

Know Thyself: My Journey of Self-Discovery as a College Freshman

At nineteen, “know thyself” is something I have seen almost everywhere, in books, in classrooms, and in lessons. Even so, I am still figuring out what it really means for me. I do not think it is something you finish or complete. For now, knowing myself feels like an ongoing process that keeps changing as I change too. I am not searching for a final or perfect version of myself, because I am starting to understand that such a version may not exist. Instead, I am learning to notice my thoughts, my habits, and my reactions, and to accept that “thyself” is still being formed.

I have always been the kind of person who takes things seriously, especially the inner parts of life. I think a lot about why I do things and what they say about me. This is why the lesson about Socrates stayed with me. His idea that we should examine our lives using reason made sense to me, because questioning myself already feels natural. When I reflect on my choices, like why I avoid some challenges or why I feel confident in others, I feel like I am doing my own simple version of Socratic questioning. It is not always comfortable, but it helps me become more aware, and awareness is where real change begins.

For me, senior high school and college are not very different. College is harder, but only a little. What really changed was my environment. In my first months of college, I tried to find music groups and performances because music was a big part of my student life in SHS, where I was a music club officer. I wanted to find people with the same passion, but at first, I failed. Many people I met seemed snobbish, and that made me feel discouraged. Over time, I found a few people who shared the same interests. In some way, I even helped them become less snobbish, and I saw how some of them slowly changed. That experience showed me that I am not only shaped by my environment, but I can also influence it.

When I think about my strengths and weaknesses, I see both growth and things I still need to fix. I am still not very dependable with deadlines, but I am relentless when it comes to finishing tasks. I do not like leaving things incomplete. I also notice that I have fewer negative thoughts about myself now, and I am sometimes even overconfident. At the same time, I have become more independent. I can handle things on my own better, and I do not panic as much when things get hard. I even improved in math, even if I failed Calculus 1, which may sound strange but feels true to me.

My values are also becoming clearer. I am learning that patience, effort, and honesty with myself matter more than just looking capable in front of others. In group work, in friendships, and even when I am studying alone, I am starting to see that who I am is shown more by what I do often than by what I say about myself. This connects to the idea of examining one’s life, because reflection only matters if it slowly changes how I act and how I treat other people.

To me, knowing thyself is a lifetime task. I will never look for one final and complete version of myself, because I will always discover new things and change when I need to. But one thing I am sure of is that I am like a wheel rolling down a hill, always moving forward and never fully stopping. My tone may sound serious, but it is not sad. It is hopeful. Cheers to knowing thyself and to continuing the journey.