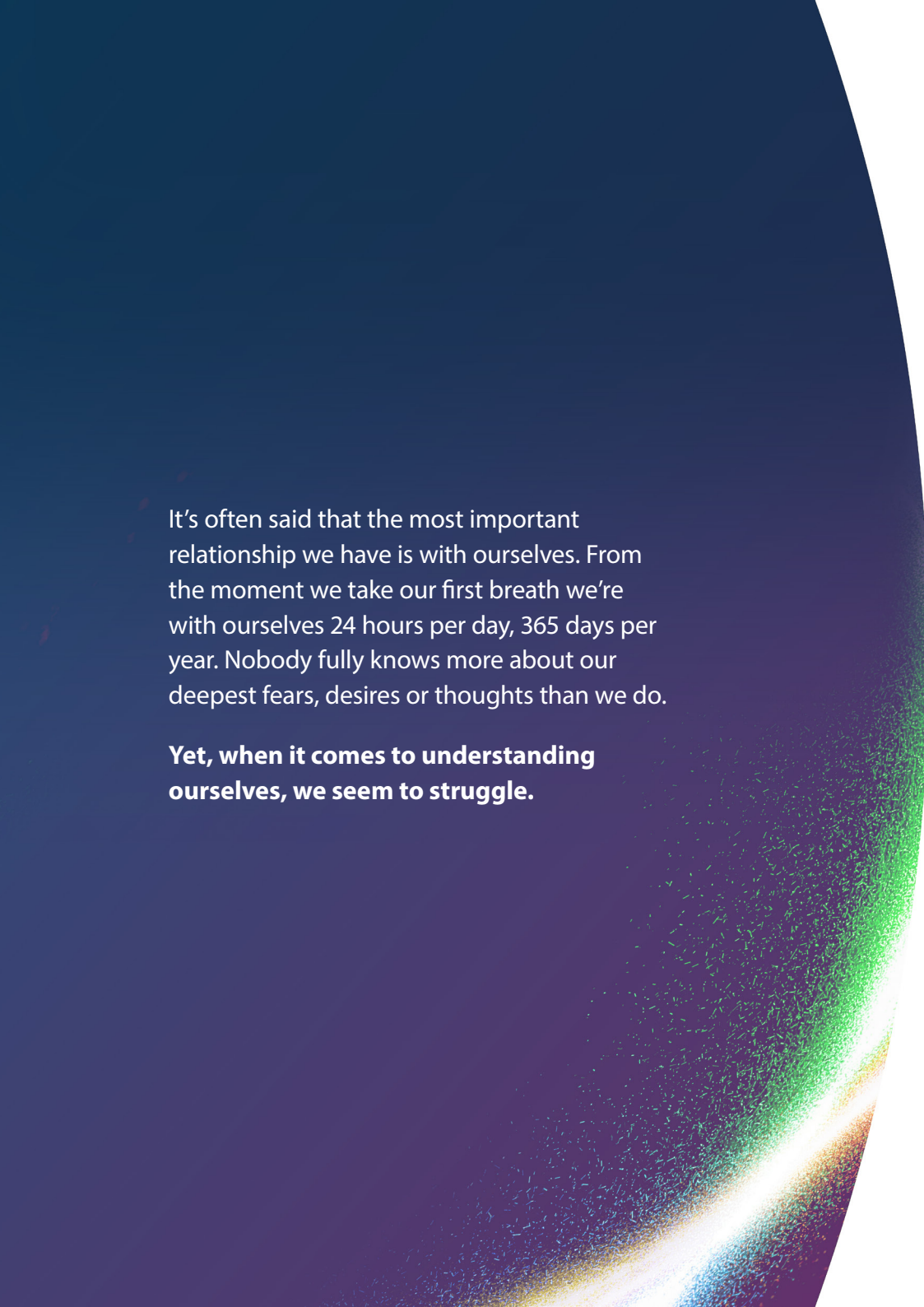


New World, New Me

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# Understanding self-awareness and your own potential





It's often said that the most important relationship we have is with ourselves. From the moment we take our first breath we're with ourselves 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Nobody fully knows more about our deepest fears, desires or thoughts than we do.

**Yet, when it comes to understanding ourselves, we seem to struggle.**

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where someone asks you what you want out of life or what your core values are and you suddenly have to think about it, even though it feels like it should come naturally?

Even if you have a good understanding of your likes, dislikes, various personality traits, and even some idea of the things you value in life and what you'd like to achieve, it's not the same as having true awareness and understanding of yourself on a deeper level.

In recent years, self-awareness has understandably become a bit of a hot topic, but what does it really mean, and how do we reach a stage of being truly self-aware so that we can fulfil our own potential?

# What is self-awareness?

At its core, self-awareness is having a true understanding of oneself. However, as with most things, it's not as simplistic as this. Self-awareness is often misunderstood, and there are also many layers to it and how it shows up in our lives.

Self-awareness is a skill that's honed over time; it's not something we're born with, and although, as we grow up, we develop awareness of ourselves as being separate from others, and awareness of our environment, true self-awareness is not a given.

Although a big part of it, self-awareness is not just about understanding our unique personality traits, behaviour patterns, and values, but it's also about understanding how those affect the various aspects of our lives, including our relationships and those around us.

The one thing that makes humans so interesting is our differences; after all, the world would be a pretty boring place if everyone was the same, we all agreed with the same things and enjoyed the same things as each other.

When we encounter people with different opinions, lives, and even personalities from ourselves, this is an opportunity for growth, to learn about different perspectives, to form more understanding, compassion, and empathy, but also to gain deeper understanding of who we are and the role we play in society as a whole.



# The different areas of awareness and how they help us

As mentioned above, self-awareness is not only about understanding ourselves, but about understanding how we impact others in our lives, and even what can help or hinder us when seeking to reach our highest potential.

So, let's look at the different areas of awareness and what they can mean for us:

## Internal self-awareness

This is about getting to know yourself, but not only knowing - being comfortable in expressing these parts of yourself so that you can be happy, fulfilled and reach the potential you deserve.

When you're reaching high levels of internal self-awareness, you're able to answer questions about what you want out of life and what your core values are with ease, because you know yourself well. You're comfortable with acknowledging your strengths and weaknesses and operate from this place without letting your ego take over.

As you start to build on your internal awareness, you'll be aware of the gaps and the things you need to work on, but you can do this from an honest and objective point of view without being hard on yourself or becoming the victim in your own story.

## External self-awareness

The next part of awareness is gaining an understanding of how others see you. Often, we have a very different picture of ourselves compared to how others see us, and this can be reflected in both our positive and negative traits.

Have you ever asked people to choose a few words to describe you and been surprised by the answers they gave?

Being able to accept that others see us differently - whether good or bad - from how we see ourselves is an opportunity to go within and learn more about who we truly are and what causes us to be seen that way.

It's not about saying that we need to change or that we're doing something wrong, but simply getting comfortable with acknowledging that what we believe to be true about ourselves is not always what's being portrayed.

Often this happens if we're afraid to be true to who we are or how we feel inside, and instead we act from the place we believe we should and not from the place of who we really are.

# Why self-awareness is so important?

Self-awareness is one of the most important skills we can ever have. It not only helps us understand who we are so that we can start living more authentically and create a fulfilled life, but it helps us develop more compassion, understanding and empathy that forge better relationships.

As we move into a new year after what has been a strange, uneasy time for the world, you may be, like many others, re-evaluating things like your career, or simply what your version of **you** looks like in this new world.

If so, then self-awareness is the thing that will help

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