

Zones of Awareness Guided Imagery Learning Experience 2025

Self-Awareness Module

Grade Level Range: Middle School - Adult

To the Teacher:

The purpose of this learning experience is to introduce students to the skill of becoming aware of the three zones of awareness and to teach them how to focus their awareness in whatever zone they want. For more information about the importance of being aware, see the article Self-Awareness Reading. We must distinguish between the three zones because each zone provides us with different information about ourselves and our world.

Procedure/Directions:

First, review the 3 zones of awareness, why it is important to be self-aware, and what each zone of awareness tells us about ourselves and our world. As you read the guided imagery, pause every time there are three periods (...) and allow students to focus on whatever you have suggested before proceeding to the next section. It is recommended that the entire learning experience be initially completed so that students focus their awareness on all three zones. In the future, specific zones can be singled out. Many learning experiences focus on awareness of feelings, and future learning experiences will focus on how our mental activity affects our feelings and behaviors.

Awareness of the 3 Zones

Now, close your eyes and see where your awareness goes. What are you aware of at this moment...? Say to yourself, "Now I'm aware of __," and finish the sentence with what you are aware of now... Are you aware of something in the outside world by using one of your senses, some mental activity in your head, or are you aware of a feeling...? Say to yourself, "Now I'm aware of something in my __ zone," and finish the sentence with what zone of awareness you are in right now...

Awareness of our External World

Tell the student that you will take them on a guided imagery and that soon you will ask them to close their eyes, but first ask them to become aware of their outside zone of awareness. The "outside" zone is when we use our senses to discover sensations outside ourselves—what we see, hear, smell, taste, or touch. It is awareness of the external world. Ask them to become aware of what they are seeing... Ask them to say to themselves, "Now I'm aware of __," and finish the sentence with what they see now... Ask them now to become aware of what they are hearing... Ask them to say to themselves, "Now I'm aware of __," and finish the sentence with what they are hearing now... Ask them now to become aware of what they are touching... Ask them to say to themselves, "Now I'm aware of __," and finish the sentence with what they are touching now... What does whatever you are touching feel like...? When you are seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting, you are in your inside zone of awareness.

Awareness of Thinking Activity

I will now ask you to become aware of mental activity in your head. Awareness of “mental” activity includes all explaining (in our heads), imagining, guessing, thinking, planning, remembering, anticipating, rationalizing, daydreaming, and fantasizing. What we think about, daydream, and fantasize about can tell us much about who and how we are and what we want. Now, become aware of something going on in your head. Some form of mental activity. What mental activity are you aware of at this moment...? Say to yourself, “Now I’m aware of __,” and finish the sentence with what mental activity you are aware of at this moment... Now, become aware of something you are thinking about. Say to yourself, “Now I am thinking about __,” and finish the sentence with what you are thinking now... Now, become aware of something you are planning to do in the future. Say to yourself,

“Now I am thinking about __,” and finish the sentence with what you plan to do in the future... Now, become aware of something that you have done in the past. Say to yourself, “Now I am thinking about __,” and finish the sentence with something you have done in the past... Now, become aware of something you daydream or fantasize about. Say to yourself, “Now I am daydreaming or fantasizing about __,” and finish the sentence with something you daydream or fantasize about...

Awareness of Feelings

I will now ask you to become aware of what you are feeling. Awareness of our feelings is when we are aware of what we are feeling and why we are feeling that way. It also includes any physical manifestations of feelings like muscular tensions and aches. Now, become aware of what you are feeling right now and why you feel this way. Say to yourself, “Now I’m feeling __,” and finish the sentence with what you are feeling and why you feel this way...

Processing /Main Points/Summary of the Learning Experience: Debriefing questions include:

1. What were the main points of the lesson today?
2. How was that experience for you?
3. I learned that I...
4. I relearned that I...
5. I was surprised that I...

Summary:

Summarize why it is important to be self-aware and how each zone provides different information about ourselves and our world. See the Self-Awareness Reading ([Self-Awareness Module](#)) for the main reasons.

Additional Suggestions:

Teachers can take a few minutes at the beginning or end of subsequent classes to do guided imagery in one of the zones. All the other learning experiences in this module focus on self-awareness and self-management of feelings, thinking, and behavior.

Attribution/Source: The concept of the three zones of awareness came from *Awareness: exploring, experimenting, and experiencing* by John O. Stevens. The guided imagery is a modification of one of his exercises in that book.