

Emotional Intelligence

A Different Way to Be Smart

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God created us to have emotions. Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 3 says, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn." Psalms 100:2a says, "Serve the LORD with gladness." There are numerous references in the Bible to our emotions.

Emotional intelligence is a scientifically validated function of the human brain to process and utilize emotional information.

Terms:

EQ: abbreviation for "emotional quotient," similar to "intelligence quotient," also used to mean "emotional intelligence"

SEL: Social-emotional learning, curriculum for teaching the application of EQ

Emotional literacy: identifying and naming emotions

"Emotional intelligence is a different way of being smart, it includes knowing what your feelings are and using your feelings to make good decisions in life. It's being able to manage distressing moods well and control impulses. It's being motivated and remaining hopeful and optimistic when you have setbacks in working towards goals. It's empathy; knowing what the people around you are feeling. And it's social-skills- getting along well with other people, managing emotions in relationships, being able to persuade or lead others" (O'Neil, 1996, p.6).

Goleman's definition consists of five dimensions, as follows:

1. Awareness of One's Emotions

- Identifying one's emotions
- Understanding causes of feelings

2. Controlling One's Emotions and Expressing them Appropriately

- Tolerating frustration; anger management
- Avoiding aggressive or self-destructive behavior
- Managing stress, and avoiding and managing loneliness and social anxiety

3. Motivating One's Self toward a Positive Goal

- Behaving responsibly, following through with plans
- Focusing on task at hand, paying attention
- Behaving less impulsively

4. Recognizing and Understanding Others' Feelings: Empathy

- Taking the perspective of others
- Being sensitive to feelings of others, empathy
- Listening skillfully to others

5. Developing Relationship Skills

- Understanding others and relationships; communicating skillfully
- Resolving conflicts skillfully; negotiating disagreements
- Being friendly, pro-social, cooperative, helpful, and considerate of others

Two Approaches

1. Teachers can design and teach lessons on EQ and adopt special programs or curriculum.
2. Teachers can teach their existing curriculum using instructional strategies and activities that promote EQ as an embedded curriculum, thus allowing students to practice EQ skills on a daily basis.

ACES to Develop Students' Emotional Intelligence (ACES = Awareness, Control, Empathy and Social Skills)



Activities to Develop Awareness

Awareness means being aware of our feelings; paying attention to our emotions as we experience them.

Emotional Word Walls

Post a list of words that describe a range of emotions, to help students develop a vocabulary that they can use to accurately describe and distinguish between their feelings. For example, when a student is asked, "How do you think Mark felt when you wouldn't let him join in your game?" the traditional answer of "sad" might be replaced with "hurt" or "frustrated," both more specific labels, enabling the student to think more deeply about the effect of his or her actions, and perhaps also understand Mark's reaction to being left out.

"Whether" Report

Ask students to give a "whether" report: describe whether they are feeling cloudy, sunny, or stormy; then discuss why and what they can do about it.

Picture Dictionary (grades 1-4)

Students create a picture dictionary of emotions.

Silent Role Plays

Tell students that you will state messages which they are to express nonverbally, using only their bodies. Have a few students come to the front of the room to demonstrate each one, while the remaining students watch. Examples to call out include:

I'm so tired.

I'm bored.

Please don't look at me.

I didn't do anything wrong!

Please let me answer the question.

I'm very proud of you.

I can't believe you just said that!

See how wonderful I look.

I'm so scared.

I'm so angry!



Journal Reflections

To promote self-awareness, students keep a “feelings” journal in which they record their emotional reactions to anything that occurs in school including successes, failures, and relationships. Teachers may choose to make this for the author’s eyes only, or ask for permission to read it and/or ask them to share their entries with peers.



Emotion Tree

In the top half of a sheet of paper, ask students to draw a tree, writing the word “feelings” in the trunk, the names of the feelings they tend to hide in the roots and those they display in the branches. On the bottom half, ask students to write a paragraph describing a time when they kept their feelings inside, explaining why and what happened. Ask them to reflect on what might have happened if they had shared their feelings.

Recognizing Emotions in Others

Describe or show pictures of aspects of faces that may reveal different emotions (e.g., furrowed brows may denote anger, blushing may signify embarrassment); discuss ways to determine emotion being expressed.

Mobiles or Collages

Students create mobiles or collages using pictures of faces from newspapers, magazines, or comics that depict various emotions. Hold a class discussion about the specific parts of each face that depict the emotions.



Understanding of Emotion

1. Explain how emotions have causes which are not always easy to identify.
2. Describe two or three circumstances that may cause or have caused particular emotions in the people who experienced them (e.g., loss of a pet, move to a new town).
3. Students think of other events and the emotions they trigger.
4. Discuss how an understanding of what causes people to feel the way they do may help them relate better to friends and family.

Use of Emotion in the Media

Explore how television commercials influence emotions, and thereby thinking.



1. Describe or show a video of two or three familiar commercials that evoke emotion (Hallmark cards, Campbell’s soup, Dodge trucks).
2. Ask students to think about the emotions triggered by these commercials and how they may affect the viewer’s thinking.
3. Have students work in small groups to create posters depicting the commercial, highlighting the emotions it conveys and/or seeks to elicit and the thoughts it hopes to instill in its audience.

Activities to Develop Control

Control involves managing feelings (fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, etc.) so that they are expressed appropriately; realizing what is behind a feeling.

A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards. (Proverbs 29:11, KJV)

A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back. (Proverbs 29:11, NKJV)

Be ye angry, and sin not. (Ephesians 4:26a)

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. (Philippians 4:13, KJV)

Discussing Control of Emotions with Students

1. Students share examples of the various ways in which people manage their emotions, distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate ways.
2. Distinguish between “self-control” and “do not feel.” Control means acting with clarity and intention.

Posters

In groups, students select an emotion, think of and discuss preferable ways to manage that emotion, and create a poster for it.

Things I Get Angry About

Ask students to list situations that usually make them angry. Discuss how their body feels when they are angry, how they can tell when someone else is angry, and ask them to identify appropriate ways to deal with those feelings.

Worry Boxes

Label a box and place it somewhere in the classroom where students can drop in written notes to share concerns they may have about any aspect of their life, either in school or out. You may wish to put a stuffed animal or mascot near the box to make it seem more “friendly.” Check the box regularly, and speak to the student privately about the concern raised.

Talking Chips

Students use the following rule during a group discussion: You have the right to talk when you put in your talking chip (pencil, token, colored marker). Once you have spoken, you cannot speak again until everyone has put in a chip. When all chips have been put in, they are collected and anyone can speak again. Talking Chips teaches self-control because it inserts reflection between impulse and action. Students who otherwise would talk every time an idea occurs to them, monitor their talk knowing they have but one turn per round.

Activities to Develop Empathy and Social Skills

This entails developing sensitivity to others' feelings and concerns and learning to take their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel and responding appropriately.

Discussing Empathy with Students

Think of a time when you felt uncomfortable. What *one thing* could someone have said or done to make you feel more at ease? Find opportunities to empathize with others who look uncomfortable, and do that thing for them.

Also...

1. With younger children, play charades. In turn, each child acts out an emotion and the others try to guess what it is.
2. When reading stories, ask students to empathize with the characters by discussing what the characters are feeling and why.
3. Present a conflict scenario for students to role play. Have them do it a second time, but switch roles.

Corners

Post in the corners of the room four choice alternatives (sometimes fewer or more). For example, in each corner, post a picture of a different animal: Lion, Monkey, Beaver, Eagle. Ask students to think about their preference: "If you could be an animal for a day, which would you choose?" With no talking, students think about which alternative they prefer, then write their choice and walk to the corresponding corner. There they interact with a partner or partners in the corner to share the reasons for their choices. Students must listen carefully to points of view different from their own and are held accountable for understanding the ideas of others via the paraphrasing.

Student-Led Parent-Teacher Conferences

In some schools, students lead the conference. They share information about what they believe are their strengths and weaknesses, their goals and how they're going to achieve them, and how they have handled homework assignments.

Paraphrase Passport

As students interact with others, they must accurately paraphrase the person who spoke before them before expressing their own ideas. Encourage use of such phrase stems as: "If I heard you right..." "Do you mean to say...?" "Let me see if I got this right." If the speaker believes the listener has heard him/her correctly, he/she gives the listener the right to speak. If not, he/she must try again.

Resources for Emotional Intelligence

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Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) - <http://www.casel.org>

Edutopia - www.edutopia.org Articles and videos about current educational issues and topics, including emotional intelligence and multiple intelligences.

Emotionally Intelligent Schools - www.ei-schools.com

This web site includes a database of free lessons, activities, and articles -- you can try them out, post comments, and give back your own favorite activities. www.self-science.com

Multicultural education and diversity lesson plans: www.tolerance.org