


A hand is shown at the bottom of the frame, holding a lit dandelion seed head. The dandelion is in full bloom, with bright yellow and orange sparks radiating outwards. The background is dark, making the glowing dandelion stand out prominently. The text is overlaid on the upper and middle portions of the image.

# WHO ARE YOU?

FIND GREATER SUCCESS  
WITH SELF-KNOWLEDGE

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A close-up photograph of a hand holding a lit sparkler. The sparkler is in the foreground, with bright yellow and orange sparks radiating outwards. The background is dark, making the sparks stand out. The hand is visible at the bottom right, holding the sparkler's handle.

“SELF-AWARENESS IS THE ABILITY TO TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT YOUR LIFE WITHOUT ANY ATTACHMENT TO IT BEING RIGHT OR WRONG, GOOD OR BAD.”

Oxford Dictionary

# INTRODUCTION

**G**etting to know yourself might seem more than a little boring. After all, what else is there to learn? You've spent every second of your life with yourself. There certainly can't be any surprises, right?

You're not alone if you feel this way, but you'd be wrong.

You know a lot less about yourself than just about anyone else in your life knows about you.

We don't see ourselves very well. We don't really want to look. We're afraid of what we'll find. We avoid examining ourselves. We'd rather turn on the TV, find a snack, or watch videos online. Anything to avoid seeing the truth.

**As unpleasant as the truth may be, it holds the secret to greater levels of success.**

When you understand yourself, you can:

- Gain control over yourself
- Avoid your weaknesses and common pitfalls
- Understand and deal with your negative habits
- Have healthier relationships
- Choose a life path that suits you
- Find enthusiasm and happiness

We're all suffering from a case of mistaken identity.

We've bought into the American dream like it's a one-size-fits-all solution. We have jobs we don't like, but we can't figure out what we'd rather do.

We repeat the same mistakes over and over, but don't have a clue we're doing it. On the off-chance we recognize our repeated mistakes, we don't understand why we're doing them or how to change it.

**Success is much more challenging without self-knowledge.**

To be highly successful, it's necessary to:

- Set big goals that are meaningful to you
- Utilize your strengths and avoid your weaknesses
- Deal with stress in a productive manner
- Know how to motivate yourself
- Overcome fear
- Persevere

All of these items are easier to accomplish if you know yourself. Without self-knowledge, luck becomes more of a factor.

## **Consider these topics to learn more about yourself and your opportunities for success:**

1. **Chapter 1: Discover Your True Self.** Your strengths, weaknesses, values, and preferences all give clues to help you find your true self. Who are you really? This chapter will help you begin that journey.
2. **Chapter 2: Repeating Mistakes.** Our repeated mistakes are harder to see than you might think. These are the

mistakes that limit our potential and make success harder than it needs to be. These mistakes negatively affect our relationships, finances, health, and career.

3. **Chapter 3: Meditation - How Does Your Mind Work?** Unless you've studied your mind seriously, it's a mystery. Meditation has been used for thousands of years to gain self-knowledge and is more popular than ever.
4. **Chapter 4: Discomfort and You.** How we handle discomfort has a huge effect on success. Our negative habits are the result of dealing with discomfort poorly. Discomfort can work for you or against you.
5. **Chapter 5: Habits.** The things we do each day add up over the years to create our future. How are your habits influencing your life and success?  
**Good habits guarantee success. Poor habits guarantee failure.**

6. **Chapter 6: How to Find Your Passion.** Success is easier to accomplish when you're pursuing something that fills you with excitement. This chapter will help you to find that thing that excites you.
  
7. **Chapter 7: Journaling.** Recording your life, thoughts, and activities can provide the insight you need about yourself to take your life to the next level. Journaling is a powerful tool when used daily.
  
8. **Chapter 8: Trauma.** Our worst experiences can shape our thoughts and behaviors for the rest of our lives.
  
9. **Chapter 9: Final Tips.** A final chapter of simple ideas you can use to learn more about what makes you tick.



## Who Are You?

"SELF-KNOWLEDGE IS ESSENTIAL  
NOT ONLY TO WRITING, BUT TO  
DOING ALMOST ANYTHING  
REALLY WELL.

IT ALLOWS YOU TO WORK  
THROUGH FROM A DEEP PLACE –  
FROM THE DEEP, DARK CORNERS  
OF YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND."

**- MEG ROSOFF**

# DISCOVER YOUR TRUE SELF

Your true self-is the part of you that's constant. It's the part of you that you would recognize, even if you had been brought up in another country and had a totally different set of experiences. It's the part of you that makes you uniquely you. **Over the years, we often lose sight of this person.**

It's the unadulterated you. It's the person you would be if you were free from worry about the opinions of others. It's the 100% real deal. It's the you without any fear or doubt.

**Discover your true self that's lurking beneath the surface of your fear and erroneous beliefs:**

1. **What would my dream profession be if I knew I would be successful, and no one would judge me negatively?** Do you dream of being a rock star, but you've chosen to be an accountant? You're probably more a rock star at heart.

- Somewhere along the way, you've allowed yourself to believe you were less capable than you really are.
- It might be too late to be a rock star but knowing that's your dream profession tells you a lot about yourself.
- What does your dream profession tell you about you? How close does your current career come to delivering the same experience?

2. **Whom do I most admire?** You can learn a lot about yourself by the people you admire or feel disgusted by. Who are some people in your life or from history that you admire? Which people turn your stomach?

- What does this tell you about yourself?

3. **What are my greatest accomplishments? This is a way of learning what you value.** What have you done that you're most proud of? Why do those things make you feel good?
  
4. **What are you ashamed of?** What have you done that you regret? What things from your past would you prefer to keep a secret? What can you learn about yourself from the fact that you feel shame about them?
  
5. **How would I describe the ideal person?** What are the characteristics of the ideal person of your gender? What would they value? What would their list of accomplishments look like? Describe their personality. Is it possible that this is your true self?

Your true self is that part of you that is constant from situation to situation. **No matter what you learn or experience, your true self stays the same.** The true self is hidden by our fears, our incorrect beliefs, and our concern of the opinions of others.

*“SELF-AWARENESS IS NOT SELF-CENTEREDNESS, AND SPIRITUALITY IS NOT NARCISSISM. 'KNOW THYSELF' IS NOT A NARCISSISTIC PURSUIT.”*

- MARIANNE WILLIAMSON

## **Values**

What are your values? If you have to think for more than three seconds, you don't know them well enough to be highly successful. Our values determine what activities and ideals are most important to us. Choosing goals that violate your values guarantees that you'll struggle, and most likely fail.

Living according to your values is beneficial to your self-esteem. It's easier to achieve success when you're pleased with yourself!

**Knowing your values is an important part of knowing yourself.**

## Use these techniques to discover your values:

1. **Make a list of every positive value you can think of.** This isn't about what others value. What do you think are positive values or qualities a person can have?
2. **Imagine you could only have 10 of these values.** What values would you choose for yourself? Which values would make you feel proud of yourself if you possessed them?
3. **Place those 10 values in order from most important to least.** It might be challenging but prioritize that list. What are the first three values? Does the life you're currently living reflect these values? Why not?

**The values you most admire are the values of your true self.** If you're miserable in your life, you're probably not living a life that exemplifies those values. Your success will be greatly limited if you're not living those values.

Based on the life you're living, what would you say your values are? If a stranger watched you for a week, what would they list as your three most important values?

Why the discrepancy?

*"WHATEVER I HAVE NOT YET  
LEARNED TO TOLERATE IN MYSELF  
INEVITABLY WILL APPEAR IN MY  
CHILDREN. IN THIS WAY, THEY, LIKE  
JULIA, GUIDE ME TO A NEW LEVEL  
OF SELF-AWARENESS AND  
EVERYONE BENEFITS."*

- KENNY LOGGINS

## **Strengths and Weaknesses**

Quick question: What is your mother's biggest weakness? How does your friend mess up every relationship she's ever been in?

You can probably answer those questions without even thinking.

Now, what is your greatest weakness? What do you need to change in order to be much more successful? Do you know? If you have an answer, ask a few of your friends for their honest opinion. Ask someone you only know casually.

You'll likely find that everyone's answers agree, except for your own. You might not like their answers, but down deep, you'll know they're correct.

We're pretty good at identifying our strengths. We like those! Our weaknesses? Not so much. We instinctively avoid our weaknesses, but we're not as consciously aware of them as we could be.

### **Ask yourself these questions to learn and leverage your strengths:**

1. **What am I naturally good at?** What are some things that you seem to be better at than just about anyone else you know?



**We all have at least a talent or two that most others seem to be lacking.** Make a list of these natural strengths.

2. **What have I learned to be good at?**

These are things that you have a lot of experience and interest in doing. While these might not be innate strengths, you've developed these skills into strengths. List these, too.

3. **What do my friends and family view as my strengths?**

Ask your friends and family to name some of your strengths. Push them to be honest with you. You're bound to hear a few things that surprise you. Add these to your list.

4. **What do other people compliment me for?**

Are you complimented for certain things more often than others? Write these down, too.

5. **What are my favorite hobbies?**

What do you love to do? Our hobbies are a demonstration of what we love to do or have a high level of interest in.

**6. What activities cause me to lose track of time?** What are the things you love to do so much that you can't believe how much time has passed when you look at the clock?

**It's important to identify your strengths and interests.** It's easier to be successful when you use your strengths and interests to your advantage. That only makes sense.

**It's just as important to identify your weaknesses.** Weaknesses either need to be remedied or avoided. Imagine taking a long trip, and you know that there's a section of road along your journey that was washed out last month. You'd either ensure that it was repaired, or you would avoid that road.

*"SELF-REVERENCE, SELF-KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONTROL;  
THESE THREE ALONE LEAD ONE TO  
SOVEREIGN POWER."*

- ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

You might be surprised to discover that you've done a better job of hiding your weaknesses from yourself than you realize!

## **These questions will help you understand your weaknesses:**

- 1. What are somethings that nearly everyone seems better at than I am?**  
There are things you're naturally gifted at, and others that are more challenging for you than for others. It's important to know what these things are.
  - Start a new list for your weaknesses.
- 2. What do I find challenging to learn or improve at?** Your serious weaknesses are those things you naturally struggle with, and you also struggle to learn. It's like a double whammy. **Don't worry, everyone has a few of these.** Identify these things and add them to your list.
- 3. What do my friends and family view as my weaknesses?**

It will be challenging to get your friends and family to be honest on this one, but it's one of the most important things to know about yourself.

- Push your friends and family to be honest. Give them the courtesy of not being offended by their opinions and insight.

4. **What hobbies or careers would I despise?** What are some hobbies you can't imagine doing? Hunting? Bowling? Playing cards? Needlepoint? Woodworking? What do the things you hate say about you?

- **The things you dislike may reveal weaknesses, too.** If you can't get yourself to do them easily, they're a weakness.
- Look for similarities between the things you dislike. What is the common thread?

5. **What activities make me miserable and drain my energy?** This is a little more specific than the previous question, but along the same lines.

- Maybe you can't stand attending parties or other social events.
- Do you dislike spending time in the outdoors?
- Sports?
- Cultural activities?
- Meeting new people?
- Going to church?

6. **What are five careers that sound like pure torture to you?** Accounting? Sales? Artist? Medicine?

- **What do the careers you dislike have in common?** Do you dislike them because every day is the same? Or, is it because they require talking to strangers?
- What skills are needed to be good at those careers? Are you lacking in those skills?

Learn your weaknesses and understand them. **Self-knowledge regarding your**

**weaknesses is critical to success.**

Otherwise, it's like walking into a bear trap when you pursue a big goal. Go around the traps or disarm them by fortifying your weaknesses.

Remember, there's always someone else that's great in the areas you struggle. Success doesn't have to be a solo journey.

*"THE BEGINNING OF SELF-  
KNOWLEDGE: RECOGNIZING  
THAT YOUR MOTIVES ARE THE  
SAME AS OTHER PEOPLE'S."*

- MASON COOLEY

# REPEATING MISTAKES

It's not the occasional big mistake that derails your life and your efforts for success. It's the habitual mistakes you make. These are the mistakes you make over and over again. You can see these in other people from a mile away. They're much more challenging to notice in yourself.

We often view these as areas of our lives where we frequently suffer from "bad luck". Luck, good and bad, is evenly distributed across humanity. If you have an area of your life where you seem to be unlucky consistently, you're making one or more mistakes repeatedly.

This is going to take some soul searching and help from your friends and family.

**Analyzing these areas of your life can help you avoid making the same mistakes over and over:**

1. **Review your life from beginning to end.** Look at your life sequentially and examine the times your life became miserable or chaotic. Look at the times you failed. What happened just before these situations occurred?

- What did you do or fail to do?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- Where did you go wrong?
- Do you see any patterns of incorrect action or thinking?
- What would have been a better course of action on your part?

2. **Relationships.** Look back on your failed friendships and romantic relationships. Include your relationships with your family members, too.

- Think back on every major disagreement you've had. What was your contribution to the cause?
- Consider all of your relationships that have ended.



How did you contribute to that relationship's end?

- Examine your romantic relationships specifically. What do all of those people have in common? Are you choosing the wrong type of person for you?
  - Ask your friends and family why they think your relationships failed.
3. **Finances.** Look back on your financial challenges. What led up to those challenges? Could you have done something differently to avoid them?
  4. **Health.** What are the mistakes you're consistently making regarding your health? Are you going to the doctor regularly? Eating habits? Exercise? What mistakes are you making each day that keep your health and fitness less than acceptable?
  5. **Work.** What are the mistakes you're making at work? Ask your coworkers and boss for advice on what you can do to improve. You'll be surprise by what you hear.

The mistakes we make repeatedly are the biggest of anchors. **They sabotage us continuously, and in many cases, we are unaware of them.** Discovering and fixing these mistakes is a huge step toward finding greater success.

*"YOU CAN'T BE A GREAT COMEDIAN  
WITHOUT HAVING SELF-  
AWARENESS ABOUT OTHERS OR  
YOUR OWN FAULTS. YOU NEED A  
STRONG SENSE OF SELF AND VIEW  
ON THE WORLD. THAT'S WHAT  
GREAT ACTORS HAVE, TOO."*

- BILLY EICHNER

# MEDITATION - HOW DOES YOUR MIND WORK?

Our minds are very different than they appear to be. There's the real world, and then there's what's going on between our ears. We all have a different view of the world. The thoughts and noise going on in our heads taint our perceptions. It's not easy to see the world and life without these filters changing our perspective in some way.

**Meditation is one way to notice the activity and bias of our mind.** It's also a great way to give your mind a well-deserved rest. Meditation provides a mental reset like nothing else.

Your mind is ultimately running the show. You can only apply so much willpower before you're out of gas. Understanding how your individual mind works is important.

Start a daily meditation practice. **You only need 15-30 minutes each day to get**

**significant benefits.** There's a plethora of information to help you get started, from books to videos to guided meditations.

*"SOME ARTISTS SHRINK FROM SELF-AWARENESS, FEARING THAT IT WILL DESTROY THEIR UNIQUE GIFTS AND EVEN THEIR DESIRE TO CREATE. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS QUITE OPPOSITE."*

- JAMES BROUGHTON

# DISCOMFORT AND YOU

We all have our pet methods for dealing with discomfort. Some are relatively harmless, while others can be quite destructive. It's possible to have strategies for dealing with discomfort that are actually beneficial!

**The ways you deal with discomfort and can aid or detract from your success.**

**How do you deal with discomfort?**

**Let's find out:**

**1. What are you likely to do when faced with a task you don't feel like doing?**

Imagine you know that you need to clean the garage, and you'd rather eat a bag full of nails. What are you likely to do?

- Find another activity that needs to be done, but is more agreeable to you?
- Distract yourself in some way? What would you do instead?

- Take a nap?
- Rationalize that it can wait until tomorrow?
- Make a plan to clean the garage in smaller chunks?
- Psych yourself up so you can get it done?

2. **How do you handle boredom?** If you have nothing to do, what are you likely to do?

- Choose a goal and work on it?
- Watch TV?
- Eat something delicious?
- Text a friend?

3. **What is your response to stress?**

You're feeling anxious or under pressure. How do you handle it? Do you drink? Eat? Sleep? Or do you find a way to relax and get things accomplished in your life?

4. **What are your bad habits? All negative habits provide one benefit: they make you feel better in the short-term.** They have no other benefits. Bad habits are ways of

dealing with negative emotions. If we were “tough enough,” none of us would have bad habits.

How do you deal with discomfort? The answer to this question tells you a lot. Poor responses to discomfort make life more challenging and decrease the odds of success. Handling discomfort appropriately gives you a huge advantage over the many people that do not.

*“THE SUCCESSFUL  
ENTREPRENEURS THAT I SEE HAVE  
TWO CHARACTERISTICS: SELF-  
AWARENESS AND PERSISTENCE.*

*THEY'RE ABLE TO SEE PROBLEMS IN  
THEIR COMPANIES THROUGH THEIR  
SELF-AWARENESS AND  
BE PERSISTENT ENOUGH  
TO SOLVE THEM.”*

- ALAN SCHAAF

## **There are better ways to deal with discomfort:**

1. **Find a solution.** Imagine how powerful you would be if you immediately started looking for solutions to a challenge instead of looking for a distraction.
2. **Relax.** This doesn't mean take a nap. **This means finding ways to reduce your discomfort enough that you can take action.** Meditation is one example. Calling a friend is another.
3. **Exercise.** You'll reduce your stress and enhance your health. At least it isn't causing any harm or wasting time like the traditional responses to stress.
4. **Have a glass of really cold water.** It will snap you out of your mental state, and you probably need to drink more water anyway.
5. **Have a staring contest with your discomfort.** When you're uncomfortable, it won't last if you'll

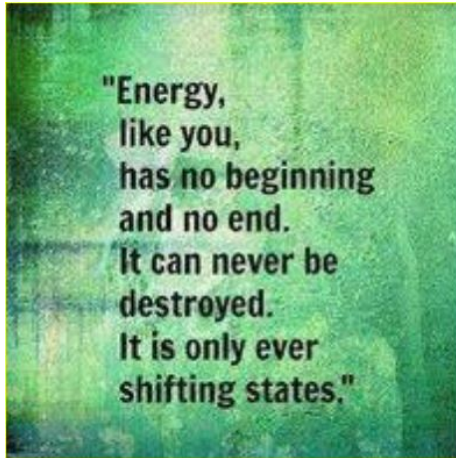


look it right in the eye.

- Instead of doing something harmful or worthless, just sit with your discomfort and observe it.
- How does it feel?
- Where is it located in your body?
- **Relax, keep watching it, and it will fade away.**

Discomfort is your mind's way of protecting you. This is great if you're about to risk your life, but it's misguided the majority of the time. Success is heavily dependent on the ability to overcome this discomfort and take appropriate action.

Become aware of how you handle discomfort and devise positive ways of handling these situations.



*"I THINK SELF-AWARENESS IS  
PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT  
THING TOWARDS BEING A CHAMPION."*

- BILLIE JEAN KING

# HABITS

**Your habits control your destiny.** It's not the amazing things you do or fail to do once a year that make a big difference. It's the things you do day after day that add up over time.

For example, think about how much brushing your teeth each day matters. Each individual day means nothing, whether you do it or not. But look at the difference between brushing your teeth every day for three years versus not brushing them at all for three years.

The difference is striking.

**Many of the things you do, or don't do, regularly have a monumental impact on your success and failure.**

We are aware of some of our habits, but not all of them. The previous section on how you handle discomfort exposed some of your habits, but there are more.

The key to increasing the odds of being successful is creating goals that are aligned

with your purpose and values, and then creating habits that bring you closer to those goals. So, do your habits support your goals?

## **Consider how your habits can make or break your odds for success:**

1. **What is your morning routine?** Even if your morning routine was never planned, you've developed a routine. The question is whether or not it supports being successful.
  - What time do you wake up? Is that the best time to wake up to achieve your goals?
  - What do you have for breakfast? Does that support your health and alertness?
  - What do you think about in the shower?
  - Do you review your plan for the day?

- Do you review your goals?
- Do you give yourself enough time to arrive at work on time?
- What do you actually do each morning? What could you improve?

2. **What do you do for the first two hours at work?** The first couple of hours at work set the stage for the rest of the day. How do you use them?

- Do you grab a coffee, chat with a friend, and check the ball scores on your computer?
- How do you spend this time, and is it the best way to support your career goals?

3. **What is your routine when you get home from work?** Most of us change clothes and hit the couch or the dinner table. How do you spend the time? If you wait for the weekend to do anything worthwhile, you're only using two days of each week. Is that enough to be successful?

- **What could you be doing each night to make the biggest difference in your life?**

4. **What is your routine during the last two hours of the evening?** How do you wind down from a long day?

- Do you learn something new each night?
- Review your goals?
- Take action toward your goals?
- Do you prepare for tomorrow?
- Do you waste your time?
- How do you spend your time?  
Are you spending it wisely?

5. **How do you spend your weekends?**

Most of us have more flexibility on the weekends. Unfortunately, for most of us that means doing nothing worthwhile for the majority of the weekend. What habits do you have for the weekend? What habits would suit you better?

Understand your habits and how they impact your success. Poor habits lead to poor results. **The right habits create billionaires and other super successful people.**

Take a look at your current habits and think about the future you can expect.

*“SELF-AWARENESS IS VALUE-FREE. IT ISN'T SCARY. IT DOESN'T IMPLY THAT YOU WILL SUBJECT YOURSELF TO NEEDLESS PAIN.”*

- DEEPAK CHOPRA

# HOW TO FIND YOUR PASSION

When you were a child, you were passionate about a particular career. The market may have tanked for becoming a cowboy or a dragon slayer, but you also lost your way. You allowed people to change your mind. Or you may have gotten a little lazy. Maybe you were more interested in impressing others than following your dream.

**It's not too late to rekindle your passion.**

You know more about yourself now than you did when you were 18. It might be the perfect time to track down a compelling future.

We've talked around this topic by looking at your strengths, hobbies, values, and the people you most admire. Now, it's time to be more direct.

**Goals and aspirations that include your passion are the easiest to attain.**



**Ponder these questions and answer them truthfully. Your thoughts and answers will lead you to your passions:**

- 1. If you were the last person left on Earth, what would you want to do or learn?** Imagine you have access to every modern convenience. How would you choose to spend your time?
  - This is an interesting question, because it eliminates the opinions of others. There is no one to impress or disappoint. It's just your interests and you.
  - What would you want to learn? Many times, we want to learn something because of the benefit we can receive. In this situation, the primary benefit is satisfying your own interest.
- 2. What is the one, big thing you want to accomplish before you die?** Let's take two examples: Climbing Mount Everest and finding a cure for cancer.

WHO ARE YOU? FIND OUT BY ASKING YOURSELF QUESTIONS WITH SELF-KNOWLEDGE

**"SELF-KNOWLEDGE  
IS THE FOUNDATION  
OF REAL SUCCESS."**

**- RACHEL SIMMONS**



What do these different goals say about someone?

- The desire to climb Mount Everest might suggest someone that values travel, adventure, risk, and great, physical challenge.
- The desire to find a cure for cancer might mean that person wants to help society, enjoys an intellectual challenge, and prefers to work in solitude rather than in a social setting.
- **What does your dream accomplishment say about you?** Goals that provide a similar reward or require similar types of effort are likely to be a huge turn on for you. Goals that are the opposite are likely to be miserable.

What are you passionate about? Asking yourself that question each night will lead to some interesting answers. Keep track of the responses you receive and write them down.

# JOURNALING

Journaling is a great habit if you want to know more about yourself. Journaling once a week doesn't provide a lot of insight. It's when you do it daily that you can see meaningful results. It's a great activity.

Journaling is:

- Inexpensive. All you need is a pen and paper.
- Revealing. You'll quickly see the patterns in your thinking, life, and behaviors.
- Convenient. You can do it anywhere. A few minutes are all that's required.

**Use these strategies to start a journaling habit and learn more about yourself:**

1. **Write with a pen and paper rather than using a word processor.** Unless you're physically unable to write, manually writing is best. It's a more complete experience.

2. **Review your day.** What happened that was out of the ordinary? What thoughts do you have about your day? Was it good? Bad? How could it have been better?
  
3. **Rate how you feel, both mentally and physically, on a scale of 1-10.** Are you tired? Write it down? Do you notice that you've been tired several days in a row? Do something about it. Monitor yourself.
  
4. **List your successes and failures.**  
Define your successes and failures. You might want to do this for different areas of your life. For example: work, relationships, goals, and finances.
  - **Identifying your successes and failures is the first step to having more successes and fewer failures.**
  
  - Think about what you can do better tomorrow and in the future.

5. **Review your progress.** How are you doing? Reviewing your goals keeps them fresh in your mind.
6. **Write down anything else that seems relevant.** It's your journal, write down whatever you like.
7. **Once every two weeks, read over the previous two weeks.** What are your thoughts about what you read? What insights do you have? How can you use that information?

Keeping a journal can be intimidating. We don't like to look at ourselves too closely. The fact that it makes you uncomfortable is a sign that it would be valuable. There are many signs that you're uncomfortable about it. A few include:

- "I'm too tired."
- "A journal is dumb."
- "This is worthless."
- Any type of excuse to not do it is just your subconscious getting in your way. You know it's a good idea, so just do it.

*“SELF-AWARENESS IS SOMETHING  
THAT WE ACTUALLY ACTIVELY AVOID.”*

- TED DWANE

## **Writing Prompts**

Consider using writing prompts to add to the level of self-discovery. These are just ideas or questions that direct your writing. There are lists available online and in books. Here are a few to get you started:

- If I had an extra hour each day, how would I spend it?
- What was my favorite job of all time? What did I like about it?
- What do I want my obituary to say about me?
- With unlimited time and money, what career would I pursue if that was the only way I could spend my time?

- What do I need more of in my life?  
Less?
- How do I believe others would describe me?

Add a writing prompt each day to your regular journaling process. There might not be a better way to learn about yourself.

*"THE ONE SELF-KNOWLEDGE  
WORTH HAVING IS TO KNOW  
ONE'S OWN MIND."*

- F. H. BRADLEY



# TRAUMA

Trauma, especially in childhood, can have a huge impact on your thoughts and behavior later in life. It doesn't matter if the cause of the trauma seems silly as an adult. The fact that it was traumatic at the time is what's important.

Being afraid of a bully or losing a beloved pet in first grade might seem inconsequential today, but it wasn't then. It had an impact.

Of course, bigger things like abuse or losing a parent can have even bigger consequences.

**Answer these questions to discover the negative events from your past that may be influencing you today:**

1. **What are your worst memories from your childhood?** How did those impact you? How did they change you? Did it change the choices you made at that time? Later in life?

2. **What would you tell yourself if you could go back in time?** Imagine that your adult self is talking to your younger self. What would you say? What advice would you give regarding that negative event?
  
3. **Does it still impact you?** Do you view the world in a certain way because of those events? Do those events change how you make decisions?
  
4. **Ask the same questions for events that happened after childhood.** Include bad relationships, negative events associated with work, and anything else that's happened since you turned 18.

Some people are able to shake off negative experiences with few long-lasting effects. Some of us are affected by traumatic events much more profoundly. Our brains are so intent on protecting us that our responses to trauma can be extreme.

Understand the traumatic events from your past and how they have impacted your life. Notice if they are still impacting your life.

**Are they responsible for the limitations you put on yourself?** Do they affect your relationships with other people? Are your values impacted by the traumatic events you've experienced?

**Do you agree with these limitations? If not, how can you go about changing them?**

*"TO KNOW YOURSELF AS THE BEING  
UNDERNEATH THE THINKER, THE  
STILLNESS UNDERNEATH THE  
MENTAL NOISE, THE LOVE AND JOY  
UNDERNEATH THE PAIN, IS FREEDOM,  
SALVATION, ENLIGHTENMENT."*

- ECKHART TOLLE

## FINAL TIPS

A few final tips for the committed. There are plenty of things you can do here and there to increase your awareness of yourself. These are interesting activities you might not think of on your own. On the other hand, with a little effort, you might find even better ideas!

### **Here are 9 more ways to learn more about yourself:**

1. **Take a long walk by yourself in nature.** What kind of things did you think about? What did you notice about your thoughts? A more serious version of this is to go camping by yourself for a long weekend. Find a remote spot.
2. **Read a book about something that makes you upset.** Maybe you're a diehard Christian. Read a book about Judaism or Satanism. Perhaps a book written by a white supremacist would really get under your skin. Read a book

you don't agree with and notice your response.

3. **Make a video of yourself talking to a friend or stranger.** You'll either need to be sneaky or you'll need some help. How do you appear to others? We can't watch ourselves interact with others without recording ourselves.
  - Watch your body language. How is what you're seeing and hearing different from the perception you had before seeing and hearing yourself?
4. **Go on a meditation retreat.** Meditate for 10 or more days straight. You'll find out more than you could ever imagine.
5. **Ask yourself "why" until you get an answer you can use:**
  - Why do I hate parties? Because I can't talk to strangers.
  - Why can't I talk to strangers? Because it makes me nervous.

“KNOW YOUR ENEMY  
AND KNOW YOURSELF  
AND YOU CAN FIGHT  
A HUNDRED BATTLES  
WITHOUT DISASTER.”

- SUN TZU

- Why does it make me nervous?  
Because I don't know what to say.
  - Why don't I know what to say?  
Because I don't have anything planned in advance.
  - Try this exercise and see what you find out.
6. **Write a personal manifesto.** What do you want your life to represent? What is your credo? What are your rules for life?
  7. **Take online personality tests.** Some of these online tests are more credible than others. The best tests will often have a small fee, but the price is worth the information.
  8. **Ask yourself, "Who am I?"** Keep asking yourself. Ask hundreds of times over the course of several weeks. Keep asking and notice the answers you receive.
  9. **List your 10 biggest regrets.** These are things you've done or failed to do. Why do you regret them?

# CONCLUSION

## **Knowing yourself is a challenging task.**

You've spent every second of your life with yourself. You've been there for every experience. Yet, you often have more insight into someone you know at a casual level than you do into yourself.

We are composed of our values, experiences, habits, and preferences. The mistakes we repeat limit us. Our passions remain hidden.

We're so busy worrying about the opinions of people that don't even care that we don't know ourselves anymore.

**But knowing yourself is a fundamental key to success.** Without self-knowledge, luck has a great influence over the results in life.

**Our true self is that part of us that never changes.**

We often cover up the true self with false beliefs and fears. We superimpose the desires of society over our own. So finding



the true self requires that we going back to the beginning.

Now let's spend the time to get to know the true self. When we do, we can finally soar!

*"NEVER BE AFRAID OF FAILURE.  
AND DON'T STOP YOURSELF  
FROM DOING SOMETHING YOU  
WANT TO DO BECAUSE OF WHAT  
OTHERS MIGHT THINK. ONLY YOU  
KNOW YOURSELF BEST."*

- SUKI WATERHOUSE



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