

Self Awareness Paper

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Abstract

This paper is a self-awareness reflection. The author will discuss the importance of self-awareness and emotional intelligence as it relates to the field of social work. Firstly, I talked through what led myself into pursuing a future in the social work profession and what population I would hope to work with someday. Secondly, I talk about any personal history or significant turning points that were a direct contribution in my want to become a helper. Thirdly, I discussed my own personal values and beliefs that are related to how I work with others in society. Next, I talk through what my social identities are and how they reflect how I stand and am seen in the world. Then, I discuss what I believe to be my strengths and limitations as it pertains to going into a future helping profession. Lastly, I talk about my goals and aspirations for my personal and professional future as an upcoming social worker.

Keywords: self-awareness, reflection, social work

Self-Awareness Paper

I define self-awareness as the ability to recognize one's own emotions and how they can affect ourselves and others. Developing self-awareness is one of the first steps when it comes to emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence displays the capacity of how much I am aware and have control over my emotions. Without being aware and acknowledging what feelings are, as an individual, I would not be able to move on towards new capabilities in life. I believe my self-awareness is a makeup of our personality traits, personal values, emotions, and psychological needs. Moreover, this reflection will be a demonstration of how my self awareness will benefit me in knowing my social identity, my strengths and limitations, my dreams and goals, and finally my future in becoming a future social worker.

Pursuing a Social Work Career

One of the main reasons I decided to pursue a career in social work was to protect vulnerable populations and insure that if they are in need of assistance and services, they get them. Specifically, I want to work with children and their families. When working with these populations, social workers need to have particular skills to best serve them successfully. For instance, empathy, patience, enthusiasm, good communication, and decision-making are just a few skills that come to mind when working with children and families. With that said, I still have areas to improve upon and learn about, particularly, my own self-awareness. I have many things to work through and more growth to explore so that I am equipped enough to do this job the best way possible.

Personal History

One significant turning point in my life that encouraged my decision to become a helper would be my mom's decision to become a caretaker for her youngest sister's three children. She

made the decision over seven years ago. Her decision impacted my life more than my sisters because she moved to college shortly after they moved in. The whole situation is not ideal and has a lot of problems, specifically, that my mom does not technically have custody over them so she does not get benefits for them staying with her and she tends to struggle at times. For more context, both of the kids' parents are alive and well, but do not want to take care of them full time and only spend time with them when it benefits them. In these circumstances, I was forced to grow up quicker and become a role model for my cousins. My role in the family changed because I went from being the youngest child to basically becoming a big sister to three children. Throughout this experience, I was influenced by mom to step up, help her out, and take responsibility for these new additions. This event only motivated my want to become a social work practitioner because I am sure that many families go through situations that are similar to mine and my hope is that I can support those families and advocate for them.

Values and Beliefs

My mom instilled many core values in me as a child. She always taught me to show respect, be responsible, be honest, have integrity, and to be kind. These values impact my ability to navigate through society because they display the foundation that is my life. The choices and behaviors I choose are based solely on what my values are. My values influence all aspects of my life as well as all of my interactions. Values are essential because they help us grow and evolve. My values also contribute to my self-awareness. In the field of social work, they value the dignity and worth of the person which allows clients to develop self-determination based on their individual values.

Social Identity

My social identity would include being a 20 year-old black, female college student that is studying social work, is heterosexual, a member of generation Z, and is a part of the working class. These identities show where I stand in society because it categorizes me from other individuals. My social identities are what make me unique but also determine whether I have privilege or are a victim of oppression. In certain areas of my life, I have experienced privilege and experienced oppression. I have the privilege to continue my education at a university. But I have been oppressed because of my skin color, my gender, and as a member of the working class. In the field of social work, my identities play a role in how my job gets done. Specifically, my identities are how my colleagues will see me forever. In their eyes, I could be an ally or enemy all because of my social identities.

My levels of cultural competence and cultural humility is still something that needs to be developed because I do not have much knowledge with communicating and working with other cultures. I learn best when I am continuously practicing what I am taught and as of lately I have not had much opportunity to do so. For starters, my hope to expand my knowledge of both terms starts with gaining cultural knowledge and engaging myself into mindful conversations to help me better understand. For instance, being culturally competent in the workplace would be like becoming a part of a trained staff to improve cultural awareness and skills. An example for cultural humility would be the willingness to understand another one's culture and not act like you know everything that is assumed about it.

Strengths and Limitations

Acknowledging my strengths and limitations affords me the opportunity to understand and work with them. One certain attitude and or quality that is counterproductive to my strengths would be agreeableness for the one reason it would only result in disruption because of the

eagerness to avoid conflict. My personal and professional strengths and qualities would include, ambition, a hard worker, dedicated, empathetic, flexible, independent, moral, patient, responsible, respectful, team-oriented, and trustworthy. I feel as though some of my strengths can also be my limitations, specifically, my empathy, patience, and dedication. These three attributes of my personality can cause restriction in both professional and personal areas of my life because they can be seen as weaknesses. Also, these attributes align with two of my biggest insecurities: rejection and social anxiety. The constant feeling of rejection shows up because no matter how patient, dedicated, and empathetic I am, failure is bound to happen and my social anxiety is something I have lived with for so long that it has become a part of me. My insecurities are a work in progress. I hope to work on these by taking in the realization that although failure is something that happens, it does not have to hold me back and it does not have to be such a bad thing. As for my social anxiety, I just have to continue learning about the signs and symptoms that trigger it.

Dreams, Goals, and Aspirations

One of my aspirations is that people see me as someone that is trustworthy, reliable, kind, and educated. The only way to accomplish this aspirations is to continue my education, show up for people when needed, and stay true to myself. My personal goal is to become more confident and to develop a positive mindset and balance. My goal as a social worker is to advance human rights and work with and enable people to achieve the best possible levels of personal and social well-being. In order to put these ideas into place and make a difference, I need to continue my practice and engage in policy work.

Discussion

In conclusion, self awareness has proven to be needed in every aspect of my life. It is an essential part of becoming a social worker because it affords me the knowledge to best help my future clients. My emotional intelligence is another important tool of my future. It is significant because it can sharpen my communication and relationship skills in the workplace. Without either of these ideas, I would not be capable of understanding my own emotions and be able to see and articulate my behavior because of it. In all, this paper does a good job in covering the topics that contain essential parts of my self-awareness because acknowledging them now will benefit me later on.