

Self-awareness is the ability to understand who we are and what others think of us, and it consists of seven insights.

Self-awareness is one of the more remarkable features that set humans apart from animals. Some 150,000 years ago, the brain of Homo sapiens developed in a way that led our ancestors to begin examining their own behavior, thoughts and emotions. In this way, self-awareness was born.

Self-awareness is defined as the ability to know oneself and be conscious of how others see us. Psychologists separate self-awareness into two categories: internal and external.

Internal self-awareness is about knowing ourselves; being conscious of our likes and dislikes, our ambitions, our place in the environment and our impact on other people.

External self-awareness has to do with understanding how other people see us. It's about being able to look at ourselves from an outside perspective.

Surprisingly, scientific research shows there's hardly any relationship between internal and external self-awareness. But research has found a relationship between a person's happiness and how self-aware they are. People who have both internal and external self-awareness are able to make better decisions, have stronger professional and personal relationships, are more successful and more creative.

So how do we develop self-awareness?

To be fully self-aware requires seven types of insight, the first of which involves insight into our values. Our values are the principles guiding how we live our lives. Examples of these include honesty, humility and fairness.

The second and third insights are our passions and aspirations, which are concerned with discovering the things we love doing,

and what our life goals are.

Fit is the fourth insight. It involves understanding which environment will make us happiest, keep us engaged and enable us to thrive.

Then come patterns – the consistent behaviors that make up our personality. We must understand how we think, feel and act in various situations.

The sixth insight refers to our reactions – the emotional and physical behaviors we exhibit in certain circumstances. For example, our ability to control our feelings under stress.

And the final insight is impact – understanding how our own behavior affects others.
