



# 3 ways to become wise

by Carmen Allen

## What is wisdom and how do we get it?

*“Wisdom is the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgement.”*

I like to think of it as...

- ✓ Knowing when to speak and when to keep quiet.
- ✓ Knowing what to say that will be helpful rather than hurtful.
- ✓ Knowing what to do in a given situation that will bring about life, not destruction.
- ✓ Being able to really listen to a person’s heart as they speak, rather than merely hear words.
- ✓ Being able to analyse a situation and correctly guess possible outcomes.

But, before we talk about *how* to get wisdom, I’d like to pose a question.

### **Are you willing to change?**

If we’d like to become wiser, then we need to be willing to change. Ask yourself...

- Am I willing to learn from what happens to me and around me?
- Am I willing to take a close look at who I am: my beliefs, my thoughts, my behaviour.  
This means I will grow in the area of self-awareness. *(I’ve included some helpful information about self-awareness at the end of this article.)*
- Am I prepared to change if and when necessary?

If you ticked “Yes” to these questions... read on. You are in the right place to discover three ways to become wise. Good on you!



## 3 Ways to become Wise

### 1. Learn from experience

When my youngest son (T) was 11 he complained of a sore tummy. The following day I went to work as usual, but left him at home in the care of his older brother (B). I felt extremely guilty about putting work before the health of my child, but I worked for a boss who made it very difficult to ask for time off. I took my son to the doctor at 2.00pm. The doctor's prognosis was... "It could be his appendix but there's a virus going around with similar symptoms. If you're worried about him through the night take him to hospital."

The next morning, T was no better, so we (my husband and I) took him to hospital. They did tests and said it was definitely appendicitis. He was operated on later that evening. After waiting almost three hours, the surgeon came to chat with us. He said that T's appendix had ruptured and it had taken them a long time to clean him up. He was a very sick little boy and would need to be in hospital for at least a week on triple antibiotics to ward off infection.

Two weeks after his operation, he had complications and was back in hospital. To say this was a very dark and stressful time in my life, would be an understatement. I was terrified for his health, and overwhelmed by a sense of guilt for not getting him to hospital earlier.

But I learned from this experience. It made me wiser for next time. And yes there was a next time.

A few years later my eldest son started to show similar symptoms to T. After a night of vomiting and pain, we rushed him straight into hospital and he had his appendix removed later that afternoon. Thankfully, we got him there in time and it hadn't ruptured.

*Wisdom is gained by learning from our experiences.*

### 2. Learn from others

Wow! This has been mind-blowing for me. I can't imagine how small and boring my life would be if I assumed I knew everything. I've learned so much from other people; people I know and people I don't know. Here's two little examples...

- ✓ I've learned how to use Photoshop by watching Youtube tutorials. Thank you to all the Photoshop experts who have taken the time to share their knowledge.
- ✓ I've learned how to self-publish a book from best-selling authors who've been kind enough to share their writing journey with me. They've shared what worked for them and what didn't. This has saved me a mountain of mistakes.

### 3. Learn from God

When life gets tough or I need to make a difficult decision I turn to God for his wisdom and advice.

I'm a bit like Molly, the main character in the Molly Greenwood Adventure series. She stops and asks the King for help and direction whenever she's in a jam.

These three ways have worked for me. But you may have discovered other ways to become wise. Feel free to [contact me](#) for a chat.

## a closer look at Self-Awareness



One of the ways we can gain wisdom is by being self-aware. We can challenge our behaviour and reactions by asking ourselves questions like:

- Why do I always react like that when I'm in those types of situations?
- What belief is driving my thoughts, feelings and behaviour?
- How do others view me?"

I believe that a person who lacks self-awareness misses out on a deep and fulfilling life. They merely skim through life on the surface. A bit like a canoe on the water - easily pulled this way or that, by the current.

Whereas someone who is growing in self-awareness is more like a person willing to put on a wetsuit, snorkel and goggles, jump out of their boat, and see the beauty under the water. Risky? Yep, for sure. But well worth it :)

### What is Self-Awareness?

Duval and Wicklund who first came up with the term 'Self Awareness', explain:

"When we focus our attention on ourselves, we evaluate and compare our current behavior to our internal standards and values." <sup>1</sup>

"Self-awareness plays a critical role in how we understand ourselves and how we relate to others and the world." <sup>2</sup> (sourced from verywellmind.com)

Tasha Eurich, a researcher and organizational psychologist, and her team of researchers came up with two categories of self-awareness: internal self-awareness, and external self-awareness.

**Internal self-awareness** is how clearly you see your values, passions, and aspirations, and how well those standards fit with your environment and your reactions (which include thoughts, feelings, behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses).’

She gives some examples: ‘Internal self-awareness is recognizing your current job doesn’t match your true passion for marketing, or feeling dissatisfied with a heated conversation you had with your colleague, which conflicts with your belief that kindness is important.

**External self-awareness**, on the other hand, is the ability to clearly see how other people view you. People who know how others see them are typically more empathetic. Leaders who can see how their employees view them are usually more effective, and have stronger relationships with their employees.’<sup>1</sup>

**Wikipedia Definition** = Self-awareness is how an individual consciously knows and understands their own character, feelings, motives, and desires.<sup>3</sup>

I know that may all sound a bit heavy, but drilled down, it means, a person who is self-aware evaluates their behaviour by understanding and recognising their: internal standards, beliefs, values, thoughts, personality, feelings, motives and desires.

Luckily, self-awareness is something you can learn. Phew!

## Knowing me



### Sources:

1. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/self-awareness>
2. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-awareness-2795023>
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-awareness>

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