

Maximize Your Emotional Intelligence
for Unstoppable Victory



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

CHAPTER 1



What is Emotional Intelligence?

What is Emotional Intelligence?

The phrase "emotional intelligence" can actually be traced back to a paper published by Michael Beldoch in 1964. However, it became very popular in the United States and elsewhere, especially among management circles, in 1995. In that year, the journalist Daniel Goleman published a book of the same name.

The initial public perception of the concept of emotional intelligence is that it is a mix of Trait and Ability impacting social leadership or interpersonal relationships. More specifically, it can be broken down into four key parts: perceiving emotions, using emotions to our benefit, understanding other people's emotions, and managing our own.

Put in these terms, emotional intelligence seems pretty straightforward. However, it has very important components that we need to seriously examine instead of just automatically assume.

This is the big danger of emotional intelligence. Since we get along with other people and have some level of experience as far as social interactions are concerned, it's too easy to gloss over the intricacies and fine details of this skill. That's precisely what emotional intelligence is. It is a skill.

Some people have higher levels of natural emotional intelligence, especially empathy, but it is still a skill. You need to fine tune it and polish it for your initial level of emotional intelligence to help you live up to your fullest potential.

The key components I mentioned above can be actually be broken down into four key areas: awareness, understanding, control and empathy.

Emotional Awareness

Emotional intelligence, at the very least, enables you to be aware of other people's emotions. This means you are able to correctly identify the range of emotions that they are feeling. This is what makes other people's emotions very tricky because we're not confronted or faced with black and white situations.

When you look at somebody, you can't just say that that person's angry. Usually, the person has a range of emotions. Maybe you're looking at somebody, and they're feeling apprehensive, a little fearful, and quite shocked. Other people would have a different mix of emotions.

People who have high emotional intelligence don't gloss over or dismiss these secondary or tertiary emotions. Correct emotional identification often boils down to getting a clear understanding of the mix of emotions somebody is feeling.

It's so much easier and simpler to just say that a person is shocked and call it a day. Unfortunately, you're not really fully understanding that person if you don't bother to look at other emotions that may be at play.

Another key component of emotional awareness is your own ability to be emotionally honest with yourself. In other words, you have to be able to read your own emotions, and this has to be a complete and honest objective assessment.

In other words, you can't just assume that since you're subjectively feeling a certain way, then that is the absolute truth. On a purely subjective basis, that is absolutely correct. After all, if you're feeling angry or upset, you have every right to feel that way. You obviously should know yourself enough to clearly label what you're feeling at any given time.

The problem here is, your emotions don't exist in a vacuum. Other people looking in from the outside must be able to clearly read you as well. There's a problem when there's a disconnect between the objective reading of your emotions and your own labeling of your emotions.

It's not unusual for people to feel really angry, but other people would think that they're just disappointed, let down or inconvenienced. Eventually, this disconnect can actually cause serious problems.

Finally, increased emotional awareness leads to the ability to function without emotional denial. In other words, when you feel some strong emotion, you can easily own up to it. You're not making excuses for it, nor are you trying to pass it off as something else.

Emotional Understanding

In addition to understanding other people's emotions as well as your own emotions and clearly identifying them, emotional intelligence also involves deep emotional analysis.

When somebody feels emotionally upset, it is not just something that they feel at a given point in time and in a certain place. It has an impact. It can tie back to something that happened before, or it can cause consequences that will resonate in the future.

People with high EI understand this. This is why they are just as concerned about future impact and consequences as they are with root causes of why people feel the way they do. This analysis also applies to their own emotional states.

Emotional Control

This is where things get real. In the previous two parts of emotional intelligence, it's very easy to just look at it as some sort of intellectual exercise. It's very easy to file this information in the category "something nice to know" and leave it at that. But if you are able to control your emotions, you are able to ultimately control your destiny.

The sad reality is that the vast majority of people actually act out of impulse. Now, most people are not going to admit this to your face. Most people would come up with all sorts of rational sounding explanations why they made the kind of decision they made. Don't believe them.

In a recent study, scientists discovered that a large percentage of people's decisions were made purely out of impulse. However, when asked to explain those decisions, the subjects came up with all sorts of rational sounding reasons.

In other words, they would let their emotions get the better of them and they would make decisions, and then they would look for excuses or justifications that make it seem that their decisions made sense.

When you control your emotions, you are less likely to let your emotions get the better of you. When you make a choice or you take action, you are more likely to do so based on a rational decision-making process.

In other words, you would weigh the pros and cons, you would go out of your way to research what exactly is going on and what type of action would lead to the best outcome. That's how rational people make smart decisions. You're more likely to do things that way than simply going with your gut or, worse yet, getting all emotional and just letting your emotions run wild as you make a decision.

Emotional control is also crucial because you are able to respond to other people based on your character and values. This is a big deal because too many people simply react emotionally. They can't help it. If somebody pushes at them, their number one instinct is to push back. If they feel that somebody said something that isn't so nice, their default response is to reciprocate.

This is a serious problem because if you want to be successful, you must be able to respond based on your values. You must also be able to react based on your character.

But unfortunately, if you just spend your time simply reacting, you're dealing with your lowest common denominator. You're dealing with revenge, getting stuff off your chest, making a problem go away, or even worse, giving in to your worst instincts.

Believe it or not, emotional management plays a very big role in whether a person is going to reach the pinnacle of success.

Like I said in the introduction to this book, there are lots of people with high IQs who are living their lives far below their fullest potential. A lot of this under-performance, if you will, stems from their lack of emotional management.

It's not unusual for perfectly intelligent people make unintelligent choices because they react emotionally. When you develop your emotional intelligence, you are able to manage your emotions better so you would be able to make higher quality decisions.

Empathy

Being able to put yourself in other people's shoes is a very powerful skill. I understand that in our modern society, being empathetic or even compassionate are sometimes viewed as signs of weakness. This really is too bad because if you are able to develop a high level of empathy, you become a more persuasive person.

You would be more likely to lead by example instead of by outward indicators of authority. Instead of leading because people are afraid of the negative consequences if you discipline them, they would gladly follow you. These are all fruits of empathy.

Empathy enables you to cross boundaries with people. They can easily see that you see the situation with their eyes and that you're giving them their due respect.

You don't necessarily have to agree with them, you don't necessarily have to kiss their butts, but when people feel that you can see the situation from their perspective and that you respect and give them proper dignity, they're more likely to view you in a favorable light.

This goes a long way in increasing your leadership capabilities. It also goes a long way in making you more persuasive and likeable.

Now, please understand that empathy has two levels. It's one thing to step into other people's shoes and look at the world from their eyes, it's another thing entirely to be able to communicate that empathy in a clear and effective way.

Empathy skills, in the context of emotional intelligence, involves both. You're not just able to empathize, but you're also able to communicate your empathy.

2 Key Models for EI

As awesome as emotional intelligence may seem, there are actually two models for it that are in competition. Depending on which model you go with, you may be making things harder for yourself, or you may make things easier for yourself.

These two competing models are the Ability and Trait models for EI. This book focuses solely on the Ability model for EI.

CHAPTER 2



Emotional Awareness & Emotional Understanding

The Ability Model for EI

According to this model, emotions provide you with the information you can use to better pick up and identify social data. Similarly, emotions help you deal with social situations by tying the emotional information you pick up into your own actions, reactions and coping mechanisms. These two abilities go hand in hand.

Individuals vary tremendously in these two abilities. This variation among individuals is reflected in their adaptive behaviors. Others are able to do well in most social situations, others need a little bit more help, while others are completely clueless.

The Ability EI Model Focuses on 4 Key Abilities

The Ability model for EI looks at one's awareness and effectiveness in dealing and working with emotions as primarily learned behavior. In other words, you're not born with these skills. It's something that you pick up and you hone as you mature as a human being.

This is a big deal because if it is learned, then it is not set in stone. It's also something that all people, given enough time, effort and focus, can master. It's not something that some people are born with and other people are not born with.

This is the model for this book. I believe that EI is an ability that you can learn, fine tune, and optimize over time. Accordingly, the Ability model for EI focuses on 4 key abilities.

Emotion Perception

Your ability to perceive emotions doesn't just involve face to face interactions. You are also able to detect emotions from the tone of people's voices, the faces people make in movies, as well as

how scenes are set up in the materials you read. You are also able to detect emotions in the context of cultural expressions.

Part of emotional perception includes perceiving your own emotions. In fact, this is the cornerstone ability of emotional intelligence. If you're not aware of your own emotions, how do you expect to be aware of other individuals' emotions? It's impossible.

Accordingly, the Ability model of EI focuses primarily and initially on building up one's ability to honestly and sincerely perceive and label one's own emotions. Everything hangs on this ability.

Using Emotions

The next component to the Ability model of EI focuses on training people to use their emotions to solve problems, to think about and analyze issues better, as well as to use mood to handle tasks or situations.

Understanding Emotions

Understanding emotions is different from perception. You're not just identifying other people's emotions or your own. Instead, understanding emotions deal with understanding how your emotional responses interact with sensitive or complex situations. You look at your emotions in the context of your social interactions.

This requires attention to detail regarding small changes to people's emotional responses around you as well as small changes in your own reactions. This skill set also requires that you figure out how your own emotions, as well as how you read other people's emotions, evolve over time.

Managing Emotions

Finally, the Ability model for emotional intelligence also focuses on helping individuals regulate their emotions. In addition to being able to dial down emotional states, individuals also learn how to channel their emotional states to different expressions.

If you're feeling sad, there are more ways to communicate that emotional reality than just simply pouting or crying. This is an important skill because the quality of your social interactions as well as your relationships can be greatly improved if you adopt a better emotional vocabulary for emotional expression.

Managing emotions also involve the ability to separate your thoughts from your emotions. When mental images come out, you don't necessarily have to get triggered in a negative way. You don't have to keep repeating the same emotional reactions that you've had to negative thoughts and other stimuli that you have experienced over the years. You can change your response.

Finally, emotional management also involves harnessing strong emotions to achieve both individual and collective goals.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of the Ability Model for Emotional Intelligence

The big advantage to the Ability model for EI is that this is testable. Researchers are actually able to measure the abilities above. People either have it or they don't, or somewhere in between.

Another key advantage of this model is that it is learned. It is not somehow hardwired into who you are. You're not born an emotionally intelligent person. According to this model, people pick this up shortly after they are born and they improve on it, or fail to improve on it, as they get older.

This is a big deal because if we start with the assumption that emotional intelligence is somehow hardwired, then we are left with a very difficult position of admitting that some people have it and some don't.

And those that don't are not going to develop emotional intelligence. They're basically left with whatever level of emotional intelligence they have, which could be very low or almost non-existent. This is a very difficult position to put ourselves in.

The disadvantage of the Ability model is that it takes time to cultivate EI. It also takes effort to learn. You must be willing to learn.

Another key disadvantage is that different people come from different backgrounds. It's great if you come from a background where your family is very supportive and you grew up in a warm, nurturing environment. What if you grew up with parents who are very discouraging? What if you come from a background where you feel that you are opposed or discouraged from all sides?

It's important to note that different people from different backgrounds can have different results using the techniques mentioned in this book precisely because they come from different backgrounds.

Do not underestimate the impact of your personal background. Your childhood, your family structure and your family history, as well as your own personal experiences, provide a context to not only your ability to learn emotional intelligence, but also your speed of learning.

CHAPTER 3



Emotional Control & Empathy

Understanding the Benefits of Emotional Intelligence

What exactly do you get if you fine tune and hone your emotional intelligence? Here is just a short list. This is by no means an exhaustive list, nor is it intended to be some definitive list. The truth is, when it comes to social interactions, the benefits to mastering such interactions is actually limitless.

Better Social Relations for Children

With children, increased levels of emotional intelligence leads to higher quality social interactions, better relationships, and is more likely that they would not develop antisocial behavior or traits. This is a big deal because when people deviate from social norms, this may lead to potentially negative long term life consequences.

According to both subjective and objective tests of EI, increased EI for kids shows a positive correlation and positive social behavior both inside and outside of school.

Improved Adult Social Relations

When adults develop higher levels of emotional intelligence, they are able to feel more confident. This is due to the fact that they are able to perceive their emotional states better, and this can help them conduct themselves better in emotional settings. This increased social competency leads to increasing levels of social confidence.

Having achieved this, this positions them to wanting more interpersonal interactions, which can lead to more opportunities for interpersonal relationships and can lead to even higher levels of social competence.

Similarly, high EI correlates with lower levels of aggression and interpersonal problems.

Less Conflicts

People with high emotional intelligence tend to be perceived better by their peers. Other individuals think that people with high EI are more empathetic, easier to get along with, and are more socially skilled. This leads to lower levels of interpersonal conflicts and misunderstanding.

Better Intimate and Family Relationships

Studies also correlate high EI with better family relationships as well as better relations with intimate partners across a wide range of indicators.

Better Work Relations and Performance

Whether we're looking at negotiating for better pay, getting better jobs or getting promoted at work, higher emotional intelligence is correlated with all these. As long as there's any kind of social dynamics involving the workplace, people with higher EI are able to negotiate better positions or situations for themselves.

Better Overall Psychological Well-being

People with high EI scores tend to report higher levels of self esteem, personal confidence, and life satisfaction. They also report lower levels of depression, anxiety or insecurity. These measures of well-being are not isolated. They actually correlate with better health choices and more positive personal behavior.

Paves the Way for Self Compassion

People with high EI are more likely to have a superior understanding of who they are, where they're going, and what they're about. They are able to make decisions on a more conscious level, even if they factor in their emotional states. They are able to make decisions that they don't regret later on. This higher propensity to self compassion positions them for self actualization.

CHAPTER 4



The Ability Model for EI

Improving your emotional intelligence

The first step is self-perception. This is crucial. You cannot skip this step. You may think that you know yourself deep down inside. You may think that you are a very self-aware person. Guess what? Think again.

In many cases, we assume that our emotions. We make all sorts of snap judgments about how we feel. Little do we know that we're actually feeling many things at the same time. This always shocks people, even those who claim to be totally self-aware. This is why at this point in time, I need you to drop all your assumptions about how well you know yourself.

Instead, ask yourself a very simple question, "How aware am I of all my emotional states?" Pay attention to the word "all." This is plural. Every time you feel strong emotions, it usually doesn't just involve one emotion. You're feeling something before, during and after that strong emotional state. If you ignore this or dismiss it outright, you're doing yourself a big disservice. You really are.

You're putting yourself in a situation where there's a disconnect between how you're feeling and how others perceive you. You have to understand that there is often a disconnect between what you think you feel and what others say you're feeling. Now, this is not a question of opposition. This is not a question of black and white opposites, that either one is true and the other one is false.

Instead, this is a question of seeing the big picture. For example, you're feeling depressed that your ex-girlfriend is going out with somebody else. But if you dig deep enough, you're not just feeling sadness. You're also feeling nostalgia and a sense of disappointment in yourself because you did not treat her better. You may even be feeling angry at yourself.

There are so many different emotions that are going on. It's kind of like a tossed salad. There are many different layers to this emotional state that you're in. It would help tremendously if you consult with other people to get the view from outside. You may feel just totally depressed, but it may well turn out that there are other things going on.

If you are aware of these and you are able to overcome your own sense of denial, then you become less disconnected. You will be able to clearly express your emotions better, but most importantly, you will become more aware of what you are truly feeling in any point in time.

The problem of denial

Why do people play the denial game? Why do people lie to themselves? Well, a part of that is due to the fact that we are playing to the crowd. For example, guys are not supposed to feel sad. You're supposed to be tough, independent and autonomous. Negative feelings should slide off you like water off a duck's back.

Similarly, if you're a female, you're supposed to feel empathetic. You're supposed to be compassionate. So, when you feel contempt and anger, you get confused. You have to overcome this and replace it with a deep sense of authenticity.

You have to remember that there is no such thing as a right and wrong emotion. What's important is that you are fully aware that you are feeling it. That's all you need to do. Acknowledge that you are feeling it. Clearly identify it. There is nothing to explain. There is nothing to be embarrassed about. There is nothing to sweep under the rug. Just acknowledge it.

Don't label it as ugly, inappropriate or something a "bad person" would feel. Your job is to be as clear as possible about the emotions that you're feeling. Take ownership of them. There's no need to apologize for them. Overcome this natural sense of denial because since we were children, we were trained to deny our feelings. We were trained to make excuses for them. Well, starting now, you're going to have to overcome that.

You can't assume that you'll automatically be understood

Another problem that gets in the way of a heightened level of emotional self-perception is the idea that people will automatically "get us." I really can't blame people for thinking this way. After all, when you were a kid and you were going through your emotional growing pains, your parents gave you a lot of rope and they played along. They may have even enabled you.

The problem is, at some point, you're going to have to grow up. The people around you are not going to bend over backwards to try to understand you. They're not going to give you the benefit of the doubt. They definitely are not going to give you much rope. Don't put yourself in the position of constantly assuming that people will automatically understand what you're expressing and what your words truly mean.

You have to understand that people have enough problems of their own. They have their own lives to live. Otherwise, you're putting yourself in the situation where people are basically going to be walking on eggshells around you. You will be a very unpleasant person to be around. You don't want to play that game.

You have to get rid of this mental crutch. The more you believe that people will automatically understand what you're feeling, the less likely you're going to be doing the heavy emotional work of being truly emotionally self-aware.

Stop playing to the crowd

In addition to what I described above. Another way people play to the crowd involves some sort of emotional "Kabuki Theater." Have you seen a Kabuki show? The emotions of the actors fixed. They are formulaic. It doesn't take a rocket scientist or a very sensitive person to figure them out. In fact, you can actually read people's emotions in Kabuki because they are very easy to tell apart.

When you play to the crowd, you are engaged in Kabuki Theater. on an emotional level. Why? Well, when you express your emotions based on social expectations, you're not really showing your real face. You're not really expressing what you truly feel. Instead, you look at your situation and imagine what the "right" emotional state is.

In other words, you're looking for what's socially acceptable. Then you express your emotions along those lines, exactly like Kabuki Theater. Life does not work on formulas. Unfortunately, the more you do this and play to the crowd this way, the less emotionally honest you become. Eventually, you reach a point where you can't even tell your own emotions unless they are reduced to cartoonish simplification.

Stop playing to the crowd emotionally. Don't let social expectations dictate how you express yourself emotionally.

Focus on honesty

If you're feeling sad, feel sad. If you're feeling upset, feel upset. Now, please understand that this doesn't mean lashing out. This doesn't mean that you have to bawl your eyes out or yell at somebody in anger. I'm talking about what you're feeling deep down inside. Instead of covering it up, pretending it's something else or, worse yet, denying it, feel it.

Honesty is its own reward. If you keep covering up what you're feeling, the only person you're fooling is yourself. Remember, emotions have two levels. There is the purely subjective emotion and you're the only person who can feel this, but there is also the external part. When you manifest emotions, other people can see signals that you're sending out.

Unfortunately, unless you are completely honest with what you're feeling, oftentimes, there is a disconnect between the objective signals you're sending out and what you subjectively feel. This

type of honesty is its own reward. The more you practice honesty deep down inside, the better off you will become.

Log your emotions

Keep an emotional intelligence journal. Your first step is to log your emotions. Once you're clear, you're going to have to overcome denial and stop playing to the crowd. Log what you're feeling. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer. Nobody has to read your notes. It's not like you're going to write all this down and post it on Facebook. This is for your eyes only.

Just write whatever is at the top of your head. This is the subjective part. As long as you feel it, write it down. Next, describe it in objective terms. This is very important. What is the context of your feelings? What brought it on? What exactly do you feel?

For example, if the mental image of my ex-girlfriend who cheated on me flashed in my mind, I would write, I feel sad because she betrayed me. She didn't tell the truth. She told me lie after lie to my face. She let me go on, knowing full well that she was doing certain things behind my back. It was only until I discovered that she was doing these things, that she told me the truth. This is why I feel bad.

When you write along these lines, you're being objective because you are tracing what you feel, which is sadness, to a set of facts that happened in a specific time and a specific place in your personal history. This is the objective portion of your log. You're creating context when you do this.

Now, the next part is subjective. You ask yourself, what do I think I'm feeling? I think I'm feeling sadness, but is there anything else? I feel nostalgia because I truly loved her. I believed her. A part of me would like to think that she loved me too. She seemed conflicted at the end when we broke up.

After you've written this type of material, you ask yourself, what are the objective factors here? What are the things that I can test? Well, you can test the fact that she lied to you because you talked to your common friends and they told you the truth. You can test the fact that she did all these things.

In that context, it's okay to feel sad and that's what you're really feeling. You're also feeling angry and betrayed. You're feeling abandoned. The key here is to list down all the emotions that would be warranted by the facts. That's how you get to your real emotions. You can't just say, I feel sad," or "I feel angry," or, "I feel regretful." That is too shallow.

You have to look at the whole set of facts, pay attention to the context and then list down all the emotions that could possibly come. After that, ask yourself, "Am I feeling this?" That's how you break down that iceberg of emotions, instead of just vainly scraping the surface.

If you keep going through this process, you start seeing the big picture of how your emotions stack up and how you express them.

Ask a friend

When you're interacting with your friends like telling jokes, hearing sad stories, listening to them and just basically hanging out together, stop and ask them, "Look at my face. Pay attention to my words. Look at how I'm carrying myself. What do you think I am feeling?"

Now, please understand that you have to do this with real friends because real friends care. But there is also a chance that they will try to give you the answer that you're looking for because they don't want to offend you. They want to remain your friends. You have to give them permission to be completely honest.

Ask your friend what he or she perceives based on facts. This is the most important part. They have to tell you their interpretation of your feelings, but they have to give facts to support it. Maybe they would say, "Yeah, I saw you smirking, so I think that you were upset when we were talking about your ex-girlfriend. I saw you with a smile in your eyes when you're talking about Jennifer. Maybe you really enjoyed being friends with that classmate of yours," and so on and so forth.

The key here is to get them to say facts. Remember, it's not going to help you if your friend just says, "Well, I think you're still feeling guilty about what you did to Eduardo 20 years ago." That doesn't help because it's purely subjective. Who knows how they came up with that conclusion? So, ask for facts.

What you're doing is you're trying to correlate what you're subjectively feeling with what your friend perceives objectively. This goes a long way in fixing that disconnect that I described earlier.

Train yourself

Now that you have logged your emotions and asked friends, you should have enough information regarding whatever disconnect may exist between your subjective feelings and how you externalize or communicate these feelings. At the very least, you would be more aware of the emotional signals that you are sending out.

Armed with this information, you can ask yourself what the objective parameters are of certain emotions. What kind of emotional range do I normally exhibit when I'm feeling these certain types of strong emotions: sadness, happiness, joy, anger, shock, guilt, regret, etc.

Remember, strong emotions often happen within a range. It's not just one emotion that you're feeling. Now that you have a fairly clear understanding of your range of emotions and the objective parameters for those, what they're supposed to look like and how you communicate them, the next step is to train yourself to emote in objectively clear terms.

It's very important to then look at the range of emotions and be as clear about them as you can. This way, when you feel sad, people perceive that you are sad. Not shocked, not nostalgic, not

guilty, but sad. If you're upset and angry, that's what people should perceive you as. You have to train yourself on two levels.

You have to learn how to emote the emotions that you're feeling in clear terms objectively, so people are less likely to misread you. This, of course, assumes that you learned an earlier lesson, which is that you are fully in tune with what you're feeling. You're not mislabeling it, you're not in denial, nor are you taking one emotion over another.

Instead, you are fully aware of what you're feeling at all times. This takes a lot of work because, let's face it, most people are lazy. Most people would rather make assumptions of strong emotions that they feel and leave it at that. This emotional self-awareness is the foundation of emotional control. Get this right and you are well on your way to self-mastery, create your personal success and higher emotional intelligence.

CHAPTER 5



Understanding the Benefits of Emotional Intelligence

Becoming a better judge of others' emotions

I can't even begin to tell you how many people are really good judges of their own emotions. They really are. They know themselves inside out. Now, this is awesome and everything, but the problem is they can't quite make the transition from an excellent understanding of themselves to a superb understanding of other people's emotions.

There is a disconnect. They're experts when it comes to themselves, but completely clueless when it comes to others. This is not emotional intelligence. If you want to increase your IE, you have to go to the next step, which is to become a better judge of other people's emotions.

Logically speaking, if you are a better judge of your own emotions, particularly the objective part, there is really nothing getting in the way of you using that skill set to become a better judge of other people's emotions. How exactly do you improve this EI ability?

Expose yourself to cultural expressions

To become a better judge of other people's emotions, look at how people in your larger culture express their emotions. You could start with pictures. Look at many different pictures of people interacting with each other or solo pictures of people looking at the camera. Ask yourself, "What are these people feeling?"

When you see a social scene, what exactly is going on in terms of emotions? Are there any conflicts there? Is somebody cracking a joke? Was there something awkward that just happened? You can also pay attention to movies. Great actors are great precisely because they can emote in a realistic way within a certain cultural context. Be on the lookout for that.

Read people's blog posts where they share personal experiences. You can see that when you read a lot, you would notice that the range of emotional expression actually varies from person to person. However, when you look at people that fall within certain cultural categories, there tends to be a common range of cultural expressions shared by people within that culture.

So, look for blog posts written by people who share the same culture as you. While these people are unique individuals and have their own distinct emotional ranges, when you put all those ranges together in one big bar graph, there is that bell curve in the middle that everybody agrees on emotionally. Be on the lookout for that.

Finally, look at people's faces that you meet day to day. Look at them in the eye with friendly eyes. Don't stare them down. Try to figure out what they're feeling and try to judge your own impression of what they're feeling.

Find any disconnects between your perception and external signals

Don't jump to conclusions. If somebody has furrowed brows, this could mean a lot of things. This means that they may be confused. This could mean that they may be under a lot of stress or pressure. This can also mean that they don't like you and they're uncomfortable around you. There are just so many things that could be going on.

However, the worst thing that you can do is to automatically assume the meaning of their facial expression. Try to look at the big picture. Look at the other external signals that they are sending. Just as it is a bad idea to assume that a dog is hostile just because it's barking while its tail is wagging, you can be doing the same with people.

Sure, somebody may have their chin lowered and is looking at you with furrowed eyebrows, but they may be smiling, or they may be doing something with their hands or their posture. Look at the big picture. Once you are able to do that, then look for any disconnects between what you perceive their emotions to be and the totality of the external signals that they are sending.

Work with a buddy: emotional identification

Get a friend you truly trust to work with you in terms of emotional identification. Basically, you're going to set up a game with each other. They're going to look at you and then you're going to guess their emotions. Your goal here is to overcome any disconnect between your perception and other external signals that they're sending. They will tell you whether you are on the money or not.

Now, you have to do this with somebody who is not just trying to please you or trying to score points with you. This person has to be brutally honest. At this stage, your goal is simple emotional identification. You just want to identify the emotions that they're feeling. That's all you're trying to achieve.

Work with a buddy: interpretation

Share with them your analysis of their emotions. Basically, you identify their emotions above and then you check with them. So, they will tell you right or wrong. Next, you analyze their emotions. You're basically interpreting what they're feeling. They told you that they're angry, so you said, "Okay, that's correct. I identified what you're sending as an anger signal. Here is my analysis of why you are angry."

Check with them to see if it's accurate. This is a good opportunity to get past whatever justifications or excuses you make. What you're doing is, you're inferring from your own experiences with others and with yourself, and then projecting this out to other people. So, you tell them, "This is how I analyze that type of emotion because this is what I do with my own anger."

You ask and check with them, "Is this the correct analysis?" You'll be surprised that judgments that you've made all day, everyday, for so long, may well turn out to be wrong. Get ready for that. Be prepared for that possibility. That's how change happens.

Remember these qualifications

When doing the exercises above, please understand that you're going to qualify whatever insights you get using the following.

Cultural filters

Every culture has certain norms regarding emotional expression. For example, the Japanese are not as emotionally expressive as Brazilians or even Koreans. Understand that, similarly, Scandinavians are definitely less emotionally showy than Italians. Also, filter based on gender. Like it or not, there are certain gender roles that fall into.

This impacts how they express their emotions. Also, understand that people's specific backgrounds can play a role in how they express their emotions and their relationship to their emotions. For example, if you grow up in a household where your parents don't really kiss or hug you or give you any kind of validation except for the verbal kind, you're probably going to express your emotions differently from somebody who grew up in a more expressive family.

Background plays a big role in emotional expression, as well as a self-analysis. This goes hand in hand with life experiences. Maybe you grew up in a very nurturing and emotionally warm family, but something happened. Maybe your dad left, your parents divorced, your parents had to find work overseas and left you behind. There are just so many types of life experiences that can impact your emotional expression.

Finally, you may be an introvert or an extrovert. These have an impact on both your emotional expression and how other people express theirs.

Start with yourself and move on to others

Apply these lessons to yourself. Identify and analyze the meaning of your emotional states and then apply it to other people and get objective validation to see if your reading is correct. This doesn't happen overnight. You have to keep at it. The best way to do it is through repeated social interaction.

Sure, at first, you're going to be awkward. There are going to be some weird moments, but that's okay. All that means is that you're trying. The more you try, the more you learn. You have to do this because this is the cornerstone of emotional intelligence.

CHAPTER 6



Improving your emotional intelligence

Using your emotional intelligence for better overall performance

Let's get one thing clear. Too many of us have a problem separating our thoughts from our emotional states. Whenever some sort of mental image comes to mind of somebody says something, it triggers a wave of negative emotional states. If you're not careful, you'll end up saying or doing something that you will come to regret later on. You feel that you can't help it.

You just need to think of something or somebody has to say or do something, and you get triggered. This leads to all sorts of rash actions. Chances are, if you're like most other people, you don't like this or, at least, you shouldn't. This all boils down to an improper analysis of whatever it is that triggered you.

It doesn't matter whether it's a thought or a word somebody said or something that they did, you improperly analyze it and you come up with hasty conclusions and oftentimes these lead to something that you would regret. Emotional intelligence enables you to get out from this trap.

Using emotions to your advantage

The first thing that you need to do is to understand your emotional responses. This is important. You can't just gloss over this. You can't just rush through this. You can't just automatically assume that you have a problem with your emotions and this is why you're reading this book in the first place. No. You're going to have to slowly walk through what your typical emotional responses are.

You have to get a clear understanding of what you're thinking or what you're perceiving and how you respond. This is how you get out from under them. It all boils down to getting a clear perspective on the issues in your life.

Now that you have a clear understanding of how you normally react, ask yourself these questions: What kind of emotional state would lead me to a better understanding of what's going on around me? What range of emotions would help me burn less bridges? What kind of feelings would lead to more effective actions?

Remember, your analysis of your stimuli is what triggers these range of emotions. By looking at the emotions that you want to end up with, you can then walk back from that point to a better analysis. That raises the question: how should I read the things that normally trigger me, so I can end up with these more positive emotions?

Understand how you interpret your emotions

You have to take control of how you analyze the things that are happening around you. Now, this is easier said than done, especially if you tend to react habitually. Still, it can be done. How? First, you need to avoid jumping to conclusions. Don't automatically assume that there is only one way to read the situation.

For example, somebody came up to you and said you're ugly. Is there only one way to respond to that? Similarly, if somebody said you're fat or you have back acne, what then? Avoid jumping to conclusions. The conclusion here, of course, is that you should push back.

There are other ways to deal with stimuli. When you do this, you open yourself to more opportunities. I know that this is difficult because you're going to have to overcome your very natural instinct of self-preservation. Nobody likes being hurt. Nobody likes to be made to feel small, ugly or unwanted.

But you would have to overcome that to see the opportunities in front of you. If a positive reading is impossible, at least go for a neutral reading. Go for an interpretation that is not going to lead to you feeling small, insulted or degraded.

Do yourself a big favor by avoiding these

You would do yourself a very big favor by avoiding the following. First, you have to get rid of whatever victim narratives you choose to believe about yourself. I know this might come as a bit of a shock, but you are not a victim. If you're a victim, things happened to you. You can't make things happen. You are always at the receiving end of life. You know that that's not true.

The fact that you have chosen to read this book is testimony to the fact that you're not as big of a victim as you think you are. Another narrative that you need to avoid is the idea that there is always constant conflict and that is all you deserve. No. You deserve better. Things don't have to end up with some sort of win-lose situation.

For you to win, somebody doesn't necessarily have to lose, and vice versa. Don't think that people are out to get you or that the best things have been taken by other people and the only

way to get ahead is to take from somebody else. Believe it or not, there is such a thing as win-win. That is the opportunity that I want you to train your mind on.

Unfortunately, you need a tremendous amount of emotional intelligence to find the win-win situation in most interpersonal interactions. The good news is that it's always present. There is always a win-win. I mean it's not always going to be bright and obvious, but it's always there. It's your job to look for it.

Finally, you need to let go of an ego-centered narrative. I hate to be the one to break this to you, but the world is not about you. The world existed before you were born and guess what? It's going to continue to exist long after you're dead. A little bit of selflessness enables you to see a bigger picture.

That bigger picture is not all about your emotions, how you feel small, how you were abused and how you were made to feel embarrassed. It's something bigger than that. The more you identify with something that is bigger than you, the more you grow up emotionally.

All of these narratives that you need to avoid also present perfect opportunities for you to increase your emotional intelligence. The more you work to avoid these narratives and dismantle them in your mind and heart, the more progress you make in becoming a more emotionally mature person.

CHAPTER 7



Becoming a better judge of others' emotions

Use emotional intelligence to understand situations better

The problem with people is that when they enter any kind of social situation, they automatically look at it only from their perspective. They don't realize that their emotions, as well as the signals that they're sending out, have consequences. It's not unusual for people to say that they are victims because wherever they go, it seems that the worst side of people come out.

It really is quite sad to hear these kinds of stories because when these people narrate their experience, they are completely blind to the fact that they are not watching a movie. When you walk into a room full of people, you are affecting the scene around you. It's not a one-way street. It's not like you sit down and you watch a movie.

It's a two-way street. You are also sending signals. You have to take ownership of those signals because they have consequences. You can't just say that people are mean to you and conveniently ignore the fact that you had a role to play. I don't know about you, but calling somebody an idiot is probably not going to illicit a positive response.

Refusing to smile and stabbing people with your stares are not exactly signals that foster friendship, openness and accessibility. You have to always look at the consequences of your emotions. This is a key component of emotional intelligence. Unfortunately to get here, you must already have a clear understanding of your own emotions.

You must be able to identify your emotions, not just internally, but objectively as well. Just as importantly, you must be able to master how you communicate your emotions. These two skill sets are required for you to get to this level, which is to look at the consequences of your emotional states.

There is a complicated interplay between your range of emotions and the emotions of other people. This is what makes social reality. You have to understand how this works because if you are clueless regarding how your own signals start a chain reaction in other people, then you're always going to feel like you can't do anything right.

You are always going to feel like you are the victim and people just don't like you. You might want to stop and look at how well you communicate your emotions and, most importantly, how mindful you are of how these signals trigger a chain reaction. You to understand that at some level or other, people are mirrors.

They can only reflect whatever light you give them. They can only bounce back whatever color you flash in their direction. You have to understand how this works. Unfortunately, to come into a room, thinking that it's all about you and people just don't get you, is not going to do you any favors. You are not going to emotionally grow.

Your relationships are going to be stunted. People are not going to trust you the way they could. It's a dead end.

Conflicts arise more often due to low EI

If you are completely clueless of how the chain reaction of emotional states your presence in any kind of social setting triggers, don't be surprised if there are all sorts of conflicts. Now, please understand that this doesn't necessarily mean violent conflicts. It can be an argument or, worse yet, people don't even say anything, but in their minds, they'd rather not deal with you.

This is more dangerous. Why? You can't quite put your finger on it, but it seems like nobody wants to be friends with you or trust you. You are kept in the dark. How do conflicts arise due to low EI? Well, you can say thoughtless words.

For example, you go to a meeting and you know that a friend of yours recently lost her father and you say something that could be misinterpreted easily. Maybe you could have used other words. Maybe you could have just shut up and just projected comforting emotions or assuring signals.

You can also take thoughtless actions. If you know somebody is sensitive to certain foods and then you eat those foods in front of them, it can signal disrespect. It definitely can trigger all sorts of negative emotions on their end. Another common conflict arising from low emotional intelligence involves hypocrisy.

If you talk a big game about who you are, and you project a certain image of yourself, make sure that everything you say emote and line up with your PR. Otherwise, people would say that there is something off with you. They can't quite put their finger on it, but the more you do your thing, the more uncomfortable they become.

Even if they cannot say the word hypocrisy, the fact that there is a big disconnect between how you present yourself and certain things you claim about yourself and what you actually do, will put you in a negative light. Let's put it this way: you'll be less influential and persuasive.

Finally, you might just be sending out bad signals altogether. These are just signals of conflict, menace, threat or animosity. These may be due to habits or these may be due to certain situations that come up in any kind of interaction. Whatever the case may be, you might want to stop doing this. You might want to pay careful attention to the consequences of these.

What is the answer?

The answer is actually quite simple when it comes to emotional interplay and complexity. Start with your own emotional self-understanding. In other words, use your high level of emotional authenticity to act as the foundations for understanding others. In other words, know yourself first. Make sure that you truly know yourself and then project this out to a sincere search to understand others.

Emotional self-understanding is the cornerstone of emotional intelligence. You can't make any progress if you don't get this down. Unfortunately, this is precisely the part that people dismiss. They think they know themselves already. That's why they're having a touch time building emotional bridges with others.

This is how you change the chain reaction. You don't have to always bring out the worst in people. You don't have to be triggered by whatever things people say. See how these evolve with time and with different people, and you would quickly realize that most of the time it's not them, it's you.

Take comfort from this. I know it hurts to hear. After all, nobody wants to be wrong. But let's put it this way, it's hard enough trying to change yourself, can you imagine trying to change other people? That is a dead end, so you have to focus on changing yourself. It all begins with honesty and clarity.

Key requirements to managing interpersonal emotional complexity

Assuming that you have a high enough level of emotional authenticity and self-awareness, the following are required to help you cement your emotional intelligence. First, you need attention to detail. This means you have to give people the benefit of the doubt.

Sure, the words, "you're ugly," seem pretty straightforward. It may seem black and white. But you have to allow yourself to be curious. What exactly did that mean? What context did that come from? What happened before, during and after? Developing an eye for emotional detail grows from a natural curiosity about other people.

In other words, you have to care about other people for this to work. Unfortunately, if you think you're just a victim and it seems that certain people are out to get you, curiosity about other people is the first thing to go. You couldn't care less. All you care about is that you got hurt. That's all you can see. That's how far your analysis goes.

Overcome that natural tendency. I know that you're defensive right now, but choose to be curious and see the bigger picture. Next, you need to respect other people. Please understand that respect means that you accept that other people's emotions are equally valid and are as important as yours.

This all comes from the belief that people are entitled to their emotional states. They're entitled to form emotions. Now, you can talk to them as to the wisdom of their conclusions and maybe come up with a happy resolution, but everybody is entitled to their internal process. That's where respect comes from.

Again, I know this is unpleasant to many people. I know we always question people's actions towards us, but we have to apply the same analysis to ourselves. If you want to be treated a certain way, shouldn't you give the same kind of courtesy to others?

Next, you need to believe in that fact that emotional chain reactions do exist. This means that you have to understand that when you send emotional signals, you're not just venting. It creates a chain reaction. There will be a response to what you just did. Understand how this works. Also understand that when you plug into any kind of social interaction, there are other people sending out signals as well.

This creates some sort of emotional network. Be aware that this is going on, so you can be more thoughtful regarding your role in such a network. Finally, you need to be patient. Don't try to change others. It's hard enough trying to change yourself, can you imagine trying to change another person that you can't control?

Instead of trying to do the impossible, change your response instead. Put yourself in a position where you can guide your reactions and interactions to lead to better chain reactions.

CHAPTER 8



Using your emotional intelligence for better overall performance

Managing your emotional smarts like a champ

To sum things up, how do you manage your emotional states, so you always come out on top? Follow the advice below.

Always be aware of your emotional state

Regardless of whether your emotional state is “socially acceptable” or not, be aware of it. You’re not trying to apologize for it. You’re not trying to make it go away. Just be aware of it. If you’re feeling angry, take ownership of that anger. If you’re feeling lustful and horny, take ownership of that.

The key here is to focus on awareness. It doesn’t mean that you completely agree with your emotional state. This doesn’t mean that this is the best emotion to have on display. But if you want to manage your emotions, you have to first choose to be completely honest and be aware.

Learn how to read others in the room quickly

Learn how to read other people in the room. You need to do this very quickly. Remember, there is some sort of emotional network happening here. They are sending signals, you are sending signals, and depending on how these line up, there can be chain reactions. This is why it’s a good idea to learn what other people are feeling and then go back to your current emotional state.

Is there a way you can interpret whatever is triggering you in a more positive way, so you can express whatever you’re feeling in a more conducive manner so as to turn the chain reaction around? Make the emotional chain reaction work for you, instead of against you.

Know your triggers

You know that you get emotional when you think of certain things or when you hear certain things, that's okay. There is nothing to apologize for. There is nothing to be embarrassed about. What's important is that you know your triggers. Once you know that certain things trigger you, then you are on notice. You can then proactively choose to interpret it neutrally or even positively.

Know how to make your triggered states work for you

Hijack the intense focus that you get when you get triggered. Remember, when you get emotionally triggered, you are focused. It may not seem like it, but you are. Now, here's the thing. Turn that focus around. How?

Instead of seeking to be understood or seeking to be made to feel welcome or better about yourself, seek to understand first. Read other people first. Assume their perspective by practicing empathy. Identify how they would view your situation and why they would take this view.

Now, this can take anywhere from a few seconds to a full minute or so, but it happens fairly quickly because it's all happening in your head. Be clear about the process. Hijack the intense focus you get when you get emotionally triggered.

It doesn't have to end up the same way that it ends up normally. It doesn't have to end up with you feeling bad, not only about other people, but about yourself. If you are able to do this, then you would be able to work with other people's emotional position. You are not there to beat them. You are not there to overcome them.

You are there to work with them. Again, this is an emotional network that you're plugged into.

Channel your emotional states more effectively

When you first seek to understand, you are more likely to want to seek consensus. It may well turn out that calling people idiots or saying absolutely no to them may not benefit anybody. It may well turn out that simply giving people the benefit of the doubt or giving them at least the opportunity to explain themselves would produce better results.

Channel your emotional state. Don't jump to the worst conclusion. Don't always snap into a "fight or flight" mode. Worse comes to worst, delay things. In other words, deal with it later. But here's the thing, when the time comes, actually deal with it. Don't sweep it under the rug.

Finally, when you find yourself with a lot of people and everybody is heated, harness that strong mutual emotion to work towards common goals. You can say to everybody around you, "I know we're all tense right now. A lot of us have conflicting demands. But what is it that we can all agree on? Maybe we can use our heightened emotions to work towards the thing the we all agree on."

Work towards common goals. You'd be surprised at how much you have in common with people that may emotionally turn you off.

To be a master, you need to be the facilitator and central point of authority

Make no mistake, it's very easy for a one-eyed man to become a king in the kingdom of the blind. If everybody around you seems to be losing their heads emotionally, seek to be the facilitator. Instead of just another face in the crowd that is just reacting in the worst way possible, practice the steps above and be that eye of the storm.

When people look at you, they see calm action. They see somebody who is not reacting, but responding based on their best values. Instead of just being a part of the conflict, you actually become a central point of authority for the resolution of that conflict. This builds up your natural levels of authority and credibility.

If you keep this up enough times, people will gravitate towards you. You become a natural leader. People are more likely to listen to you. People are more likely to give you the benefit of the doubt.