Introduction: Gaining self-awareness

Journalists, no doubt, have stressful jobs. They often must contend with life's harshest realities, from mass shootings to natural disasters to various types of discord and conflict. Additionally, the very processes and practices of journalism, including the omnipresent deadline, can create a culture that views stress and pressure as just part of the job, something to be tolerated as opposed to managed and mitigated. But it doesn't have to be this way. Especially in the journalistic context, people need to develop self-awareness so they can proactively manage their stress, perform their best at work and maximize their personal well-being.

This module is based on two premises: 1) that "self-awareness lies at the heart of the ability to master oneself and therefore to lead and manage others"[1] and 2) that people are more likely to be successful by developing their strengths than by shoring up their weaknesses.[2] A focus on self-awareness helps leaders understand their own strengths and weaknesses so they can choose contexts that enable them to play to their strengths and collaborate with people who can compensate for their weaknesses. Self-awareness also enables leaders to develop the ability to understand and appreciate the differences among other people with whom they interact.

Most of the modules in this curriculum begin with a focal case study, which portrays the themes of the module in the context of a real situation. Because this module focuses on self-awareness, YOU are the focal case study. That is, rather than reading about another person's journey toward increased self-awareness, you will take self-assessments, participate in exercises and reflect on the results in a manner that is designed to help you increase your own self-awareness.

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[1]Whetten, David A., and Cameron, Kim S. (2020). "Developing Management Skills" (10th edition, p. 37). Pearson Prentice Hall.
[2] Rath, Tom, and Conchie, Barry (2008). "Strengths Based Leadership: Great Leaders, Teams, and Why People Follow." Gallup Press.