



EXPLORATION

Emotional Intelligence

Readings

The most basic sense of being, of existence, is the openness of feeling in all directions. Being is feeling wide open.
David Deida



Photo by Nicole Wilcox on Unsplash

1. *Developing Emotional Intelligence* by Katie Klear

...According to [Harrison] Monarth, “Emotional intelligence is the ability to both recognize your own emotions [and] understand your own emotions, and the impact they have on your thinking, on your behavior, as well as how your emotions impact the thinking and behaviors of others, the feelings of others.” Taking that first component of the definition a step further, he elaborated: “Emotional intelligence is being able to not just understand all of this but also to manage it ...for more productive outcomes.”

...Alicia Del Real...has curated six pillars for what EI looks like.... “First is a minimum of defensiveness and arrogance,” she said. “Two is accurate empathy, being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes and giving them what they need. Third is living your social values; define what you stand for and walk your talk. Four is appropriate transparency, having open and honest communication even when it makes you feel vulnerable. Five is emotional courage. Finally, the sixth condition is a tolerance of paradox [of] ambiguity.”

...Bill Benjamin ...describes the emotional and cognitive parts of the brain as two strains of an intertwined rope.

...Del Real stated, “It’s hard for us to develop and reach our potential when we aren’t in touch with our blind-spots, so it all starts with emotional intelli-

gence.”

...Whereas the IQ component of the brain is relatively fixed, EI can be improved.

... “The only way to build emotional intelligence is through practice,” Del Real said. “You really have to practice it, set a goal, share it socially and then practice it, the only way to move the needle.” Source: <https://www.chieflearningofficer.com/2020/03/03/emotional-intelligence-is-a-critical-skill-for-development/>

2. *Improving Improving Emotional Intelligence* by Nikita Duggal

To a large degree, our emotional intelligence starts in childhood with how we’re raised, but as adults, we can take steps to get emotionally “smarter.” Justin Bariso, author of EQ, *Applied: A Real-World Approach to Emotional Intelligence*, offers seven ways to improve emotional intelligence....

- ◆ **Reflect on your emotions.** This is where self-awareness begins. To grow in emotional intelligence, think about your own emotions and how you typically react to negative situations, whether they involve a co-worker, family member or stranger. When you’re more aware of your emotions and typical reactions, you can start to control them.
- ◆ **Ask for perspective.** What we perceive to be reality is often quite different from what those around us are seeing. Start getting input from others to understand how you come across in emotionally charged situations.
- ◆ **Observe.** Once you’ve increased your self-awareness and you understand how you’re coming across, pay more attention to your emotions.
- ◆ **Pause for a moment.** Stop and think before you act or speak. It’s hard to do, but keep working at it

and it will become a habit.

- ◆ **Become more empathetic by understanding the “why.”** Try to understand the “why” behind another person’s feelings or emotions.
- ◆ **Choose to learn from criticism.** Who likes criticism? Possibly no one. But it’s inevitable. When we choose to learn from criticism rather than simply defend our behaviors, we can grow in emotional intelligence.
- ◆ **Practice, practice, practice.** Becoming more emotionally intelligent won’t happen overnight, but it can happen—with effort, patience, and a lot of practice.

Source: <https://www.simplilearn.com/emotional-intelligence-what-why-and-how-article>

3. *Understanding the Five Categories of Emotional Intelligence (EQ)* by Michael Akers & Grover Porter

1. **Self-awareness.** The ability to recognize an emotion as it “happens” is the key to your EQ. Developing self-awareness requires tuning in to your true feelings. The major elements ...are:
 - ◆ Emotional awareness. Your ability to recognize your own emotions and their effects.
 - ◆ Self-confidence. Sureness about your self-worth and capabilities.
2. **Self-regulation.** You often have little control over when you experience emotions. You can, however, ...alleviate negative emotions such as anger, anxiety or depression. ...Self-regulation involves:
 - ◆ Self-control. Managing disruptive impulses.
 - ◆ Trustworthiness. Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity.
 - ◆ Conscientiousness. Taking responsibility for your own performance.
 - ◆ Adaptability. Handling change with flexibility.



- ◆ Innovation. Being open to new ideas.
- 3. **Motivation.** To motivate yourself for any achievement requires clear goals and a positive attitude. ...Motivation is made up of:
 - ◆ Achievement drive. Your constant striving ...to meet a standard of excellence.
 - ◆ Commitment. Aligning with the goals of the group or organization.
 - ◆ Initiative. Readyng yourself to act on opportunities.
 - ◆ Optimism. Pursuing goals persistently despite obstacles and setbacks.
- 4. **Empathy.** ...An empathetic person excels at:
 - ◆ Service orientation. Anticipating, recognizing and meeting ...others' needs.
 - ◆ Developing others. Sensing what others need to progress and bolstering their abilities.
 - ◆ Leveraging diversity. Cultivating opportunities through diverse people.
 - ◆ Political awareness. Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships.
 - ◆ Understanding others. Discerning the feelings behind the needs and wants of others.
- 5. **Social skills.** The development of good interpersonal skills is tantamount to success in ...life and career. ... Among the most useful skills are:
 - ◆ Influence. Wielding effective persuasion tactics.
 - ◆ Communication. Sending clear messages.
 - ◆ Leadership. Inspiring and guiding groups and people.
 - ◆ Change catalyst. Initiating or managing change.
 - ◆ Conflict management. Understanding, negotiating, and resolving disagreements.
 - ◆ Building bonds. Nurturing instru-

mental relationships.

- ◆ Collaboration and cooperation. Working with others toward shared goals.
- ◆ Team capabilities. Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals.

Source: <https://psychcentral.com/lib/what-is-emotional-intelligence-eq/>

4. **Four Types of Listening**

by Otto Scharmer

...I have identified four basic types of listening.

“Ya, I know that already.” The first type of listening is downloading: listening by reconfirming habitual judgments.

...“Ooh, look at that!” The second type of listening is object-focused listening: listening by paying attention to factual and to the novel or disconfirming data. ...You pay attention to what differs from what you already know. ...Object-focused or factual listening is the basic mode of good science.

...“Oh, yes, I know how you feel.” The third and deeper level of listening is empathic listening. ...As long as we operate from the first two types of listening, our listening originates from within the boundaries of our own mental-cognitive organization. But when we listen empathically, our perception shifts ...to the other, to the place from which the other person is speaking. ...In that mode of listening, we have to activate our empathy by connecting directly, heart to heart, to the other person. ...Empathic listening ... requires us to activate a different source of intelligence—the intelligence of the heart.

“I can't express what I experience in words. My whole being has slowed down. I feel more quiet, present and more my real self. I am connected to something larger than myself.” This is the fourth level of listening. It ...connects to a ... deeper realm of emergence. I call this level of listening generative listening.... This ...requires us to access our open heart and open will—our capacity to connect to the highest future possibility that wants to emerge. ...Maybe communion or grace is the word that comes closest to the texture of this experience....

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2426>

5. **Dispelling Myths About Emotional Intelligence**

by Marina Fiori

...Three false myths about emotionality and (in)effectiveness are:

1. *Emotions do not necessarily bias perception and reasoning.* Emotions in themselves are not right or wrong, good or bad, correct or incorrect. Emotions are simply pieces of information telling us how we are currently navigating our world. Depending on how we understand and use this piece of information we may end up being either supported or impaired by emotions.
2. *Being emotional does not equal being weak.* Feeling deep emotions, having a higher level of emotional self-awareness, being more accurate in labeling and attributing emotions to others, as well as being more capable to regulate emotions are all characteristics that may foster creativity and overall performance, sustaining the development of one's full potential. People who disclose their feelings are more authentic and are perceived to be so by others. ...Speaking one's mind through emotions is a demonstration of power, not a weakness.
3. *Being emotionally intelligent is different from being overwhelmed by emotions.* The emotionally intelligent person is someone capable of managing the ups and downs that positive and negative emotions may bring; someone who has a more accurate perception of one's own emotions and those of others and uses this information to better adjust to the social environment; someone who has a profound understanding of emotions and shows it through empathic concern; someone who can prevent negative emotions from impeding thinking and who can channel them as a motivational force.

Source: <https://www.hospitalitynet.org/opinion/4099494.html>

6. **Seeing Is Not Thinking**

by Jeanne de Salzmann

The question is not what to do but how to see. Seeing is the most important thing—the act of seeing. ...It is...an act



that brings ... a new possibility of vision, certainty and knowledge. This possibility appears during the act itself and disappears as soon as the seeing stops. It is only in this act of seeing that I will find a certain freedom.

...I am a slave to my mechanical thoughts. This is a fact. It is not the thoughts themselves that enslave me but my attachment to them. ...I need to see the illusion of words and ideas, and the fear of my thinking mind to be alone and empty without the support of anything known. ...Then I will begin to perceive a new way of seeing. ...Seeing does not come from thinking.

...I ...realize that my thinking mind cannot perceive reality. To understand what I really am at this moment, I need sincerity and humility, and an unmasked exposure that I do not know.

...Our conditioned thought always wants an answer. What is important is to develop another thinking, a vision. ...I need to experience "I do not know" without seeking an answer, to abandon everything to enter the unknown.

...Perception, real vision, comes in the interval between the old response and the new response to the reception of an impression. The old response is based on material inscribed in our memory. With the new response, free from the past, the brain remains open, receptive, in an attitude of respect.

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2254>

7. *Beyond Clinging* by James and Evelyn Whitehead

Harboring an emotion, we cling to it. Instead of seizing its energy to face a challenge, we bog down. Rather than using the arousal to confront a threat, we mull it over. A harbored emotion becomes chronic, corroding our insides and spoiling our relationships with others. Author Thomas Buckley describes such a prolonged attachment to anger: "The 'sinfulness' of anger may not lie in anger itself but in prolonged attachment

to it; in the refusal, out of fear, to let ourselves back into the impermanent world of interrelationship, across the bridge of sadness."

When we cling to feelings of anger or loneliness or guilt, we refuse this crossing. We choose, instead, to dwell in a private world of regret and self-pity. In Buckley's words, this is a "refusal of grief, and thus of the possibility of going through and beyond both anger and sorrow." But what is this bridge of sadness and how are we to cross it?

The bridge is constructed by all the disciplines by which we *make something* of our painful emotions. On one side of the bridge is raw pain, the mute, nameless hurt we feel on the inside. Certain moods—sadness, guiltiness, loneliness—seem to envelop us, absorbing attention and deterring us from action. But emotions are transitive: they are meant to move us, to impel us to face a threat or to seek forgiveness—to cross the bridge.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/quotes/quotations/view/42525/spiritual-quotations>

Wisdom Story

Heaven & Hell, a Zen story retold by Jack Kornfield

A big, tough samurai once went to see a little monk. "Monk," he said, in a voice accustomed to instant obedience, "teach me about heaven and hell!"

The monk looked up at this mighty warrior and replied with utter disdain, "Teach you about heaven and hell? I couldn't teach you anything. You're dirty. You smell. Your blade is rusty. You're a disgrace, an embarrassment to the samurai class. Get out of my site, I can't stand you."

The samurai was furious. He shook, got all red in the face, was speechless with rage. He was so angry that it looked like he might explode. He pulled out his sword and raised it above him, preparing to slay the monk.

"That's hell," said the monk softly.

The samurai was overwhelmed. The compassion and surrender of this little man who had offered his life to give this teaching to show him hell! He slowly put down his sword, filled with grati-

tude, and suddenly peaceful.

"And that's heaven," said the monk softly.

Source: <https://jackkornfield.com/heaven-hell/>

Snippets

Sanctuary is a place of safety. An emotional sanctuary is, by design, a place that allows us to fully experience dangerous feelings. ...

Effective sanctuaries appear in many guises: the comforting quiet of the chapel, the privacy of a counselor's office, the safe shelter of a hospital room. We find haven in a support group's acceptance or in the solitude of confiding our thoughts in a personal journal. In the movie *A River Runs Through It* a father and his two sons go frequently to a nearby stream for fly-fishing. With little talk and much concentration, they occupy this privileged place together. During difficult times they bring their negative emotions to the river; it serves as their sanctuary." *James & Evelyn Whitehead*

"Self-awareness—recognizing a feeling *as it happens*—is the keystone of emotional intelligence. ...The ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment is crucial to psychological insight and self-understanding. An inability to notice our true feelings leaves us at their mercy. People with greater certainty about their feelings are better pilots of their lives, having a surer sense of how they really feel about personal decisions from whom to marry to what job to take." *Daniel Goleman*

"Hopelessness comes when we feel there is nothing we can do to handle the situation, emotions, or life we are living. The basic anger within destroys our innate sense of personal power, will, commitment, and ability to make a difference in the world. Hopelessness and despair can live inside an individual unrecognized. If they are present for too long, they often give rise to physical, mental, and emotional symptoms of all kinds. In order to heal these symptoms, it is often helpful to get back to the despair a person is feeling, and beneath that to the anger that is fueling this sense of impotence." *Brenda Shoshanna*



“It is true that most people like to hate.... Hate makes people feel they have principles and opinions. But I would argue that finding something admirable, or touching, in an incomprehensible or obnoxious person, is also profoundly satisfying. The feelings of shared humanity, the tears which come to our eyes when we see suffering even in complete strangers, are among our deepest emotions. Every time we experience them, we are rediscovering that we belong to that enormous family which is humanity.” *Theodore Zeldin*

“Emotions that simmer beneath the threshold of awareness can have a powerful impact on how we perceive and react, even though we have no idea they are at work. Take someone who is annoyed by a rude encounter early in the day, and then is peevisish for hours afterward, taking affront where none is intended and snapping at people for no real reason. He may well be oblivious to his continuing irritability and will be surprised if someone calls attention to it, though it stewes just out of his awareness and dictates his curt replies. But once that reaction is brought into awareness — once it registers in the cortex — he can evaluate things anew, decide to shrug off the feelings left earlier in the day, and change his outlook and mood.” *Daniel Goleman*

“Emotional generosity: when we are generous with our time and our emotions, we help others overcome the hardships of life. Our laughter will help them endure, our kindness will keep them from fear, while our sensitivity will help them realize the oneness of all sentient beings.” *Master Hsing Yun*

“Empathy isn't just something that happens to us—a meteor shower of synapses firing across the brain—it's also a choice we make: to pay attention, to extend ourselves. It's made of exertion, that dowdier cousin of impulse. Some-

times we care for another because we know we should, or because it's asked for, but this doesn't make our caring hollow. This confession of effort chafes against the notion that empathy should always rise unbidden, that genuine means the same thing as unwilling, that intentionality is the enemy of love. But I believe in intention and I believe in work. I believe in waking up in the middle of the night and packing our bags and leaving our worst selves for our better ones.” *Leslie Jamison*

“Social competence takes many forms—it's more than just being chatty. These abilities range from being able to tune into another person's feelings and understand how they think about things, to being a great collaborator and team player, to expertise at negotiation. All these skills are learned in life. We can improve on any of them we care about, but it takes time, effort, and perseverance.” *Daniel Goleman*

Self-Regulation: “In between every action and reaction, there is a space. Usually the space is extremely small because we react so quickly, but take notice of that space and expand it. Be aware in that space that you have a choice to make. You can choose how to respond, and choose wisely, because the next step you take ...could either strengthen or damage ...[a] relationship.”

Rebecca Eanes

“Sociobiologists point to the preeminence of heart over head at such crucial moments when they conjecture about why evolution has given emotion such a central role in the human psyche. Our emotions, they say, guide us in facing predicaments and tasks too important to leave to intellect alone—danger, painful loss, persisting toward a goal despite frustrations, bonding with a mate, building a family. Each emotion offers a distinctive readiness to act; each point us in a direction that has worked well to handle the recurring challenges of human life.” *Daniel Goleman*

Questions

The following questions are for your consideration.

1. In reading #1, Katie Klear quotes Alicia Del Real's list of the following pillars of Emotional Intelligence (EI): “First is a minimum of defensiveness and arrogance,” she said. “Two is accurate empathy, being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes and giving them what they need. Third is living your social values; define what you stand for and walk your talk. Four is appropriate transparency, having open and honest communication even when it makes you feel vulnerable. Five is emotional courage. Finally, the sixth condition is a tolerance of paradox, [of] ambiguity.” Which of these do you find most compelling? Why? Which of these do you find most challenging? Why? Del Real points to the problem of blind spots, which can include hidden assumptions, unconscious bias and prejudice, stereotyping, unexamined ideologies and allegiance to a tribe, and more. How can we uncover our blind spots?
2. In reading #2, Nikita Duggal summarizes Justin Bariso's seven ways to improve emotional intelligence: Reflect on your emotions; Ask for perspective; Observe; Pause for a moment' Become more empathetic by understanding the “why;” Choose to learn from criticism; and Practice, practice, practice. Which of these do you find most important? Why?
3. In reading #3, Michael Akers and Grover Porter offer a good summary of the five components of emotional intelligence. Which have you practiced, in part, or in full? What were the benefits? The challenges?
4. In reading #4, Otto Schramer summarizes four types of listening: downloading, object-focused, emphatic, and generative. We tend to use them in the order presented, downloading most. In terms of emotional intelligence, emphatic listening is essential. When have you listened to someone else emphatically? What was the result for you and the other person? When have you been listened to emphatically?

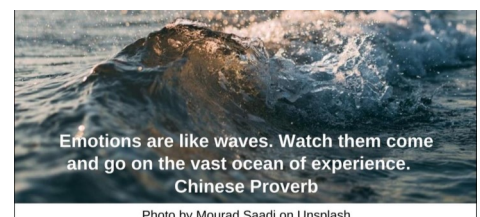
- How did it feel? How did it help?
5. In reading #5, Marina Fiori discusses three myths about emotion and emotional intelligence. In her comments she is confronting negative stereotypes of emotions compared to intelligence. Why do people tend to “trust” intelligence and “mistrust” emotions? What if emotions are more trustworthy than our ability to reason? What value do you place on your emotions compared to your intelligence? Why?
 6. In reading #6, Jeanne de Salzmann places a priority on seeing over thinking. The kind of seeing she has in mind can tolerate ambiguity and surface blind spots. Most of the time our seeing is clouded by what Schramer calls downloading. We see what we know, when our vision should be guided by our unknowing to help us to see what we can’t see. This is called beginner’s mind in Buddhism. How can we cultivate this kind of seeing?
 7. In reading #7, James D. Whitehead and Evelyn E. Whitehead write about the problems of clinging to emotions. They suggest that emotions are not meant to keep us stuck in anger or guilt, but to motivate us to cross the bridge by using the emotion in a constructive way. What keeps people stuck in anger or guilt? Can we think our way out of these emotional states or do we have to take some action to cross the bridge? Why?
 8. In the story, *Heaven and Hell*, these opposites can symbolize emotional opposites like anger and calmness, sadness and happiness, etc. In the midst of being angry, would it help to meditate on calmness, in sadness on happiness? Why or why not?

The following questions are related to the Snippets.

9. James and Evelyn Whitehead write about emotional sanctuary. When children are emotionally overwrought, especially with an emotion like anger, we give them a time-out. It is less a punishment and more an opportunity to be still and quiet until the emotional storm clouds

- dissipate. Where can you bring your negative emotions to safely let them subside and allow reflection about what you are feeling and why? What are your emotional sanctuaries?
10. Daniel Goleman notes that emotional intelligence begins with self-awareness in the moment that an emotion arises because it promotes self-understanding and self-regulation. What are ways of enhancing self-awareness? What gets in the way of being aware of our emotions as they arise?
 11. Brenda Shoshanna writes about the ways in which hopelessness destroys due to the anger within that is either unrecognized or ignored. Anger is an important emotion, but it must be experienced, used, and resolved? What are constructive ways of dealing with anger? Destructive? How can emotional intelligence promote constructive ways of engaging anger, both our own and others?
 12. Theodore Zeldin writes about the human propensity to hate. Do you agree? If yes, why? If no, why not? How can hatred be engaged? If it requires understanding what lies under the hate, how can we surface that and use it to understand and soften the hatred?
 13. Daniel Goleman writes that unrecognized emotions will still affect us. Some people have difficulty recognizing some emotions. This is often the result of long-standing emotional detachment. In other cases, an emotion can be experienced so quickly that we miss it. This is especially the case if we are overly busy. Do you attend to your emotions in the moment? If yes, how does this help? If not, does this cause any problems. In term of emotions, what did you learn about emotional management as a child? How has that helped or hindered you?
 14. Master Hsing Yun emphasizes the use of emotional generosity, which requires that we be fully present to others in the moment. M. Scott Peck wrote that attention is a form of love. Emotional generosity is defined as “the act of making others

- feel positive without expecting anything in return.” Have you known emotionally generous people? How did they make you feel?
15. As Leslie Jamison writes, while we may experience empathy unbidden, it is “also a choice we make: to pay attention, to extend ourselves. It's made of exertion, that dowdier cousin of impulse.” How do you try to incorporate empathy into your daily life? Have there been times when you've found it difficult to empathize with someone? What happened?
 16. Daniel Goleman writes about social competence, which in his model of emotional intelligence are social skills. These skills include persuasion, clear communication, inspiring and guiding people, initiating or managing change, effectively engaging conflict, creating relationships, collaboration and cooperation, as well as working on a team. Which of these do you practice well? How do they serve you? Which, if any, do you find challenging? Why?
 17. Rebecca Eanes notes that while the space between action and reaction is small, it is crucial. The choice that we have is to simply react “thoughtlessly” or to expand the space so that we can reflect on the emotion and thoughtfully act. Self-regulation requires a focus on attention, thoughts, and emotions. Does the strength of an emotion affect our ability to create a space for reflection? How? What can we do to strengthen our self-regulation?
 18. As Daniel Goleman notes, sociobiologists suggest that emotion (aka heart) has preeminence over intellect (aka head) in making challenging decisions, yet this is not common wisdom. In your own decision making, what balance do you strike between head and heart? Why? How has your approach worked for you?



Emotions are like waves. Watch them come and go on the vast ocean of experience.
Chinese Proverb

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