

How self-aware do you feel you are?

In terms of psychology, self-awareness is often defined as the ability to engage in some kind of reflective awareness.

As you develop an awareness of the self, you begin to connect with your own unique identity. As you focus on yourself and start evaluating your current behavior, in comparison to your internal standards and values, you become self-conscious, and you become an objective evaluator of yourself.

There are many exercises and activities you can do to develop this self-awareness, from questions you can ask yourself to simple exercises.

Before you continue, we thought you might like to **download our three Self-Compassion Exercises for free**. These detailed, science-based exercises will not only help you increase the compassion and kindness you show yourself but will also give you the tools to help your clients, students, or employees show more compassion to themselves.

## **What are Self-Awareness Activities and Exercises?**

Self-awareness activities and exercises are tools that can help you to not only reach your goals but also to discover who you are at core level and what you want out of life.

The more you ‘peel the onion’ per se, the more you will discover what lies underneath. Self-awareness and self-improvement go hand in hand.

Becoming more self-aware can help you understand your wants, needs, and desires as well as your strengths and weaknesses.

Self-awareness is also an important tool for success. Those internal mental processes guide how you behave and how you act. When you become more self-aware, you begin uncovering those destructive thought patterns and unhealthy habits.

## **Common Self-Awareness Techniques**

There are many techniques you can practice to develop self-awareness. Some common techniques include:

- Mindfulness Meditation.
- Grounding techniques, and reconnecting to the Earth.
- Tai Chi, Qigong, or Yoga.
- **Strength Assessments**, such as the Values in Action Strength Test, from the University of Pennsylvania.
- Journaling.
- Having a Personal Vision.
- Observing others.

## **23 Self-Awareness Questions to Ask**

While there are probably hundreds of questions you could ask yourself, in terms of self-awareness, there are a few that stand out.

## **Self-awareness questions on values and life goals**

1. What does your ideal “you” look like?
2. What kinds of dreams and goals do you have?
3. Why are these dreams or goals important?
4. What is keeping you from these dreams or goals?
5. Rank 5-10 of the most important things in your life in your career, family, relationships and love, money, etc.
6. Now think about the proportion of time you dedicate to each of these things.
7. What would you recommend to your children to do or not to do?

## **Self-awareness questions on personality**

8. Describe yourself in three words.
9. Ask yourself if your personality has changed since childhood.
10. Is your personality like either of your parents?
11. What qualities do you most admire in yourself?
12. What is your biggest weakness?
13. What is your biggest strength?
14. What things scare you?
15. Do you make decisions logically or intuitively?

16. How would you complete the question: “What if?”.

## **Self-awareness questions on relationships**

17. Describe your ideal intimate relationship.
18. How satisfied are you in your current relationship?
19. Who would you call if you only had a few minutes to live? What would you say?
20. Who have you loved the most?
21. Of all the relationships you have had, describe the best moment.
22. Describe a devastating moment in terms of relationships.
23. Ask yourself if you treat yourself better than others?

These questions are designed to make you think. Answering these questions is a powerful method of self-discovery.

## **2 Self-Awareness Activities for Adults**

### **1. Mindfulness Meditation**

Mindfulness is a compelling way to enhance self-awareness.

Derived from Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, created by Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness is an awareness that arises through paying attention to the present moment, in a non-judgmental manner.

In mindfulness meditation, you learn to focus on the present moment in the same way.

Harvard researchers studied mindfulness and found that it seemed to change the brain in depressed patients. Studies have also shown some fantastic benefits of mind-body practices, such as lower blood pressure in hypersensitive patients after relaxation-response training.

Learning how to do mindfulness meditation is relatively simple.

Here is an excellent technique to get started:

1. Find a place where you won't be disturbed. You may sit in a chair or on the floor. Be sure to keep your back and neck straight.
2. As you begin, try and stay focused on the present moment. Don't think about the past or the future.
3. Develop an awareness of the breath, and focus on the feeling of air moving in and out of your body as you breathe in and out. Notice your belly rising and falling, as the air enters your nostrils and leaves your mouth. Notice how each breath is a little different.
4. Notice every thought that comes and goes. You can even name your thoughts. If you are worried,

acknowledge that and let it go. Don't ignore your thoughts, but make a note of them, using your breath as an anchor.

5. If you have trouble staying focused on the present moment, bring your focus back to your breathing and don't be too hard on yourself.
6. Strive for a minute or so initially and work your way up to longer periods.

## **2. Grounding Techniques**

According to Dr. Sara Allen, a psychotherapist, grounding is a wonderful way to calm down quickly, and it's also an excellent tool for developing self-awareness.

Grounding is another term for connecting with the Earth and bringing your focus into the present moment, similar to mindfulness.

One simple grounding technique is called the Grounding Chair. (Allen, 2019)

1. Find a comfortable chair to sit in and close your eyes. Make sure your feet can touch the floor.
2. Start breathing in and exhaling to the count of 3.
3. Bring your focus to your body next. Notice how your body feels and how your legs and feet feel. Notice how your back feels against the chair or surface. Notice the texture of the fabric and how the

seat feels.

4. Next, imagine your feet are pushing down into the ground. Picture your energy draining down from your mind, and out through your feet into the Earth.
5. As the energy drains from your head, notice how heavy each part of your body feels as you relax those muscles.
6. Feel this sense of heaviness going down your legs, through your feet and down into the ground.

You can do this same technique outside, with your shoes off. Something is compelling about connecting with the Earth in this manner.

## **2 Self-Awareness Training Activities for Youth and Students**

There are many enjoyable self-awareness activities for youths and students as well.

One of these is the Sparks: Peer-to-Peer Interview worksheet. The basis of this exercise is the exploration of a child's passions, interests, and talents, otherwise known as sparks.

The worksheet has six simple questions that can help someone delve into these ideas.

1. What is one of your sparks (passions, interests, talents)?

2. How did you discover that this is one of your sparks?
3. How do you feel when you are doing your spark?
4. Think of somebody who is really into their spark/passion. Describe what you see.
5. Do you have a spark champion (an adult who helps you explore and develop your self-awareness skills)? If yes, describe how this person helps you.
6. Do you set goals and make plans to get better at your spark/talent? If yes, give me an example.

This worksheet is also available on the [actforyouth.net website](http://actforyouth.net). This kind of simple questioning can help someone identify and build upon his or her strengths.

Another great resource is the self-awareness worksheet for kids, available on the [understood.org website](http://understood.org) for learning and attention issues.

The self-awareness worksheet has seven questions that can help a child to self-advocate. This worksheet can also be done with the child, to help them build an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

### Questions:

1. I am strong in these areas:

- .
- .
- .

2. I struggle with:

- .
- .
- .



## Questions:

3. My favorite thing about school is:

- .
- .
- .

4. Here's what the teachers I'm most comfortable with do to make that happen:

- .
- .
- .

5. The most stressful part of my school day is:

- .
- .
- .

6. I'd like some help with:

- .
- .
- .

7. When I need help, I'm comfortable asking for it in the following ways:

- .
- .
- .

## **3 Self-Awareness Activities and Exercises for Kids and Toddlers**

Toddlers and small kids can also benefit from developing self-awareness.

While a child this age may not be entirely self-aware, they do know how to create a mental picture in their mind.

As their self-awareness develops, so does their self-identity. For children of this age, self-awareness is more about noticing the differences and discovering their bodies and emotions.

Engaging in activities that help support this can go a long way to helping them learn and grow.

## **1. Same Versus Different Activity**

Children of this young age do recognize the similarities and differences, which includes things like skin color and other physical characteristics that set them apart from others.

A fun way to do this is to have kids try on different color socks or knee-high nylons, representing different skin colors. As they do this, you can emphasize the beauty and uniqueness of all the different colored skin.

According to childhood specialist Barbara Biles, this kind of simple activity can help a child learn to appreciate their skin color and the skin color of others.

## **2. Physical Awareness Activity**

Physical self-awareness also expands with age. Growth activities are a great way to help promote this. Growth activities help a young child better understand and accept their developing body.

These kinds of encouraging, positive, interactive growth activities can be very helpful. Things like hanging a height and growth chart on the wall or having a child point to various body parts by looking in the mirror, are fun activities. Children can also draw an outline of their body or their hands and feet.

This kind of activity can help promote physical awareness and self-acceptance for a young child.

## **3. Self-Responsibility Activity**

Teaching responsibility can also be considered a self-awareness activity. Young children frequently leave toys around the house without realizing any sense of responsibility.

Making a young child responsible for his toys or possessions in a fun and interactive way can go a long way to teaching them the necessary skills.

According to child educator Jean Warren, this kind of activity can also help a young child attain self-worth and group identity.

These activities and more are available on the [healthfully.com website](http://healthfully.com).

## **4 Employee Activities for the Workplace**

Daniel Goleman, a psychologist specializing in self-awareness and emotional intelligence, suggests that people with a solid sense of self-awareness generally have more self-confidence, and they have a more realistic assessment of themselves.

Some activities that can help improve self-awareness include practicing how you feel throughout the day, considering how your negative emotions impact others, thinking about ways you can better manage your emotions as well as taking an honest look at your strengths and weaknesses.

According to Goleman, it's essential to recognize that emotions can be fleeting, and they shouldn't be the foundation of decision-making or communication.

As you consider how your negative emotions impact others, like your boss or your co-workers, you also begin to realize how emotions like anger, jealousy, or frustration have a negative impact. Building self-awareness can help you acknowledge the fallout and the repercussions of such behavior.

Learning to manage your emotions better can also make a big difference. Doing so can help you avoid knee-jerk reactions or saying things you don't mean.

All of this requires taking an honest look at your strengths and weaknesses. You can do this by looking at past performance reviews or asking for feedback from someone you trust like your peers or from your boss. When you do this, you can actively work on improving those weak areas.

## **2 Self-Awareness Worksheets (Incl. PDF)**

The [Triggers Worksheet](#) is a wonderful tool for becoming more aware of those things that set you off.

Being aware of triggers can help you cope better in life, and it can also be a helpful tool for those with anxiety, depression, anger management, and other issues like substance abuse.

The worksheet is designed to help you identify three triggers. You are then asked to reflect on those triggers by answering the following questions:

1. Why does this trigger you?
2. What is your reaction to your trigger?
3. What do you need to remind yourself of, to stay in control when you are confronted with this trigger?

These questions can help build self-awareness and strengthen defense systems against harmful thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

The **Setting Life Goals Worksheet** is another useful tool to help someone identify what they want out of life.

Using this type of tool can also **help motivate someone** who may be struggling in life. Identifying goals can help someone be more self-aware as they start to get an idea of what it will take to achieve this goal.

Once someone identifies a goal, they are then asked to expand on that goal by asking a series of questions such as:

1. What do you need to know to achieve this life goal?
2. What kinds of qualities do you have that can help you?
3. What kind of challenges do you anticipate?
4. Do you have a sound support system?
5. Why do you want to achieve this goal?
6. How will achieving this goal add to your sense of purpose or happiness?

## **Can We Measure and Test Self-Awareness?**

Dispositional self-awareness can be conceptualized in different ways, including insight, reflection, rumination, and mindfulness. (Sutton, 2016)

According to the research, self-awareness is typically associated with positive psychological well-being with varying outcomes.

Self-awareness is generally defined as the extent to which someone is consciously aware of their internal

state as well as their relationships or interactions with others. (Sutton, 2016).

This idea can be further broken down into situational self-awareness and dispositional self-awareness.

Situational self-awareness is an automatic process that helps you know where you are and what you can do. It enables you to compare your current actions to your internal standards helping you foresee if you need to make any adjustments. (Silva & Duval, 2001).

Dispositional self-awareness, on the other hand, is the tendency for one to focus on and reflect on their own psychological processes as well as their subjective experiences and relationships with others. (Fenigstein et al., 1975)

Fenigstein also breaks this concept down further, by differentiating between public and private self-consciousness. Public self-consciousness is about how we appear to others where private self-consciousness is more about developing an awareness of our internal state.

One tool for measuring private self-consciousness is The Self-Reflection and Insight Scale or SRIS, (Grant, Franklin, & Langford, 2002)

This scale was developed as a measure of private self-consciousness, which assesses one's internal state of awareness or insight separately from self-reflection.

Self-reflection refers to the extent to which one evaluates and pays attention to their internal state where insight is more about clarity of understanding.

By developing measures of self-awareness, we can continue expanding our awareness in these areas.

## **2 Useful Tests**

The DISC personality test is designed to not only help you become more self-aware but also to help you increase your personal and professional success.

The test measures your DISC personality type:

1. Dominance
2. Influence
3. Steadiness
4. Compliance

This can help you better predict your behavior towards others as well as those things you do every day.

The test contains 28 groups of four statements. The questions are to be answered honestly and spontaneously. The test only takes about 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

Some of the questions include:

1. People look up to me.
2. I tend to be a kind person.
3. I accept life as it comes.
4. People say I have a strong personality.



The idea is to study all of the descriptions in each group of four, and select the one that most describes you.

You may also examine the three remaining choices, and decide which description you consider the least like you.

The full version of the test can be accessed via the [123test.com website](https://www.123test.com).

The Jung Personality test can help you explore things like how you think, how you make decisions, and how you deal with others.

The test also helps you explore whether you are an introvert or an extrovert. The test is similar to the Myers-Briggs type model, initially developed by Katherine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers.

The Jung personality test can help answer the following questions:

- What is your personality type?
- What are your Jung types?
- How does your type fit certain kinds of jobs?

**The Jung test** was developed by the work of Carl Gustav Jung, who was a Swiss psychiatrist and the originator of Jungian Psychology, which breaks the personality up into four archetypes:

1. The Persona
2. The Anima/Animus
3. The Shadow
4. The Self

The Jung personality test has 60 choices. Participants choose the statement that best describes them.

## **A Take-Home Message**

Being self-aware is vital for both personal and professional success. When you are self-aware, you can choose where to focus your emotions, your energy, and your personality so that you can better direct the course of your life.

Self-awareness helps you be much more aware of your thoughts and emotions and how these things guide your life.

The best way to continually develop self-awareness is to learn to look at yourself objectively and to try and see yourself as others see or perceive you. The more self-aware you are, the more you can improve and make changes in your life.

If you enjoyed this topic, for further reading we share a short selection of the [10 Best Self-Awareness books](#) and explore the [benefits of self-awareness](#) according to science.

We hope you enjoyed reading this article. Don't forget to [download our three Self Compassion Exercises for free](#).

## References

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## **INNOVATE**

**11 Questions Self-Aware Leaders Ask Themselves Daily**

The deepest work is in the art of asking tougher questions and attuning to what arises.

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**BY MELODY WILDING, PERFORMANCE  
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Studies increasingly show that self-awareness is more valuable than smarts alone. Research shows that leaders who are more self-aware get promoted faster and are awarded more responsibility.

Like many qualities, self-awareness is not a fixed trait.

It's a skill that can be learned and cultivated intentionally. If you're looking to boost your EQ, there are a number of ways to understand yourself better. Daily mindfulness practices, coaching, and getting trusted feedback are all valuable ways to elucidate blind spots.

Self-reflection is one of the best ways to deepen your inner knowledge and discover how to do your best work.

It can also improve your confidence and help ward off Imposter Syndrome. Harvard Business School

Professor, Francesca Gino, found that workers who spend 15 minutes reflecting on their day feel more capable, competent, and in control.

As with most good habits, self-reflection is most valuable when done consistently. Here are 11 questions you can ask yourself today to strengthen your self-awareness muscles:

*Article continues after video.*

## **FEATURED VIDEO**

How 4 Top Performers Maintain Their Mental and Physical Wellbeing

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1. When am I at my best?
2. What kind of person do I want to be today?

3. What situations make me feel terrible, and what do they have in common?
4. What activities am I doing when it feels like time flies by?
5. What is working well in my life and work today?
6. If I had a magic wand, how would my life be better in 3 months?
7. If I change nothing, what will your life look like three months from now? How does this make me feel?
8. What actions, if taken, would make me proud of myself, regardless of the outcome?
9. When negative thoughts arise, how do I deal with them?
10. How do I stay grounded when I feel overwhelmed?
11. What motivates me to make progress

