



GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY
Guidance

Framing Coronavirus Messaging Using the Moral Foundations Theory Framework

Can you take an example like Coronavirus prevention and apply it to all six intuitive moral values in the Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) advocacy framework?

We have been asked in several recent leadership presentation discussions to take the topic of Coronavirus (COVID19) prevention and apply it to community outreach and advocacy using all six Moral Foundation Theory (MFT) values.

Here is a quick example drawn from our workshops that can be used both for frontline public health workers engaging members in any local community and also can be used by spokespersons advocating for Coronavirus prevention in various conversations with decision-makers.

Using the framing concepts and the 6 MFT Values Worksheet described earlier in this Series, below is one concise way that Coronavirus prevention can begin to be framed using all 6 different values and then adapted depending upon the audience.

Six Intuitive Foundational Moral Values

CORONAVIRUS WORKSHEET

MORAL FOUNDATION	YOUR PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGE
1. Care (pairs with Harm) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reflects the base of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs » (Security, Shelter, Food, Water, Warmth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Protect yourself and others » Help those most vulnerable » Public health can assist you » Stay healthy and safe

2. **Liberty** (pairs with Oppression)

- » Physical and Mental Freedom
- » Social Intolerance of Bullies

- » **Coronavirus can threaten our safety and freedom**
- » **We want our community to be free from fear of contagion**
- » **The quicker we beat this, the quicker we recover and return to normal**

3. **Fairness** (pairs with Cheating)

- » Equality of Opportunities
- » Social Intolerance to “Free-Riders”

- » **Everyone has an interest in beating his outbreak**
- » **Those at home all need to have resources to stay there**
- » **Infection does not discriminate**
- » **We have an interest in everyone getting appropriate care**

4. **Loyalty** (pairs with Betrayal)

- » Personal Trust, Group Identity, Patriotism
- » Social isolation of those who betray

- » **Do your part, wash your hands and don't be a risk to others**
- » **We need to protect our community**
- » **Limited resources should go first to responders, HCW's and those caring for us.**
- » **I'm loyal to you and want to keep you safe**

5. **Authority** (pairs with Subversion)

- » Competitive advantage of organized groups
- » Deference to “good” leaders (Alexander the Great)
- » Social intolerance of those who subvert the system

- » **Scientific evidence and common sense show that protective measures really work**
- » **Listen to your local public health official**
- » **Respect HCW's and the risks they are taking**
- » **Quarantine and social distancing may be necessary**
- » **Be a good role model for others**

6. **Sanctity** (pairs with Degradation)

- » Not simply a religious value
- » Respect for the human spirit
- » Social aversion of personal degradation

- » **Public health does not run, it stands by your community**
 - » **Support those taking risks to care for your loved ones**
 - » **Look for ways to serve others**
 - » **Help nurture the spirits of those needing comfort**
 - » **Be willing to sacrifice your wants for community needs**
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This document was developed by Gene Matthews, Director, the Network for Public Health Law – Southeastern Region Office. The Network for Public Health Law provides information and technical assistance on issues related to public health. The legal information and assistance provided in this document does not constitute legal advice or legal representation. For legal advice, please consult specific legal counsel.

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