

Gain Self-Awareness through STEAM

Despite sincere attempts to change, people often repeat personally destructive patterns. When this happens, gaining a better understanding of yourself (and others) can help you to get unstuck.

In response to difficult situations or problem behaviors, answer the questions below to enhance your self-awareness in 5 basic domains. You may find it helpful to keep an ongoing journal with your answers so that you can then reflect on them. With persistence, you can begin to see your struggles – and how you respond to them – more clearly.

This process may facilitate change by itself. However, if you tend to respond to your struggles with criticism or in an uncaring way, you may also need to learn to nurture self-compassion. With self-awareness and self-compassion (a combination called compassionate self-awareness), you will feel more motivated – and think more clearly – as you work toward self-improvement.

Sensations: What do I sense in my body?
(You may want to scan your body from your toes to your head.)

Thoughts: What am I thinking?
I'm thinking that...
(View your thoughts from the outside as an observer.)

Emotions: What am I feeling?
(Identify and "sit with" your feelings.)

Actions: How have I been acting/re-acting?
(Notice your reactions to upsetting and positive events.)

Mentalizing: Do I really "get" what's going on for me and understand what is motivating my actions?

Do I really "get" what's going on for the other person and understand what is motivating their actions?