

How Self-Reflection Gives You a Happier and More Successful Life

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Many world champion athletes, business people, and spiritual teachers all cite self reflection as an essential key to success. This is also true for 'everyday people' who are fulfilled and happy with their lives.

So why is self-reflection so important?

Self reflection is defined as "meditation or serious thought about one's character, actions, and motives." It's about taking a step back and reflecting on your life, behavior and beliefs.

Here are the benefits of self-reflection:

Improves self-awareness

It's essential to understand yourself at a deeper level. Self-awareness and a little soul searching is critical to success in all areas of life.

Taking time for self reflection about life leads to greater self-awareness which in turn leads to self-improvement. In addition, having a strong sense of self improves your confidence and level of self-esteem.

Provides perspective

Self reflection allows you to understand and see things from a different point of view. When you take a step back from a situation, you gain a new understanding. You can see the whole picture, not just the piece of the puzzle. You become more open minded.

Ever hear the saying, "Can't see the forest for the trees"? This is an expression that highlights someone who is so involved in the details of a situation that they can't see the whole picture.

You Are Capable to Change Your Life!

This is the benefit of self reflection. You can zoom out and see the whole forest.

Allows you to respond, not react

Ever say or do something in the moment that you wish you could take back? When you react, you're not thinking about the potential ramifications of your actions. However, when you spend time to reflect on a situation, you can respond more thoughtfully and change your behavior for next time.

Early in my career, a boss made a recommendation about this very thing. He advised me to wait 24 hours before addressing something I was upset about. This forced time of self reflection

allowed me to take stock of my feelings and emotions. I was then better able to approach the situation or issue with a level head and greater perspective.

Facilitates a deeper level of learning

Many studies share the common conclusion that self reflection facilitates a deeper level of learning and understanding. It's a critical part of the education process. I've found this to be true in my own work as a facilitator and trainer.

When people are given time to reflect, digest and integrate, they are better able to make abstract connections, as well as retain and recall information. Think about this for yourself. If, after you read this article, you move right on to the next thing, how much do you think you will remember?

However, if you read this article and take five minutes afterward to think about your learnings, how much more will you retain?

Improves confidence

When you reflect, you gain a better understanding of what's working and what's not. This in turn, allows you to make better decisions and change your actions.

Each time you improve, it helps build your confidence with increased knowledge and perspective.

Challenges your assumptions

What you believe to be true is not always the truth. One of the best ways to tackle a limiting belief is to step back and debate the validity of that belief.

Self reflection allows you to challenge beliefs and assumptions that are getting in your way.