



Rest Stop #3: Using Awareness as a Tool

Awareness has different aspects to it. The core one is that you can't solve any problem in any domain without understanding it from both your perspective and also that of the other parties involved. If you are constantly projecting your views onto a given situation, you are not going to come up with consistently viable solutions. Maybe you will have repeated troubles with relationships and can't figure out why.

So, the first step in learning awareness is looking at clues that you are not as aware as you think you are. BTW, if you think you are "aware" or "enlightened", then you have already demonstrated that you are not aware. Any labels, positive or negative, block awareness.



Understanding unawareness will start you down the pathway of becoming more aware. There are exercises and methods to deepen your awareness in the following areas.

- Environmental
- Emotional
- Judgment/ "The stories"
- Ingrained patterns

Third, once you become more familiar and skilled in developing these levels of awareness, you can use them as tools to calm down and re-direct your nervous system. Some people make the strong argument that awareness is the only tool you need to heal. We know that you can't "fix" yourself. Your attention is focused on the problem and from a neuroplasticity perspective, you are reinforcing it. With awareness, you can watch yourself respond and somehow you are getting out of your own way and allowing yourself to heal. You have become an observer of your own healing.

Finally, the "Ring of Fire" can be used as your template for awareness. On a given day or moment, you can quickly assess any of the four kinds of awareness and see which part of the "circle of life" you are in. You then have a choice of using your tools to switch directions. You can't redirect unless you know where you are starting from. You will notice that experiencing all aspects of your life on your terms is the goal of The DOC Journey.

