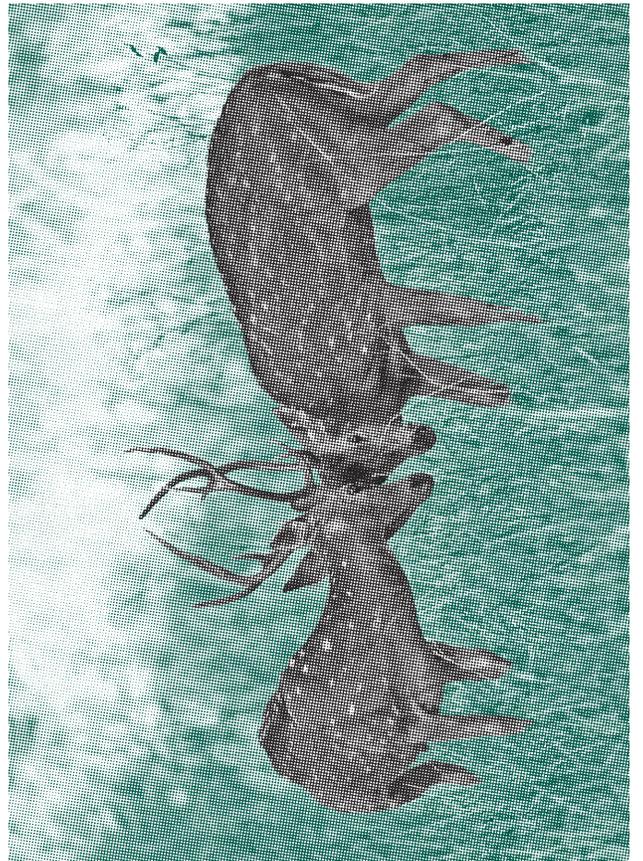
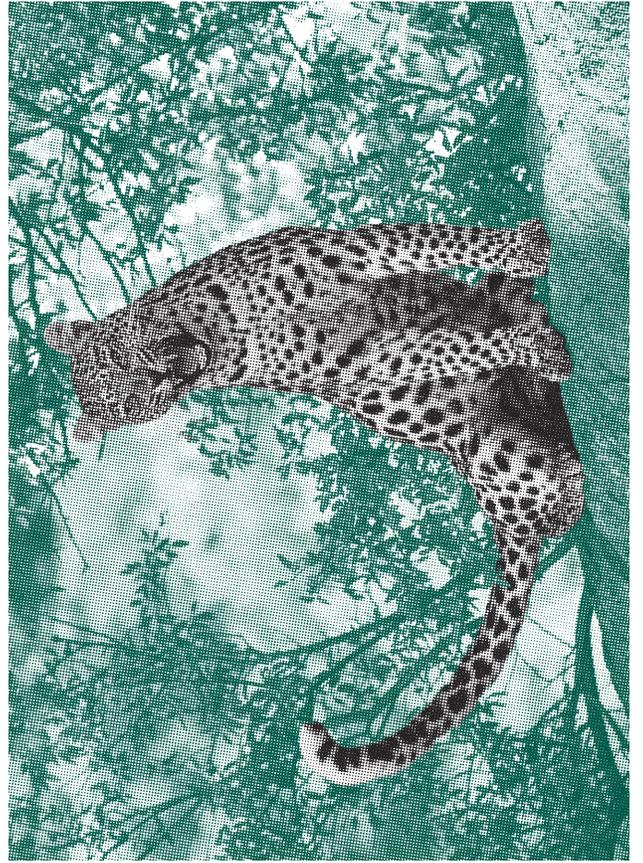
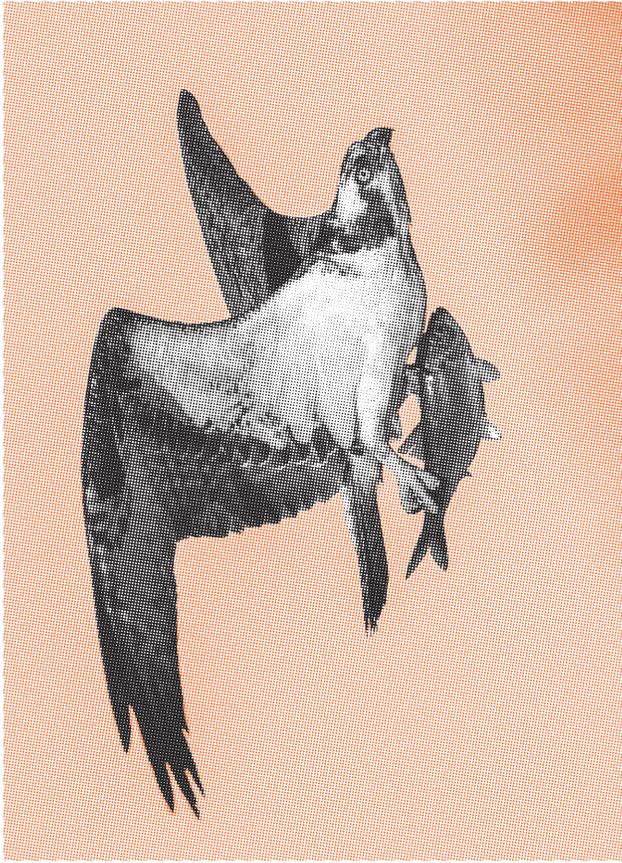
Activity One

## Identifying Individual Values



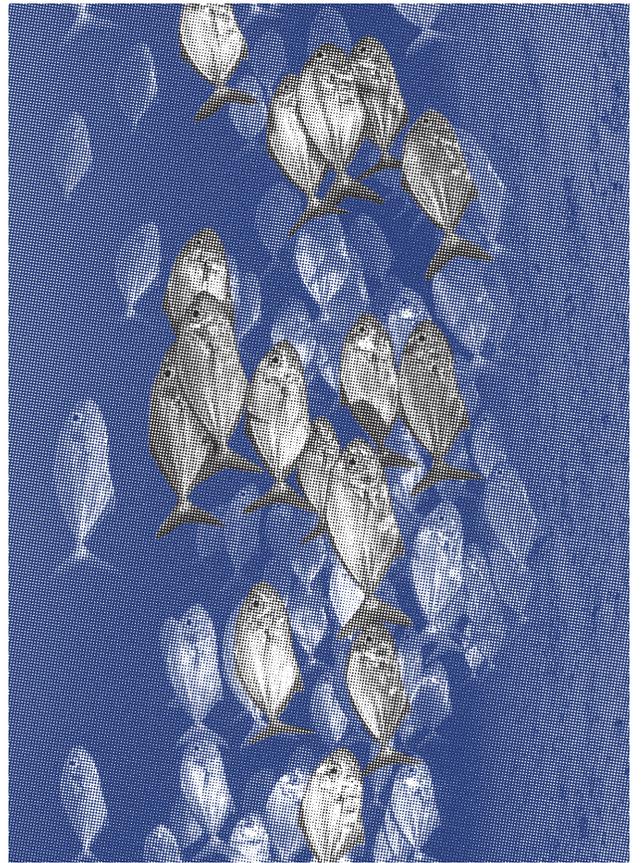
Activity One

## Identifying Individual Values



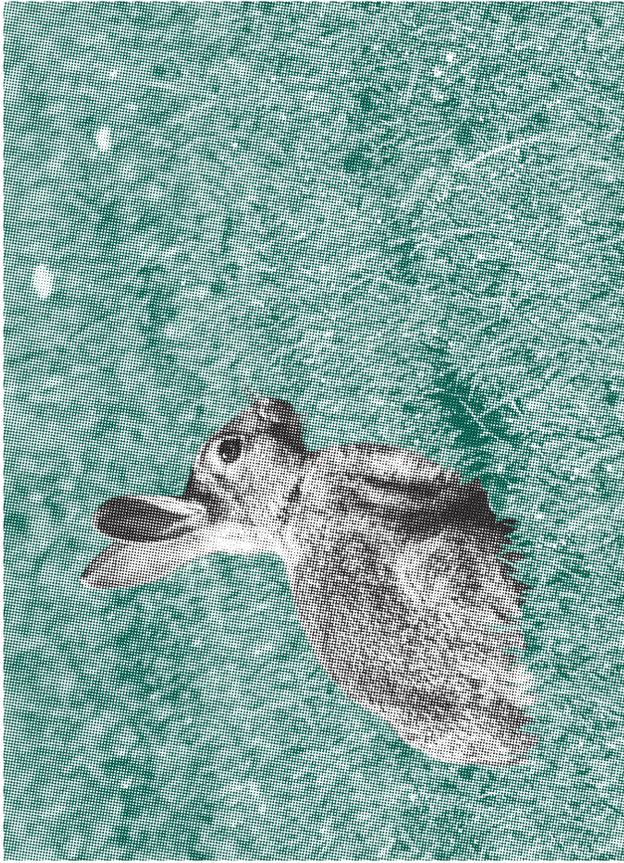
Activity One

## Identifying Individual Values



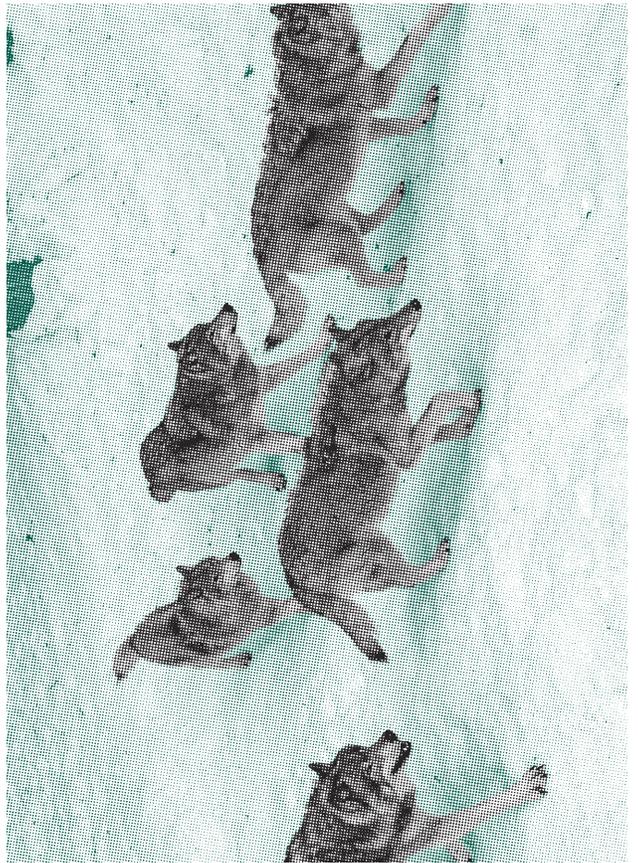
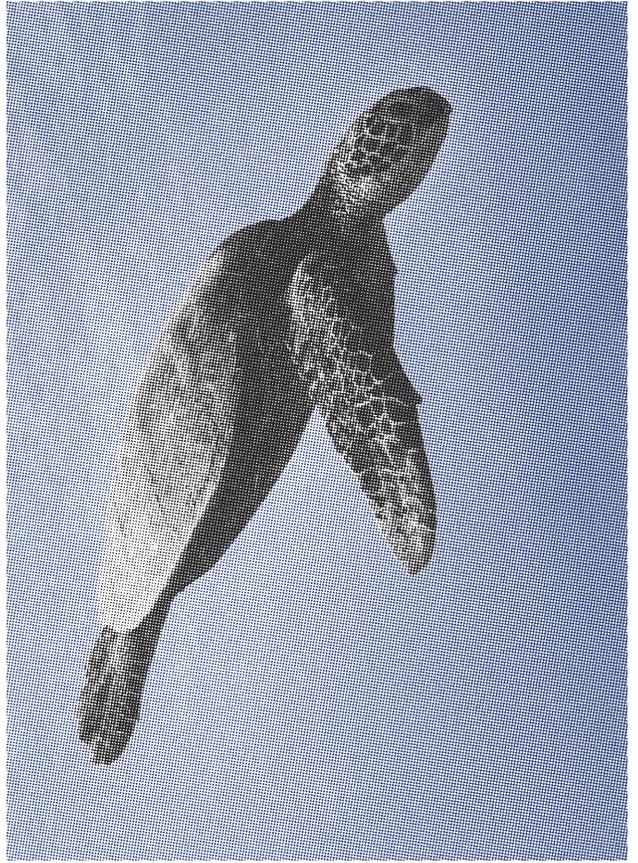
Activity One

## Identifying Individual Values



Activity One

## Identifying Individual Values



**Activity Two**

# **Question Cards**

Activity Two

## Exploring Shared Values

### Confronting Conflict

What unresolved conflicts or problematic patterns need to be addressed before we can move forward constructively?

What issue have you not felt heard about so far? What do you most want others to understand?

What qualities do we wish were more present in the group? What dynamics might interfere with these qualities?

### Working Styles

How do you want to feel when we're working together?

What kind of specific support do you want to request from the team? How do we want to support each other as a team?

What specific and intentional behavior do we want to encourage (or discourage)?

### Making It Ours

What else do we want to define in our contract?

What other conversations do we need or want to have?

What makes us feel proud of our partnership?

### Decision-Making and Alignment

How do we want to make decisions?

What will we do (or not do) when we disagree or aren't aligned?

If disagreement distances us, what will we do to come back together?

Activity Two

# Exploring Shared Values

**Making It Real**

How will we document these agreements?

How will we make sure new teammates or teammates who aren't present can contribute and feel included?

When and how often will we review our alliance and update as needed?