



Emotional Intelligence

In a nutshell: *Emotional Intelligence describes a person's ability to understand and manage their emotions. This includes skills such as self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, social awareness, and social skills. These skills form your EQ – Emotional Quotient. A higher EQ can improve lifelong physical and mental health even more than academic ability. As per a 2018 report, people with a high EQ are 8 times more likely to have a high quality of life compared to those with lower scores.*

Emotional Intelligence can be acquired. Some are born with more emotional intelligence than others, however, you can learn to be more emotionally intelligent. This stands in stark contrast from assumptions people make that someone either is or isn't emotionally intelligent.

It is impacted by several factors. Family or a culture where emotions are not valued or openly discussed result in kids often falling short of this faculty from a young age. A lack of this key aspect can also be detrimental. For instance, some people may have a rich emotional tapestry around them but lack the vocabulary to communicate their feelings. Others might have the words but may need to broaden their emotional vocabulary. Some may just feel like their words get stuck and really need to work on expression and learning how to be more open and vulnerable.

Having a stronger self-awareness of emotions can be therapeutic. Simply naming how you feel is a helpful first step. Once you identify what you're experiencing you can decide the kind of support needed. Emotional intelligence recognizes that emotions and logic will conflict with each other. Your rational side will not agree with how you feel at times. Feelings are not binary, but rather, can be a cocktail of emotions all combined at once.

Emotional intelligence can be a tool to build meaningful relationships with others, personally and professionally. It helps you pick up things from the other person that are unsaid, through body language – movements or postures. Curiosity is key with emotional intelligence because it's an instrument that allows you to get to know yourself and others on a deeper level.

One way to improve your emotional intelligence is to simply name what you're feeling once a day. Or, even putting yourself in the other person's shoes and asking, *"What do I imagine the person I'm talking to might feel if X?"* Simple tasks like these can go a long way in building your emotional intelligence.

Put into practice: *Next time be mindful of criticism. Accept responsibility, learn, and move on.*

LINK: Free course on the "Power of Emotional Intelligence"

<https://learninghub.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/guides/the-power-of-emotional-intelligence/>

AXA is committed to help people to become 'fit to flourish'. To learn more, click [here](#).

- By Allison Heiliczer, *Rethink The Couch*.