

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS



Managing emotions and feelings of fear, anxiety, grief, or stress is not always easy. By becoming more aware and going within we can learn to truly feel the range of emotions available to us as humans. In this module we will discuss ways to help you boost your emotional intelligence (EQ), allowing you to manage your own emotions in positive ways. This may help you to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict when faced with it. Boosting your EQ can also help you to connect with your feelings, turn intention into action and make informed decisions about what matters most to you.

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR EMOTIONS

When an emotion enters your awareness, acknowledge what you feel. Picture the feeling like a pet/child that wants your attention. It just wants to be recognized and until you do this it will nag and prod at you. Allow it to be, do not try to bury it and do not try to project it onto someone else. Instead, as you acknowledge it choose an outlet that allows it to move through you such as breath work, exercise, movement, music, etc. When you find that this is not possible, do not be hard on yourself, instead forgive yourself and commit to try again another time. You will still have moments when the emotion gets the best of you or you project it elsewhere. Forgive yourself and continue to practice acknowledging your emotions. Another piece of recognizing your emotions is awareness of how they affect your thoughts and behavior. For example, are your emotions ever accompanied by physical sensations that you experience? Do you get a 'knot' in your stomach, your throat or your chest? This self-awareness and being able to connect to your emotions is the key to understanding how emotion influences your thoughts and actions.

SELF-LEADERSHIP

It's crucial to remember that each person is responsible for his/her self. You have responsibility for your own feelings and emotions. No one else can look within you or change you. You must be the change you want to see in the world. Learn to use your emotions to make constructive decisions about your behavior. When stressed, the human mind is less likely to think clearly and accurately assess emotions. It is easy to become overwhelmed and lose control of ourselves in stressful situations. Building your emotional intelligence and your ability to manage stress can help you stay in better control. Learning to lead oneself with compassion helps you treat others with more compassion as well.

SOCIAL AWARENESS

While you only have control over yourself, an important piece of emotional intelligence is awareness of others and their feelings. Humans use nonverbal cues to communicate with those around them. Being aware of and knowing how to read these cues will let you know how others are really feeling, how their emotional state may be changing, and what is truly important to them. Practicing social awareness requires you to be present in the moment, not zoning out or thinking about what you are going to say next. It is also important to note that paying attention to the feelings of others does not diminish your own self-awareness. In fact, by investing the time and effort to focus on others, you will actually gain more insight into your own emotional state and your values and beliefs.

EMPOWERMENT

Emotions play such an important role in how we perceive and interact with the world. Emotional awareness will help you to see multiple perspectives in a situation, empowering you with the ability to control your own emotions, stay focused and respond effectively. Be present in the moment, allowing you to make active choices, to respond versus react, and to choose to acknowledge your emotions and to really feel rather than squelch, numb or project your feelings.

Recognize that your own choices greatly affect your relationships and the world around you. The more you cultivate emotional awareness, the more positive impact this will have on your relationship with yourself and with others.