

Your Core Values Should Show Up in Every Room You Enter. Here's What Happens When They Do.

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Key Takeaways

- Core values are most meaningful when they guide behavior both at work and at home.
- Authenticity, reliability, growth and trust should be practiced consistently across all areas of life.
- When leaders make decisions through a values lens and show up as the same person in every room, they build stronger relationships, cultures and organizations.

When I think about core values, I don't think about something that is only posted on a wall. I think about whether I can carry the same version of myself from work to home and back again.

As entrepreneurs, we always have to be "on." At work. At home. At work again. And I have witnessed myself, and others, be one version at home and something different at work. The truth is that being a separate self in each place becomes overwhelming and exhausting.

Authenticity is one of my core values. Yes, it is posted on our wall at the office, but it's so much more than that. I see authenticity as being directly tied to consistency. The person making decisions in the office should be the same person sitting at the dinner table. That alignment matters more than any mission statement or value posted on a website or in your lobby.

Reliability as identity

Early in my career, a manager once told me, "If I give something to Thiru, he will get it done." That feedback stayed with me through multiple job changes and became part of my identity. I want to be that trustworthy and reliable person, whether I'm dealing with employees, customers, family or friends.

Reliability builds trust in small, repeated actions. When people know you will follow through, friction decreases and relationships strengthen. That principle shouldn't change depending on whether you are at home or at the office.

For entrepreneurs, that reliability starts with small commitments. Do you return calls when you say you will? Meet deadlines for employees? Do you follow through on family plans the same way you follow through on board meetings? The habits are the same across all areas.

Growth beyond the office

I believe that in life, you either grow or decay. There is no neutral. That mindset shapes how I build culture at my company, but it also drives how I approach my own development outside of work.

When I started my first company, the first few years were very stressful, and I didn't focus on my health during that period. I was zeroed in on building and proving something, and I didn't manage my stress as well as I should have. Reflecting on this experience, especially when starting my second company, forced me to rethink what growth really means.

The lesson for me was simple: Growth in revenue without growth in discipline eventually catches up with you.

Now, in addition to working out, I spend time every morning on breathwork and meditation. Physical workouts are important, but so is strengthening your mind and spirit. I believe this discipline has made me more present and patient in meetings and at home.

Some days, that simply means I don't walk into my house immediately after reacting to whatever happened that day. I reset first, sometimes for just a few minutes in my car, before walking inside. Entrepreneurs carry intensity all day long. If you don't create a transition habit, that intensity follows you inside.

Decisions through a values lens

At my company, I run almost all of my decisions through a value lens. For example, if someone is technically strong but consistently violates our core values, I coach first. If behavior doesn't change, I will make a hard decision.

Using this lens simplifies leadership. It removes some of the emotional noise and helps clarify what needs to happen.

When I'm unsure, I ask myself: Does this align with who we say we are? Would I be comfortable explaining this decision to my family? That clarity removes a lot of overthinking.

This same approach applies to my life at home. When my teenage son challenges me, which can happen a fair amount these days, I listen instead of reacting. Humility in a conference room and humility in a living room require the same core values.

Hiring for mindset

Another place the alignment between myself at home and myself at work shows up is in how I evaluate people. In consulting, there is ambiguity everywhere. I look for a growth mindset more than credentials because uncertainty is part of the job.

When I interview someone, I want to know how they handled something difficult. Did they overcome it and learn from it? Did they build muscle memory from the experience? Those same questions matter in life. Challenges do not disappear outside the office.

At my company, we use a tool from EOS called GWC, which stands for "gets it, wants it, capacity to do it." Combined with core values, it helps us determine whether someone is in the right seat. That framework brings clarity and keeps decisions consistent.

For founders, having a set, clear framework matters. Without it, hiring becomes emotional. With it, you can make consistent decisions that reinforce your culture.

Leadership in the unspoken moments

I believe leaders are observed more in the unspoken moments than in formal meetings. How you treat someone in the hallway, how you respond under pressure and how you handle frustration communicate your real values. The same is true at home.

Both my wife and my son have strong opinions, and they are not shy about sharing them. My first instinct is that I want to react, but I've learned that listening fully changes the outcome, and that being present is a skill that requires practice.

If I expect my team to feel heard, I have to model that in my own house first and the conference room second.

Building loyalty through action

Intentional habits extend to how a company is built. It is important to focus on incremental improvements instead of dramatic shifts. Whether it is benefits, recognition or growth opportunities, small, consistent changes over time compound. When I see commitment from our team, I feel responsible for matching it. Loyalty works both ways.

In India, our office is in a tier-two city where many employees are local. Loyalty runs deep when people feel valued and supported. When we create a strong environment and meaningful work, retention follows naturally.

Entrepreneurs often ask how to create loyalty. In my experience, it begins with demonstrating it first, no matter where you are. People respond to actions more than statements.

Trust as the default

Finally, I believe in trusting people until they prove otherwise. Whether someone is in the office or working remotely, starting from trust changes the tone of the organization. Trust requires restraint. It means delegating real ownership without hovering, allowing someone to solve a problem in their own way and accepting that growth sometimes includes mistakes.

At home, it looks similar. It means trusting my son to navigate challenges without controlling every outcome, even when it would be easier to step in.

If trust is broken, it must be addressed directly. This does not mean reacting emotionally. It means having a clear conversation grounded in shared values, setting expectations again and deciding whether alignment still exists.

It's very straightforward when you use a consistent values lens. I work on exhibiting traits like growth, reliability, empathy and ownership myself, and also expect them from our team members. When expectations between us all remain aligned, trust thrives.

A continuous pattern

Companies evolve, and titles change. What remains are the habits you practice and the values you live consistently. Carrying the same core values between work and home takes effort, but it creates clarity and trust in both places.

Fragmentation is exhausting. Performing one version of yourself at work and another at home eventually erodes both environments. Alignment, on the other hand, simplifies leadership and relationships alike.

When your values show up in every room, they stop being statements and start becoming character. And character is what ultimately sustains both families and companies.