Self Knowledge and Rationality

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Introduction

Certain problems are of wider importance which concern common people in general and intellectuals in particular. Social Equality, Self-Knowledge and Rationality are such issues which involve any self conscious person and specialists in other disciplines like Politics and Sociology. Philosophical understanding of these issues look into the most fundamental conditions and reasons of which constitute them. Here we will discuss the problem of Self Knowledge and Rationality.
Self-Knowledge

- What is self-knowledge? One may initially understand that self-knowledge is a knowledge which one has about or in regard to oneself. According to philosophical tradition, self-knowledge is characterized by two types of epistemic privilege:

  - (i) the one concerns its security
  - (ii) the other its source.
The special security of self-knowledge has been claimed to consist in, e.g. our being infallible or indubitable. As far as the source of self-knowledge is concerned, it has been argued that we need neither rely on observation nor on inference to reach this kind of self-knowledge.
Thinking

All cats have four legs.
I have four legs.
Therefore, I am a cat.
Mental States

- The knowledge a subject has concerning is his own present mental states or events and which the subject could express by saying, e.g. “I believe that it will rain tomorrow”, “I wish to have a quite holiday.”

- As far as our mental states are concerned, we seem to have direct access to them by means of introspection, and it has been maintained that this special access accounts for the special security of self-knowledge mentioned above.
Rationality as a Necessary Condition for Self-Knowledge

- The problem of whether being rational is a necessary condition for having self-knowledge, it is first of all important to remind oneself of the triviality that self-knowledge belongs to the class of propositional attitudes.
Essential Rationality

- Everybody who has accepted the argument so far is committed to the thesis that every person is and must be rational.

- Essential rationality is compatible with episodic rationality as well as with episodic irrationality.

- Though not complete rationality, a minimum of rationality, viz. basic or essential rationality, is indeed a necessary condition for self-knowledge.
Self-Knowledge as a Necessary Condition for Rationality

- Since basic or habitual rationality is necessary for having propositional attitudes at all, than according to Davidson, rationality being a necessary condition for self-knowledge reveals itself. Having self-knowledge is a necessary condition for being rational.
Conclusion…

- As a conclusion, we can say that being able to know of one’s beliefs and desires, i.e. being able, in principle, to have self-knowledge is very likely a necessary condition for being able to act rationally or to readjust one’s belief system.

References:

- Wikipedia (the Free Encyclopedia)
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy