

If we want to connect with and help others, it's good to be self-aware, deal with what we're feeling, key in to what people around us are experiencing, and know how to engage.



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emotional intelligence

by Cheryl L. Meredith, PhD
Chief Ideation Officer
NavWorkplace



So, what is emotional intelligence? That's a question I often get.

The bare bones answer has two parts. The me part: understanding what I'm feeling and managing it productively. The others part: understanding what's happening with the people around me and engaging with it in productive ways.

Emotional intelligence (EQ) plays a role in almost every interaction we have. Daniel Goleman, who brought the concept into the popular vernacular, said that for overall success in life, EQ matters more than IQ. This has been debated, of course. But most of us have seen that if we want to connect with and help others, it's good to be self-aware, deal with what we're feeling, key in to what people around us are experiencing, and know how to engage.

My current favorite working definition of EQ is "that which closes the gap between what we intend and how we actually impact people."

Here's the me part of this. Let's say I start the day with great intentions. I want to eat healthy and avoid those chocolate-covered donuts people always bring to work. I want to be kind and gracious. I want to really listen to the people in my life and show them how much I care. As I'm driving to work, my presentation for this afternoon's meeting pops into my mind. My stomach flutters. "I'm looking forward to the challenge," I tell myself robustly. "Nothing to worry about." I walk into the office, snatch up a chocolate-covered donut, and stuff it into my mouth. My computer still isn't working right, and I'm sharp with the guy at the IT help desk. The woman in the next cubicle wants to show me photos of her new grandchild. As I say, "Yeah, um-hm, cute," my gaze flicks to the stack of papers on my desk.

A gap between what we intended and what we did . . . our impact.

Emotional Intelligence can help close this gap. How? The more we're aware of what we're experiencing inside, the more we can make conscious choices to manage those emotions in a positive way. If I had immediately identified my anxiety about the upcoming meeting, that would have been the first step toward consciously choosing productive responses over the unconscious, unproductive ones I actually chose. The impact on both me and those around me would have lined up better with my intentions.

One of my favorite scriptures is from David's writing after Nathan confronted him. He said, "God, you desire truth in my innermost being, and in my hidden parts you will make me know wisdom." God wants to help us be wise in what's happening inside us, able to use it productively for His Kingdom. David's son Solomon encouraged us to watch over our hearts "with all diligence, for they are the wellspring of life."

God made us beings who think, feel, choose, believe and create. All this flows from what's happening in our "hearts." EQ helps us grow in understanding and managing it in ways that please Him.

As for the others part of emotional intelligence, God speaks to that as well.

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being self aware and others aware

by Brad Hillman

People Resources Team Director

We spent almost ten hours listening to the husband, and nearly as long listening to the wife. Yes, we saw significant marital issues, and the wife's struggle with self-esteem and a subtle anger that sabotaged progress provided a significant part of the problem. But it was the husband that caught my attention.

The advanced degree on his resumé clearly indicated intelligence . . . maybe even brilliance. He certainly knew a lot of scripture. He'd quoted numerous passages in our time together. But in all that time listening, we never sensed a fruit of the Spirit or that he had any understanding of how he was coming across to us.

He was intelligent, but he wasn't self-aware. He had lots of knowledge, but

aware (continued on next page sidebar)



emotional intelligence (continued from page 1)

Scripture gives us over 20 "One-Anothers," including to love, honor, respect, forgive, and accept one another; to be kind and tenderhearted to one another; to bear with and be at peace with one another. We can live out the One-Anothers in practical ways as we learn to recognize what someone else is feeling and enter into it with them for God's good purposes in their lives.

Now let's say I did identify my anxiety on the way to work, prayed during the drive, and gave it to God. I'm more at peace. In the office, I stop by my friend Jes's desk. She greets me cheerfully and we chat for a few seconds. I start to turn away, then pause. Is Jes just a little too cheerful? Her foot taps rapidly against the floor. She smiles and laughs but never quite meets my eye. She says everything's going great, but . . . I ask the Holy Spirit, Is there something you want me to follow up on here? Getting a go-ahead from Him, I say, "Hey, Jes. Are you sure you're okay?"

Quick tears pop into her eyes, but her face relaxes into a genuine smile. "Wow, thanks for asking," she says. "I need a friend right now. Let's talk at break."

Three steps to grow in the me part:

1. Know who and what pushes your buttons
2. Take control of your self-talk
3. Seek feedback

Three steps to grow in the others part:

1. Watch body language
2. Practice the art of listening
3. Put yourself in their shoes

If you want to learn more, Mark Heintzman and I led a workshop on EQ at the National Conference, including a video and extensive resource guide. Here's the link: <http://tiny.cc/eqpower>. Also, a good first book is *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, by Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves. The book includes a free code for the EQ Test on their website: <http://www.talentsmart.com/test/>



e.q. scripture references:

Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. —Psalm 51:6

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. —Proverbs 4:23

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. —John 13:34

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. —Ephesians 4:32

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, —Ephesians 4:1-2

Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another. —Mark 9:50

Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. —Romans 15:7

. . . bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. —Colossians 3:13



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e.q. and ministry impact

by Cynthia Hagen, PRT

Remember that guy on your first staff team? A little quirky, but you chalked it up to youth. And the girl who was hard driving, full of conviction, but never seemed to raise up anyone to invest in?

Most likely, they didn't last long on staff. Or if they did, relational problems seemed to follow them to each assignment.

That quirky guy on my team, Terrence, leaned over during a banquet and whispered, "I'm going to cut your liver out with a spoon." I wasn't quite sure what to do with this. (I still have my liver.) He tried so hard to start a freshman bible study, to no avail. When students didn't behave the way Terrence wanted, he let them know. Those students ended up being leaders in the other Christian group on campus.

Another staff person, dubbed by a friend of mine as "socially overdeveloped but emotionally undeveloped," quickly became an upfront leader. His humor, attractiveness, and polished speaking skills got him noticed and promoted. But his first leadership opportunity ended poorly due to a discontented staff team. His second chance at leading blew up in disaster that was blamed on others. He left the ministry with a path of destruction in his rear view mirror.

Inappropriate or flashy staff don't have the emotional intelligence, or EQ, to work with people. Lack of empathy, inability to read others' emotions, and failure to be other-centered prevent them from having a positive impact. Their inability to resolve conflict, listen, and manage their own emotions hinders relationships. And relationship is the crux of ministry.

On the other hand, I think of Mary, who disciplined me as a student. She listened well, empathized, challenged, and loved me and others well. She has made lasting disciples in the US, France and Africa. Mary proved the adage, "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." She has passed biblical truth on to hundreds who know she cares.

Emotional intelligence is a key trait for ministry. The good news is that it can be developed. We all need growth in this area, but it takes humility to acknowledge this. It takes even greater humility to invite those we work with to speak to it in our lives. And if someone has already pointed out that you have a need, it takes yet greater humility to drop your self-defensiveness and lean in.

We hope this *UpFront* will help you understand and build your EQ. Giving up self-protection, inviting feedback, and seeking a mentor can open you up to love others and serve the Kingdom in a greater way.



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aware (continued from previous page sidebar)

almost no understanding of how others viewed him. In the 1990s, a phrase was coined to describe this kind of limited awareness and connection with others: Emotional Intelligence, or EQ.

TalentSmart.com suggests "*Emotional intelligence is the 'something' in each of us that is a bit intangible. It affects how we manage behavior, navigate social complexities, and make personal decisions that achieve positive results.*"

In PRT, we use the phrases "self-awareness" and "other-centered awareness." It's not just the awareness itself that's important, but also what we do with it. Is there ability, a yieldedness to the Holy Spirit, to manage that awareness and positively direct your interactions with others towards successful outcomes?

I believe Jesus was a man who understood his own sorrow and grief (Isaiah 53:3), anger (John 2:15-16), compassion (Mark 1:40-41), and agony (Luke 22:44). Jesus also knew how others perceived him (Luke 5:22, Mark 2:8, Matt 9:4, Luke 6:8).

In this self-awareness and other-centered awareness he yielded himself to the Father and always chose the route of unselfish concern that sought to invite others into a deeper relationship with the Father. May we all grow to be like Jesus, our best model of Emotional Intelligence.



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Developing Your Self-Awareness

1. Pick one person to ask one or two questions
2. Follow-up in a few months and ask the question again
3. Ask someone else another question (consider spouse, friend, teammate, student, family)

Questions to Ask a Trusted Friend

- What do you see as my greatest strengths?
- What do you see as my greatest weaknesses?
- Describe your perception of me.
- What things do you think I am blind to in my interactions, attitudes or actions?
- Are there things I do that unintentionally hurt others or damage relationships?
- If you could be completely candid with me about something you see that I should be aware of, what would it be?
- Is there anything I do too much?
Can I tone down a behavior?

<http://overviewbible.com/one-another-infographic/>

***Ask a trusted friend,
"If you could be
completely candid
with me about
something you see
that I should be aware
of, what would it be?"***

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