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## **Self Discovery: An Effective Tool For Self Development**

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### **Abstract:**

*Today in the challenging and competitive world of globalization one has to be multitasking and has to perform at many levels for survival. Every now and then individuals experience emotional disturbances in their lives. These emotional problems leave a permanent psychological scar on them. It prevents normal functioning both at work and home. Therefore there is a tremendous and overwhelming need for improving the self awareness of individuals which enable them to handle the challenging situations. Knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, he/she can prevent emotional confusions. The aim of this research paper is to provide guidelines to develop self awareness. The researcher wants to signify the idea of self-discovery in order to bring attitudinal changes in individual.*

**Keywords:** Self discovery, emotional disturbances, behaviour, success, interpersonal relations, etc.

### **Introduction:**

As Benjamin Franklin says,  
"There are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know oneself".

(qtd. Ghosh, p.13)

Greek philosopher Socrates has coined the term Self Discovery which means know yourself. Knowing yourself is a lifelong process. First of all, we have to remove all of the multiple personalities that we put on for different people and different situations. It is the right

time to identify your true self. To know oneself is to know one's true identity. Your personalities are made up of many facets that you reflect from your experiences. How you manage your life, guide others, take charge, perform and behave in relationships depends on how effectively you use your strengths and identify your weaknesses which you will discover when you truly know yourself.

In this society, we work with people of different region, religion, language and culture. Therefore to understand others, first you need to understand yourself. Tao Te Ching comments, "Knowing others is intelligence, knowing yourself is wisdom." And "Mastering others is strength, mastering yourself is power." (qtd. Dr. K. Alex, p.18). When we deal with others, we tactfully try to understand and come to a certain conclusion. A real wisdom lies in identifying yourself. It is impossible to understand others unless a person has understood himself/herself. You therefore need to discover and become your own true person. In short, knowing yourself is to know your true identity. We should respect to our inner voice which always boost our energy level and confidence. If we fail in doing so, we will not be consistent in our action which will further lead to our failure in life. As Mahatma Gandhi rightly asserts, "The only tyrant I accept in this world is the still voice within." (qtd. Dr. K. Alex, p.15). Our own behaviour is responsible for our doom. Jones and Nisbett rightly asserts about responsibility of one's own behaviour, "knowledge of behavioral variability leads to the conclusion that one's own behavior is responsive to and caused by the demands of the circumstances one has faced." It is important to understand and become aware of oneself in order to handle complex and challenging situations. The process of comparing the self with standards allows people to change their behavior and to experience pride and dissatisfaction with the self. Self-awareness is thus a major mechanism of self-control. Most of the times, we simply believe in our fate. To rely on our fate means to surrender ourselves. Our strong faith in notions or perceptions tends us not to change or adjust with the situations. Franklin Roosevelt remarks, "Men and women are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds." (qtd. Dr. K. Alex, p.15).

### **The Secret of Self-awareness:**

The ancient dictum "Know Thyself" has been variously attributed to Plato, Pythagoras, Thales and Socrates. As early as 42 B.C., Publilius Syrus proposed: "It matters not what you are thought to be, but what you are." In recent times the concept of self-awareness has assumed great importance in all walks of life. Self-awareness means knowing one's internal



states, preferences, resources, intuitions etc and indicates the ability to recognize, understand and accept one's own strengths and short-comings. The function of self-examination is to lay the groundwork for insight, without which no growth can occur. To know oneself is important to identify the dimensions that lead to self-awareness.

### **Self Awareness/ Know Yourself:**

The term Self Awareness is defined as “the capacity for introspection and the ability to reconcile oneself as an individual separate from the environment and other individuals”. In simple words, Self discovery is the discovery of your own personality. You need to discover your potentials, your strengths, your abilities, your purpose and your weaknesses. One of the basic emotional skills is the ability to recognize different feelings and emotions emanating from within and giving a name to them. Many individuals are unable to recognize their feelings and are inclined to deny them. It enhances the right attitude and interpersonal skills of the individuals. If you want to build high self esteem and become more confident, you should have sufficient levels of self discovery.

Research since the 1970s has strongly supported self-awareness theory (Duval and Silvia 2001). When people focus attention on the self, they compare the self with standards, try harder to meet standards, and show stronger emotional responses to meeting or failing to meet a standard. Self Awareness creates clearer perceptions of internal states, emotions, and traits LeFrançois (1996) offers definitions for significant self-awareness terms: These terms are self-esteem, self concept and self actualization.

**i. Self-esteem:** It is the positive or negative way an individual views himself or herself. It also Necessitate the desire to be held in high esteem by others.

**ii. Self-concept:** It is the concept that an individual has of himself or herself. Notions of self are often linked to an individual's beliefs about how others perceive them.

**iii. Self-actualization:** It is the process or act of becoming oneself, developing one's potential, Achieving an awareness of one's identity, and fulfilling oneself.

**Aspects of Self Discovery:**

There are various significant aspects of self discovery. They include- **Dreams** and goals in life, **Inculcation** of achievement motivation, **Strengths** and weaknesses, **Causes** for your failure and how to overcome them, **Opportunity** and threats, **Values** and beliefs, **Events** and things that make you happy, **Relating** well with others, **Your** philosophy in life.

**1.Dreams and goals in life:** Dreams and goals shape you as human beings and are crucial to your lives. Goals transform your dreams into reality. Arnold Glasgow rightly comments, “Make your life a mission, not an intermission.” (qtd. Ghosh, p.14)

**2. Inculcation of achievement motivation:** Achievement motivation is the tendency to attempt for success and to choose goal oriented success or failure activities. Being motivated keeps people dynamic and gives them self respect. People, who are oriented towards achievement, enjoy life and feel in control.

**3.Strengths and Weaknesses:** SWOT analysis is an indispensable tool for self discovery. Strengths are your internal and positive attributes and selling points. Weaknesses are your negative attributes. Opportunities are uncontrollable external events that you can potentially leverage. Threats are uncontrollable external factors that may work against you and require you to take protective action.

Judith Henderson remarks, “Our greatest strength as a human race is our ability to acknowledge our differences, our greatest weakness is our failure to embrace them.” (qtd. Ghosh, p.14)

**4.Causes for your failure and how to overcome them:** Fear of failure is related to the fear of criticism and the fear of rejection. Successful people overcome their fear of failure. Fear incapacitates unsuccessful and weak people. Weakness leads to all kinds of miseries. Eleanor asserts, “Do one thing every day that scares you.” (qtd. Ghosh, p.15)

**5.Values and beliefs:** Values are about how you have learnt to think things ought to behave. Beliefs are the assumptions that you make about yourself, about others in the world and about how you expect things to be.



**6. Events and things that make you happy:** Manage your thoughts and exercise them through proper control.

**7. Relating well with others:** Courtesy teaches us how to respect others and to build good relations. Donald Laird declares, “To handle yourself, use your head, to handle others, use your heart.” (qtd. Ghosh, p.16)

**8. Your philosophy in life:** Philosophy is a way of scrutinizing ideas about which goals are the most worthy ones.

**Importance of Self Discovery:**

- Self Discovery is an effective tool that unveils your talents and reveals areas that you need to improve.
- It is a guide to explore a career in which you can excel, you get a direction, you recognize your wants and this leads to build a life of success and fulfillment.
- Self-Awareness plays a key role in understanding the individuals with regard to their attitude, behaviour and approach, both independently and within a group. Such an in-depth understanding of the individuals will enable them to motivate.
- Self-Awareness is the starting point of individuals becoming aware of themselves with regard to their strengths and weaknesses. It includes aspects that highlight how much the individuals are aware of themselves in terms of self understanding, personality traits, interpersonal orientation, personal values, attitude and behaviour.
- It helps to control our emotions that lead us to miscalculations and helps in decisions and choices when you are in emotional state.
- It helps to reach your goal, personal fulfillment and happiness.
- It helps to improve your attitude and relationship effectively with others in your life.
- It helps to realize and improve your full potential.

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