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Self-Awareness: Significance & Developmental Techniques - A Study of the Primeval Foundation for Social, Spiritual, and Professional Success from a Quranic Perspective

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Abstract:

All want to succeed but only a few know what true success is and how to attain it. Success depends a great deal on how it is defined and measured. The concept of success varies from one person to another, but all concepts converge in the pursuit of 'happiness.' There are different approaches and pathways for the pursuit of happiness. People follow a certain pathway based on their philosophy of life, purpose, worldview, ideology, and level of

awareness. These approaches can be categorized into two major streams external and internal. The majority of people think that the sources of success and happiness are external and out there. Hence, they tend to seek happiness by accumulating and having more wealth, power, fame, designations, recognition, progress, influence, security, and social standing. They believe that the more material resources they have, the happier they will be. The second view is that the sources of happiness are internal, and the treasure is within. These people seek happiness by becoming more aware, awake, conscious, flourishing, and enlightened. They dig deep down themselves to experience happiness, ecstasy, and blissfulness. They prefer activities that develop self-awareness, self-purification, self-transformation, and self-actualization, believing that the deeper they go, the more they will be filled with joy and bliss. Self-awareness is recognized as the key source of happiness as the foundational step towards true and sustainable success. This study explores the significance of Self-awareness for social effectiveness, professional success, and spiritual elevation. This study employs critical literature analysis and a deductive research method for the findings. The study suggests how self-awareness can be enhanced by employing Islamic and other tools and strategies to succeed.

Keywords: Know Thyself, Pursuit of Happiness, Self-awareness, Self-knowledge, Consciousness

1 Introduction

Humans have always been searching for the secret of ultimate success and bliss, which started with the science of ‘Alchemy’ through which transformation occurs, such as lead is transformed into gold. It opened the door to the transformation of human potential to limitless possibilities. Almost all religious traditions, perennial philosophies, and modern schools of psychology affirm that Self-awareness is essentially the first step toward true success and ultimate bliss. One of the biggest causes of human suffering is ignorance of the true nature of reality and self. By correctly understanding the nature and truth of the human self, we can alleviate suffering and attain peace, happiness, contentment, and fulfillment.

Allama Iqbal lays a great emphasis on the concept of ‘Khudi’, believing that it is the most eminent and distinctive potential to flourish and attain a higher position in life.

“In man the Centre of life becomes an Ego or Person. Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained, relaxation will ensue. Since personality, or the state of tension, is the most valuable achievement of man, he should

see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal. Thus the idea of personality gives us a standard of value: it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion, and ethics must be judged from the stand-point of personality.”¹

Allah has blessed the human with great potential, but they are neither aware of it nor use it properly.

The Holy Qur’an explains:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا²

“We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of doing so; but man carried it. Surely he is wrong-doing, ignorant.”

“The system of this universe originates in the self and that the continuation of the life of all individuals depends on strengthening the self.”³

2 Introduction to Self-awareness

By knowing thyself, you discover who you are. You learn to accept, respect, love, and value yourself. Self-awareness may not be an antidote to all your ailments, but lack of self-awareness is the cause of most of your problems. The reason for suffering in the modern world is not social, political, or economic. Our real crisis is lack of self-awareness and inability to experience our essential nature. The first source of happiness or unhappiness is ‘YOU’ yourself. An unaware person may have a wrong self-image which causes suffering.

Self-awareness helps you become measurably more comfortable and peaceful in your life without burning out even if you are extremely busy. In his work “Search Inside Yourself”, Chade Meng Tan (2012) concludes that “the happiest person is the one who can develop an extraordinarily capable mind that is profoundly peaceful, clear, and free. *Self-awareness* is the most effective way for developing such an extraordinarily capable mind.”⁴

In ancient Greece, “at the front courtyard at Delphi, there was an inscription: γνῶθι σεαυτόν”⁵

It translates to “know thyself” a famous philosophical aphorism. What does it mean to “know thyself”? At first glance, you might discount this phrase as rhetoric. Sure, I know myself, you

¹ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Secrets of the Self, Asra-i-Khudi*, Translated by, Reynold A Nicholson, McMillan and Co. Limited, Martin Street London 1920, Page 18-19

² Al-Quran, 33:72

³ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Secrets of the Self, Asra-i-Khudi*, Translated by, Reynold A Nicholson, McMillan and Co. Limited, Martin Street London 1920, Page 45-46

⁴ https://siyli.org/wp-content/uploads/SIY-1D-v2.7_English_watermarked.pdf

⁵ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/self-consciousness/> retrieved on May 3, 2023

might think. I know who I am. On closer examination, however, you can't be so certain. Even though most people *believe* they are self-aware, self-awareness is a rare quality.

'Who am I?' is not a linguistic question. It is an existential philosophical QUEST about the truth of the human self. You cannot ask this question just in language verbally. You must experience the feeling of the question settling inside your being.

Initially self-awareness is the knowledge of one's thoughts, emotions, feelings, personal traits, aptitude, passion, preferences, perceptions, motives, strengths, weaknesses, beliefs, and values. At a deeper level, self-awareness is a conscious observation of what is happening, why is happening, and how is happening inside and around you. At the deepest level, self-awareness is to know the truth of your being and identify yourself with it.

3 Exploring the Terms Self-awareness & Self Consciousness

There are two important terms: consciousness and awareness. When focus is outward, it is called consciousness. When inward, known as self-awareness. In both ways, you are extraordinarily attentive. In consciousness, an organism can successfully process incoming information from the external source and respond to it proactively. Whereas self-awareness refers to the capacity to become the object of one's own attention. In self-awareness, the subject (knower) and the object (known) are the same. In consciousness you interact with others; in awareness you interact with yourself. It is wisdom to know others; it is enlightenment to know thyself.

Self-awareness, in essence, is a spiritual activity but in recent decades' researchers have found that increased self-awareness transforms everything you do. It impacts your material wellbeing, your leadership style, your relationships, how you treat others, how you communicate, what you expect of people, how you respond to situations, how you express your emotions, how you do your job or business, and so much more. Here are some major benefits of self-awareness.

1. Professional growth
2. Interpersonal success
3. Leadership effectiveness
4. Personal development
5. Self-contentment
6. Spiritual elevation

Self-awareness is important for professional growth and career building. It helps you pursue the right career for yourself. When you know your natural potential, strengths, aptitude, and passion,

you opt for a right career path which leads you to professional and financial success. Without self-awareness, you will envy other people's success and will continue to aspire for the same feat to happen to you which is not compatible with your own potential. Understanding the attributes that make up your personality helps you know how you can learn, lead, and serve.

4 Emotional intelligence and Self-awareness

Self-awareness improves emotional intelligence which is an important element of interpersonal effectiveness. Goleman, in his "Emotional Intelligence" describes EQ and IQ as two different competencies but are not the opposing ones. the pure types of self-awareness by contrast to IQ, "Men who are high in emotional intelligence are socially poised, outgoing and cheerful, not prone to fearfulness or worried rumination. They have a notable capacity for commitment to people or causes, for taking responsibility, and for having an ethical outlook; they are sympathetic and caring in their relationships. Their emotional life is rich, but appropriate; they are comfortable with themselves, others, and the social universe they live in."⁶

In his book Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman explains emotional intelligence as a vital factor in professional and social success, especially for young people. He said that "Emotional intelligence would not only improve their learning abilities, but it would also help them succeed in institutions by reducing or eliminating some of the most distracting and harmful behavioral problems."⁷

5 Leadership effectiveness and Self-awareness

According to Betty Adams (2014), the author of "How to Become a Better Leader", self-awareness is one of the most important capabilities and essential attributes for leadership effectiveness. He said, "Self-aware executives are most likely to deliver excellent bottom-line results. Self-awareness is a critical trait along with vision, strategic thinking, and effective communication for successful leaders. Self-awareness can improve communication and reduce conflict in relationships."⁸ James Kouzes and Barry Posner, co-authors of "The Leadership Challenge", state the relationship between authentic leadership and self-awareness. To effectively Model the Way, you must first be clear about your own guiding principles, and you must clarify values by finding your own voice."⁹

⁶ Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, Bantam Dell A Division of Random House, Inc. New York, New York, October 2006, Pp 64

⁷ Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, Pp 65-66

⁸ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, The Leadership Challenge, 5th Edi, Jossey-Bass San Francisco 2014, P. 16

⁹ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, The Leadership Challenge, P. 16-17

Self-knowledge leads to self-transformation. When you know your potential, you strive to actualize it. One adaptive function of self-awareness is self-regulation which includes altering one's behavior, resisting temptation, changing one's mood, selecting a response from various options, and filtering irrelevant information. This process improves one's personal quality and self-mastery. All agree that knowing and investing in yourself is the best investment. You probably won't get a better return in life than when you invest in self-awareness and personal development. The more self-awareness a person has the more alive he is. The more consciousness, remarked Kierkegaard, the more self. "Becoming a person means this heightened awareness. This heightened experience of I-ness, this experience that it is I, the acting I, the acting one, who is the subject of what is occurring."¹⁰

6 Spiritual elevation and the Stages of Self-awareness

The biggest benefit of self-awareness is spiritual growth. "The physical self is the most external layer, then the senses, then the mind, then the emotions, then the intellect, and then you as pure awareness. Self-awareness is not to peel all these layers and move inside, but to be conscious of your existence at all layers and levels."¹¹ We can count four levels of awareness:

- 1 – Unconsciousness: Being nonresponsive to self & environment
- 2 – Consciousness: Focusing attention on the outer environment; processing incoming external stimuli
- 3 – Self-awareness: Focusing attention on the self; processing private & public self-information
- 4 – Meta self-awareness: Being aware of self-awareness.

Developing meta self-awareness is the top goal of all spiritual traditions. The moment you attain meta self-awareness, suffering ends and life becomes tremendously calm and blissful. "A self-conscious self is expressed: an entity that is simulated and projected in the mind of other."¹²

"Self-aware people possess several distinct qualities and insights that unaware people don't. They understand their values (the principles that guide them), passions (what they love to do), aspirations (what they want to achieve), fit (the environment they require to be happy, energized, and engaged), patterns (consistent ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving), reactions (the

¹⁰ Rollo May, *Man's Search for Himself* 1st ed, Norton New York, 1953 P116

¹¹ <https://www.researchgate.net/institution/Mount-Royal-University?enrichId=rgreq> / <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alain-Morin-2>

¹² Philippe Rochat, *Five levels of self-awareness as they unfold early in life*, Department of Psychology, Emory University, 532 North Kilgo Circle, Atlanta, Ga 30322, USA Received 27 February 2003, www.elsevier.com/locate/concog Retrieved on May, 11, 2023. Pp 722

thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that reveal their strengths and weaknesses), and impact (the effect they have on others) In other words, at this level of awareness, individuals want to see himself in others' eyes as respected recognized and so on."¹³

Within you is a great energy which, if properly discovered, explored, tapped, grasped, and directed, can lift you out of the rut of mediocrity and place you among the elect of the earth. It rests with you only to learn, explore, and use this power which is yours---thyself. Your responsibility is to make efforts to dig out and explore the latent and undeveloped seeds of greatness that Allah has already planted in your body, mind, heart, and soul.

The potential within every individual is tremendous, even infinite, but mostly it remains untapped and unexplored. We really have no idea what a person is capable of, until we go through a rigorous process to explore it. A child may be the most dependent creation in the beginning of her life, and yet within a few short years, she can become the most powerful in her circle. We flourish through three stages. The first is Self-awareness, where we explore our natural potentialities. The second stage is Self-actualization, where you flourish and transform your potential to reach the highest possibilities. Self-expression is the last stage where you give your best, render your dedicated services, produce quality results, and contribute for the betterment of others. Self-knowledge leads to happiness. You come to know that you are responsible for your life, and you are the real source of your wellbeing. This knowledge improves your proactivity, responsibility, efficacy, and ecstasy.

7 Islamic Perspective on Self-awareness

In Arabic self-awareness is called Ma'rifat ul-Nafs which is an in-depth knowledge of the nature and reality of the human self. It is not the kind of information that has to do with knowing one's name, or father's name, or the place and date of one's birth. Ma'rifat ul-Nafs deals with the deeper aspects of the human self. God has blessed human with incredible abilities and extraordinary potential as stated in the following verse.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا¹⁴

“Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures.” (17:70)

Self-knowledge improves our self-esteem and self-respect. The Holy Qur'an further says that human self is as rich in containing the signs of truth as the vast universe.

¹³ Goffman, E. (1959). The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. NY: Doubleday, Pp 03-04

¹⁴ Al-Quran, 17:70

سُرِّيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ¹⁵

“We will soon show them our signs in the universe and in their own souls, until it becomes quite clear to them that is the Truth.” (41:53)

The universe is a great mystery, the human self too. There is always another level and another dimension of existence. This is an un-ending exploration of truth. The Holy Qur’ān time and again invites our attention to both worlds- external and internal. We must see ourselves so consciously that nothing should go un-noticed, un-appreciated, and unexplored. We are advised to contemplate the vastness of universe as well as the depth of our inner self. Those who think deeply, observe consciously, and reflect intuitively, reality reveals onto them.

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ : وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ¹⁶

“There are signs on earth for those who are faithful, as there are (signs) within yourselves. Can you not, see?”(51: 20-21)

These two verses draw our attention to the signs within our own selves, and the signs which are in the outer universe. Both types of signs lead to the same conclusion that God the Ultimate Truth exists within and without.

There is a connection between remembering God and remembering ourselves or forgetting God and forgetting ourselves. Self-knowledge is correlated with the knowledge of the ultimate Truth (God).

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ¹⁷

“And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget their own souls; these are the people who are the transgressors.” (59:19)

Forgetfulness of God inevitably leads to forgetfulness of one’s own self. Who is oblivious of the Lord is oblivious of himself? When someone becomes heedless of Him, he becomes heedless of himself. This very heedlessness turns him into nonsignificant, worthless, sinfulness which makes life a great mess and suffering! If we don’t reflect on life voluntarily, life will force us to do so. You might have had this experience in the hospital. There are quite a few people who suddenly have to think about their life very seriously. They could have done that much earlier! Hazrat Ali

¹⁵ Al-Quran, 41:53

¹⁶ Al-Quran, 51:20-21

¹⁷ Al-Quran, 59:19

(ra), a companion of the Prophet, is quoted on the subject, stressing the importance of self-knowledge:

مَعْرِفَةُ النَّفْسِ أَنْفَعُ الْمَعَارِفِ¹⁸

“Knowledge of the self is the most beneficial knowledge of all.”

Another quote on the same subject is also attributed to him:

غَايَةُ الْمَعْرِفَةِ أَنْ يَعْرِفَ الْمَرْءُ نَفْسَهُ¹⁹

“The ultimate knowledge of a man is to know himself.”

A famous saying makes a similar point.

مَنْ عَرَفَ نَفْسَهُ فَقَدْ عَرَفَ رَبَّهُ²⁰

“He who knows himself has known his Lord.”

Our life is the reflection of our inner self. When we are illuminated from within, the whole world is bright and beautiful. When we are inside dark, dim, and down, everything seems melancholic.

8 Self-awareness Development Techniques

Three things are extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know thyself. Developing self-awareness is immensely challenging because it requires a big paradigm shift. We have a deep tendency to see the changes we need to make as being in our outer world, not in our inner world.

“The first step is the most obvious, and it’s attributed to Mahatma Gandhi: I need to become the change that I want to see in the world. To this end, I came up with an almost measurable goal for myself—that before the end of my lifetime, I want to create in myself the capacity to be kind to everyone, all the time. I want to be the Kindness Channel: all kindness, all day.”²¹

Self-awareness is not learned in a book but achieved through specialized practices, using the right tool, and following authentic methods. Fortunately, numerous methods, instruments, and techniques are now available to develop self-awareness. Here are some important ways to increase your self-awareness.

¹⁸ Muhammad Al-Rishahrī, Mizānūl-Hikmah, vol.3, Hadith Number 11903

¹⁹ Ibid, Hadith Number 11920

²⁰ Bihar al-Anwar al-Jami`, the pearls of the news of the immaculate imams, Sheikh Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi, Vol. 02, P. 32 -

²¹ Chade-Meng-Tan Search inside yourself, Google Book, HarperCollins Publishers (Australia) Pty. Ltd. Level 13, 201 Elizabeth Street Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia <http://www.harpercollins.com.au> Page 234

1. Personality Assessment Tests. Whether you are working on career building, developing a rock star team, or curious to learn more about yourself, knowing personality types and understanding archetypes are invaluable. “Self-assessment tests are designed to systematically elicit information about a person’s motivations, preferences, interests, decision making patterns, emotional make-up, strengths, weaknesses, and style of interacting with people and situations. You can start self-discovery by conducting tests such as Enneagram”²², Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)²³, StrengthsFinder, the DISC²⁴, Multiple Intelligences Tests, as well as Learning Style Tests, etc.²⁵

2. The Johari Window. “The Johari window is a model of interpersonal awareness. It’s a useful tool for improving self-awareness and abilities to work well with others. It helps you understand the differences between how you see yourself and how others see you. It is particularly helpful for leaders who want to understand how people perceive them. There are four quadrants in Johari Window model: Free area is where the author knows her value, what she likes and doesn’t like where The author likes to think how people would think about her as she knows that not all people will accept her as who she is, and that is the blind area. Then, the author has insecurities that she wouldn’t tell anyone which include in the hidden area. These four segments will help the author to determine what is/are her strength(s) and weakness(es).”²⁶ The Johari Window represents information - feelings, experience, views, attitudes, skills, intentions, motivation, etc. - within or about a person - in relation to their group.

3. Self-reflective Journaling. Reflective journaling builds the habit of self-analysis and improves explicit awareness. It’s sort of a critical dialogue that you’re having with yourself by writing and expressing your own feelings, thoughts, and emotions about the situations and experiences that happened to you. In reflective journaling, you can write about a positive or negative event that you experienced, what it means or meant to you, and what you may have learned from that experience. To get the most benefits from journaling, you need practice. This could mean forcing yourself to write, at first, but after a while, it will become like second nature. A reflective journal can be a curated notebook with various reflective journal prompts, or you can use a simple blank notebook

²² <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/> retrieved at <https://app.enneagramuniverse.com/img/logo.png>

²³ Glenn Rifkin and [Benedict Carey](#) Published Oct. 14, updated 18 Oct, 2022 <https://www.nytimes.com/>

²⁴ Test Website link <https://high5test.com/> retrieved on May 11, 2023

²⁵ Test Website link <https://www.idrlabs.com/> , retrieved on May 11, 2023

²⁶ Reference The Significance of Personality Self-awareness. (2022, February 17). Edubirdie. Retrieved May 11, 2023, from <https://edubirdie.com/examples/the-significance-of-personality-self-awareness/>

to freely express what's on your mind or in your heart. What's important is that you're honest and open-minded when writing your reflective journal.

4. Constructive Feedback. Although personal experience is the best source of learning, we do not always learn from it. It may lead us to a false sense of confidence about our performance if not followed by proper reflection, assessment, and feedback.

“Leaders also must consider the impact they want to have on others and how they want to be perceived by others. Asking for feedback can be daunting, but it's important for leaders to request and heed it. Most unicorns listed 5 or fewer people they regularly came to rely on for feedback. They were picky about who to ask, said Eurich,²⁷ acknowledging that sometimes feedback is not well-intentioned or helpful. Solicit feedback, she said, from loving critics—those you believe have your best interest at heart, but also those you believe will be truthful.”²⁸ For example, one study (Katharina Klug, Jörg Felfe, Annika Krick 2022) found that more-experienced managers were less accurate in assessing their leadership effectiveness compared with less experienced managers who were given feedback. It is a fact that top performing leaders regularly solicit feedback from peers, colleagues, friends, family members and seniors. It is important to receive honest feedback to root out false assumptions. Candid feedback can improve our self-knowledge.²⁹

5. Contemplative Meditation. Contemplation is a more analytical and reflective practice that involves deep thinking about a particular topic, text, question, problem, or concept with a calm, focused, and peaceful mind. It is the perfect tool to develop mindfulness and meta-self-awareness by tuning into your mind, body, and breath. When you use contemplative meditation to look inward and gain insight into your thoughts and emotions, it enhances your self-awareness and self-mastery. This practice helps you observe the observer, know the knower, think about thinking, feel about feelings, and experience the experiencer. This is one of the best spiritual activities.

6. Introspection: Introspection is another important thinking process of attempting to directly access one's own internal psychological processes, judgments, perceptions, or psycho-mental states. It is to develop insight for accurate and deep understanding of oneself. But most people do

²⁷ Dr. Tasha Eurich, an organizational psychologist, executive coach, researcher and best-selling author, asked the NIH audience assembled in Masur Auditorium to rate themselves as leaders, friends and drivers, many proud hands were raised for “above average” in each category. It was a revealing exercise about the power of self-awareness.

²⁸ The NIH Record <https://nihrecord.nih.gov/> BY DANA TALESNIK, June 28, 2019 Vol. LXXI, No. 13 Pp. 04 <https://nihrecord.nih.gov/2019/06/28/eurich-explores-why-self-awareness-matters>

²⁹ Klug K, Felfe J, Krick A. Does Self-Care Make You a Better Leader? A Multisource Study Linking Leader Self-Care to Health-Oriented Leadership, Employee Self-Care, and Health. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022; 19(11):6733. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19116733>

it incorrectly. “When we engage in introspection, we too often start by asking ‘why’ questions. It might be as simple as, “Why do I feel this way?” *Why* questions can cause you to obsess over your problems. They may lead to anxiety and depression. Instead of asking ‘why’ questions, you need to ask questions that will help you focus on solutions or goals. You should try asking *what* questions. Ask questions like, “What am I feeling right now?” rather than, “Why do I feel so terrible?” Also, avoid asking yourself a problem-centered question. Don’t ask, “What difficulty am I facing right now?” Instead, frame the question around a goal, as in, “What would I like my relationship with my supervisor to look like a month from now?” Solution-focused questions make you feel good, whereas problem-focused questions make you feel less satisfied. If you have a persistent problem on your mind, ask yourself questions that shift your focus to its possible solution. Nietzsche describes the person who is self-consciousness when he said about Goethe” He disciplined himself into wholeness, he created himself.....such a spirit who has become free stands amid the cosmos with a joyous and trusting fatalism in the faith thatin the whole all is redeemed and affirmed-he does not negate anymore”³⁰.

9 Conclusion:

Self-awareness brightens you inside. It improves your self-worth. If you are not happy with your being, you will never be satisfied with your having. There is immeasurably more left inside than what comes out in words. Know the truth, and truth shall set you free. The more you know about yourself, the more you become happy and fulfilled. Life makes you more what you already are inside- stupidity to the stupid, misery to the miser, wisdom to the wise, depression to the depressed, enlightenment to the enlightened. The highest secret to being happy, therefore, is to develop the right perspective of your own self. An enlightened person never chooses to be miserable. Life may be painful sometimes, but it is never sorrowful to him. He is always in a state of peace and acceptance. Self-awareness improves our knowledge of the human self, its nature, and potential. We come to know that we have been given extraordinary potential to perform our role and serve some purpose in life. We are the crown creature and there must be a meaning and purpose behind our creation. Self-awareness improves our self-knowledge of our real potential and gives us the

³⁰ Rollo May, *Man’s Search for Himself* 1st ed, Norton New York, 1953 P 142

confidence to become what we ought to be. It is the first and key step to self-fulfillment. You have a sacred obligation to become who you are. And you can only fulfill this calling by becoming a wise steward of your precious, divinely gifted time and resources.



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