

Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ

Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ is a book that has helped to change a lot of lives including MMP sponsor Tim McGavin and his brother Rob McGavin who is currently Chairman of Marcus Oldham. It was a New York Times Best Seller and has been published in 40 languages.

The book is written by Daniel Goleman. Daniel has a Phd in psychology from Harvard University and founded the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning at Yale University. The American Association of the advancement of Science awarded him a Fellowship for his efforts in communicating the behaviour sciences to the public.

The brilliance of the book is how it communicates a complex topic into a deeply simplistic and easy to understand format.

The premise of the book is that Emotional Intelligence is as important as IQ for success in academic, professional social and interpersonal aspects of life. It advocates that Emotional Intelligence can be taught and cultivated.

We encourage you to read the book but have attempted to highlight the main lessons in the summary below.

- The old-fashioned word for Emotional Intelligence is “character”
- Emotional Intelligence involves self-awareness, self-control, enthusiasm, persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself
- Intelligence has little to do with emotional life. It is fact that a sample of low IQ people will end up in lower paid menial jobs, but many high IQ types fail in life.
- It is estimated that IQ contributes about 20% to the factors which determine success (defined as contentment and mastery of your own productivity) in life. Others contributing do include social class and luck but we need to focus on what we can control.
- Interpersonal intelligence – the ability to understand other people will allow you to do well with colleagues and marry the right type of person etc.
- Emotions in Latin (Motere) means “to move”. Each emotion prepares the body for a different kind of response.
- Impulse is the medium of emotion – Those at the mercy of impulse (lack of self-control) suffer a moral deficiency. The ability to control impulses is the base of will and character
- The two important moral stances are self-restraint and compassion
- We have two minds, one that thinks (our rational mind, which allows us to comprehend and be aware, ponder and reflect) and one that feels (the emotional mind; our subconscious which guides us with feelings and moods). Both minds are semi-dependant, but when passion surges, the balance tips
- Therefore there are two levels of emotion, conscious and unconscious
- “Intelligence comes to nothing when emotions hold sway”.
- “Emotions are contagious; we transmit and catch moods from each other”

There are five main domains that make Emotional Intelligence.

1. Self-Awareness

- recognising a feeling as it happens is the keystone to emotional intelligence. Certainty about feelings leads to better objective judgements in life
- There are three types of people:

- a. Self-aware – Those who are aware of their moods as they have them. This mindfulness tends to help them manage their emotions, which naturally gives them a positive outlook
- b. Engulfed – These people feel swamped by their emotions and helpless to escape them as though their moods have taken charge. They are not aware of their feelings so they blame others or the external environment for how they feel. Therefore they do little to escape their situation
- c. Accepting – These types are accepting of their moods so don't try to change them. They are split into 2 categories
 - those usually in good moods so have little motivation to change
 - People who have clarity about their moods but fully accept them so do nothing to change them. Sometimes depressed people who are resigned to their despair
- Somatic markers are gut feelings. They are an automatic alarm calling our attention to danger or opportunity. We might call this intuition. The ability to distinguish between intuition vs fear and other negative emotions is a valuable tool to navigate through life
- Freud highlighted that much of emotional life is unconscious, that is, feelings do not always cross the threshold to our awareness

2. Managing emotions

- Handling our feelings so they are appropriate
- The capacity to soothe ourselves and shake off anxiety, gloom and irritability and the consequences of failure. Allows you to bounce back more quickly to life's setbacks and upsets
- It is the ratio of positive to negative emotions that determine well-being. Try observing your own ratio
- Much of what we do (especially in our free time) is an attempt to manage our moods, or distract from them

3. Motivating oneself

- Marshalling emotions in the service of goals is essential for paying attention, self-motivation, mastery and creativity. This includes emotional self-control – delaying gratification and stifling impulsiveness which underlies accomplishment of every sort. It involves getting into the “flow” state
- Powerful negative emotions can twist attention towards their own preoccupations interfering with attempts to focus elsewhere
- What sets apart world champions? Their ability to practice routine year after year and to come back quickly after setbacks. They can hold focus on the larger long-term goal while enjoying the menial practice routines also with total focus (“flow state” or “in the zone”)

4. Empathy - People skills

- Empathy is recognising emotions in others (to have people skills)
- The roots of morality are found in empathy
- The less you know your own feelings the less you know of others feelings
- Failing to register another's feelings is a major deficit in emotional intelligence and a failing in what it means to be human
- Empathy leads to better relationships and popularity
- 90% or more of emotional communications are non-verbal
- Infants feel empathy before they can master their own feelings
- Violent people lack empathy

5. Handling relationships

- Managing emotions in others is the core of successful relationships. It requires self-management and empathy
- It is a must to avoid being perceived as arrogant, obnoxious or insensitive
- Empathy shapes our encounters, enables us to motivate, persuade, influence, and put others at ease
- Emotions are contagious; we transmit and catch moods from each other
- We unconsciously imitate the emotions we see displayed
- The person who more forcefully displays feelings will transmit his feelings to the less forceful person
- There are two cardinal sins that will lead to rejection
 1. trying to take the lead too soon
 2. Being out of sync with the frame of reference
- The ultimate measure of mastery is handling someone at the peak of their rage. One must distract the angry person, sympathise with him and draw him into an alternative focus; one that attunes him into a more positive range of feelings

The brain snap

- A brain snap is a moment of impassioned action that we later regret, when impulse overrides the rational brain
- It is when amygdala reacts instantly and overrides all rational thought.
- In the first few milliseconds of an event, we unconsciously comprehend and decide if we like it or not. This is the split second where we can choose to override the impulse before it is too late.
- Our emotions (unconscious opinions) have a mind of their own, one which can hold views independently of our rational minds. The storehouse is the amygdala. Amygdala arousal will imprint a memory, the more intense the arousal, the stronger the imprint. Negative emotions are more highly charged this is why we are usually shaped largely by our negative emotions. If you test the polarity of tears, they consist of negative energy. This is nature's way of expelling negative emotions. Therefore crying is good, encourage it when needed, don't suppress it.
- The brain has two memory systems, one for ordinary facts and one for emotionally charged ones. BUT, emotional memories can be faulty guides to the present so the message the amygdala sends is often out of date, hence our responses can be as well.

Summary

- If you want mastery in life or career you will first have to master yourself
- We know the majority of people can't master their emotions and this is why investment markets are so irrational and not efficient. To beat the masses, you need to first master your emotional intelligence