



## OMAGBITSE BARROW ON "SELF AWARENESS"

The first step on the journey of emotional intelligence is having a clear and brutally honest understanding of yourself. It sounds strange that there is a possibility that people are not self-aware, or do not know themselves? Yes, unfortunately, there is, and many people fall into the category of those who are not self-aware, and this plays out in many different ways.

For example, peer pressure has an exerting influence on people - both young and old, because such people are not sufficiently self-aware. If you understand the purpose of your life, and have set clear goals for yourself that align with this purpose and your intrinsic beliefs and values, how will you then be swayed by what your colleagues are doing, what is trending and popular or the expectations that others have of you. Peer pressure is evidence of the lack of self-awareness among many.

Think about how some of us respond to negative feedback. The truth is that no one absolutely LOVES to hear that they have not done something well, or that they have exhibited some inappropriate behaviour.

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Certainly, but people who are self-aware do not consider feedback as defining them or limiting them, rather, they are open to feedback, in fact they are desirous of learning about their mistakes and working to overcome them - they are feedback junkies, because they know first of all that they are not perfect, and are quite happy and comfortable about that. The way people respond to feedback is another evidence of the lack of self-awareness.

Another dimension plays out in how people handle difficult situations - loss of job, bereavement, ill-health, failure in politics and business. Again, nobody likes suffering, but self-aware people recognize the inevitability of suffering and difficulty and learn to fail forward. They look for and find meaning in their suffering and difficulty and many times become broken healers themselves - reaching out to help others and bringing solace to them, even while they suffer. Rather than experience Post-Traumatic Stress, they experience Post-Traumatic Growth.

So, reflect on your response to peer pressure, feedback and failure and take the right steps towards improving your self awareness.

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