

Emoting 101: Helping the Gifted Improve their EQ

with Lisa Van Gemert

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Emotional Competence Framework

from Daniel Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence*

Personal Competence

These competencies determine how we manage ourselves.

1. Self-Awareness: *knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions*
 - Emotional awareness: recognizing one's emotions and their effects
 - Accurate self-assessment: knowing one's strengths and limits
 - Self-confidence: a strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities
2. Self-Regulation: *managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources*
 - Self-control: keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check
 - Trustworthiness: maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
 - Conscientiousness: taking responsibility for personal performance
 - Adaptability: flexibility in handling change
 - Innovation: being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information

3. Motivation: *emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals*

- Achievement drive: striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence
- Commitment: aligning with the goals of the group or organization
- Initiative: readiness to act on opportunities
- Optimism: persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

Social Competence

These competencies determine how we handle relationships.

4. Empathy: Awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns

- Understanding others: sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns
- Developing others: sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities
- Service orientation: anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs
- Leveraging diversity: cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people
- Political awareness: reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships

5. Social Skills: adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others

- Influence: wielding effective tactics for persuasion
- Communication: listening openly and sending convincing messages
- Conflict management: negotiating and resolving disagreements
- Leadership: inspiring and guiding individuals and groups
- Change catalyst: initiating or managing change
- Building bonds: nurturing instrumental relationships
- Collaboration and cooperation: working with others toward shared goals
- Team capabilities: creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals

Self-Awareness

Development Ideas:

- Privilege intuition
- Show pictures – guess emotion

Resources:

- *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell
- *The Gift of Fear* by Gavin de Becker
- *The Stranger Beside Me* by Ann Rule
- *Genevieve's Gift* by Rosemary Serluca-Foster (ages 4 – 9)
- Study on quick judgment: bit.ly/nonverb
- Study on language overshadowing insight: bit.ly/verbalos

Quotes:

- The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift. - Albert Einstein
- Trust your hunches. They're usually based on facts filed away just below the conscious level
Joyce Brothers

Notes:

Self-Regulation

Development Ideas:

- Conduct a mindfulness exercise (see list at end of handout)
- Conduct the marshmallow test

Resources:

- *Don't Eat the Marshmallow...Yet* by Joachim de Posada
- TED talk on marshmallow test: bit.ly/donteatmarsh
- article on marshmallow test: bit.ly/secretselfcontrol

Quotes:

- It's not the big things that send us to the madhouse, not the loss of a love, but the shoelace that breaks when there's no time left. – Charles Bukowski
- I am, indeed, a king because I know how to rule myself. – Pietro Aretino
- You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you. – Brian Tracy

Notes:

Motivation

Development Ideas:

- Set challenging goals as a class (not FOR the class); have students set and track challenging goals for themselves. (track them online for free at bit.ly/goggoalsl)
- Create a “my favorite mistake” wall where students can display the thing that *didn't* work...add a section for “tried, tried, again” where they can post ultimate successes.
- Time undesirable tasks – you will find they don't take as long as you think
- Help students create Positive Deviant plans.

Resources:

- *Punished by Rewards* by Alfie Kohn (read abbreviated version of his feelings about praise at bit.ly/kohnpraise)
- *Complications; Better; The Checklist Manifesto* by Atul Gawande
- baudeville.com (getting ideas for thanks – and, dare I say it? - praise)
- Optimistic stories: bit.ly/optimismstories
- Optimistic news and other resources: upbeat.net/
- Three-minute talk on finding the good in a bad situation: bit.ly/ted-tumor

Quotes:

- Use the talents you possess; for the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except the best. – Henry van Dyke
- A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty. – Winston Churchill
- Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence. – Helen Keller

Empathy

Development Ideas:

- Be kinder than you have to be.
- Take Five (spend five minutes each day consciously sharing with another person)
- stereotype threat – expectation of low performance
- Do description exercise with students – how would friends, parents, teachers, describe them? How do they want to be described? How can they bring these closer together?
- Match your classroom with a Peace Corps volunteer peacecorps.gov/www/

Resources:

- *The Moral Intelligence of Children* by Robert Coles
- Picture books that display empathic behavior:
 - *Jamaica's Blue Marker* by Juanita Havill
 - *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox
 - *Chicken Soup for Little Souls* by Lisa McCourt (several stories)
 - *Read for Me, Mama* by Vashanti Rahaman
 - *The Girl Who Wore Too Much: A Folktale from Thailand* by Margaret MacDonald
- Websites for kids to get involved
 - dosomething.org (for teens)
 - idealist.org/kt
 - www1.networkforgood.org

Social Skills

Development Ideas:

- Teach group dynamics – calling it organizational psychology will appeal to gifted learners
- Spend a few minutes developing a classroom identity – a name is a good start. Let students create a name.
- Practice communication using activities that require them to share information with each other in order to be successful.
- Set up groups on purpose – rarely use *ad hoc* groups you create on the fly. Create groups of various sizes, write them down, and use those.
- Use the activity included (end of packet) to create group identities for your group variations.
- Pay careful attention to the messages (verbal and non-verbal) that you're sending – avoid stereotype threat.

Many Mindfulness Exercises

(edited, created, and compiled by Patricia Bear, L.L.P.)

Breath based

- *Just notice*: Without changing anything about your breathing, just notice what parts of your body move with each inhale and exhale. Focus on each inhale and exhale for several breaths. When your mind wanders, return to your breath.
- *Belly breathing*: Sit or lie in a comfortable position. Place your hand on your stomach, between your ribs and your belly button. With each inhale feel your hand move outward from your spine, indicating that your diaphragm is lowering and pulling air all the way to the bottom of your lungs while pushing out the organs in your abdomen. As you exhale notice your hand moving back toward your spine. Focus on each inhale and exhale. As other thoughts come to mind, gently let them go without judgment, and return your focus to your breath.
- *Counting the breaths*: Begin with belly breathing. As you inhale think “inhale one” and as you exhale think “exhale one.” Continue with the next breath and think “inhale two” and then “exhale two.” Continue for five breaths to begin with, and work your way up to ten breaths. If you lose count of your breaths, don’t judge yourself, and start over at one.
- *Slower, deeper, longer, quieter*: Begin with belly breathing. Count the lengths of your inhaled and exhaled. Consciously try to lengthen each breath. As you are lengthening your breath, think about breathing slower, quieter, and deeper.
- *Triangle breathing*: Begin with belly breathing. Inhale for a count of four, hold your breath gently for a count of seven, and exhale for a count of eight. Repeat four or five times if you can. Increase the number of cycles as you are able.
- *Walking and breathing*: As you are walking count how many steps you take for each inhalation and each exhalation. Notice how breathing feels in your body as you are walking. If you wish you can try to make your inhalation and exhalation the same number of steps, or you can try to lengthen the number of steps you take with each inhalation or exhalation.
- *Expansive breath*: Stand with your feet about shoulder width apart and your arms straight out in front of you with your hands touching each other and your shoulders relaxed. Inhale and exhale through your mouth for this exercise. As you inhale spread your hands open and open your arms wide, bringing your hands behind you as far as you can and pointing your finger tips behind you. Tip your head back slightly and look

upward. As you exhale bring your arms into your stomach and bend over slightly, letting your head hang and looking at your hands. Repeat several times at a comfortable pace.

- *Power breathing:* Stand with your feet about shoulder width apart and your arms hanging comfortably at your sides. Hold your head erect with your chin slightly forward. Imagine that you are standing on a color that represents power, and imagine that you are breathing in a color that represents strength. Follow your breathing for several breaths or minutes, imagining the power and strength flowing into your body with each breath.

Sensation based

- *Raisin Meditation:* Start with three raisins. Pick up the first and use all five senses in turn to examine the raisin. First, look at it carefully; second, roll it around in your fingers; third, smell it; fourth, place it in your mouth and roll it around on your tongue; fifth, slowly chew and taste it. Listen to the sounds your mouth makes while chewing. Completely chew and swallow the first raisin before moving on to the second. Follow the same process with the second (and then the third) raisin, noticing any differences between raisins. This can also be done with other dried fruits or foods; the advantage of raisins is that they vary!
- *Describe:* Focus on any object or sensation (sound, smell, taste, feeling) and put words on your experience. Imagine you are describing the object or sensation to an alien and include as much detail as you can. Be specific and exact. Notice details.

Imagery based

- *Waves:* This is best done lying on your back in a comfortable position. Begin with belly breathing. With each inhale imagine a wave cresting just above your belly button, and with each exhale imagine the wave crashing out in every direction, washing away tension from every muscle in your body.
- *Colors:* Think of a color that is soothing to you. Imagine that with each inhale you are breathing in air that is rich with that color. With each exhale the air you breathe out is a little lighter. The rich soothing color fills your whole body, getting deeper and richer with each breath.
- *Sponge:* Imagine that your body is a sponge and you are sitting or lying in a pool of very warm or hot water. With each inhale your body soaks up some of the warm water, and with each exhale the warm water saturates your body-sponge. As you continue your body becomes warmer and warmer, as well as softer and softer.

- *Countdown in the sand:* Imagine yourself sitting or lying on the beach in the sand. With your non-writing hand smooth a small area of sand in front of you. With your writing hand write the number 10 in the sand. With your non-writing hand smooth the sand over, and with your writing hand write the number 9. Continue smoothing the sand over and writing numbers in reverse order until you reach 0. Vary by starting with any number you wish.
- *Guided Imagery:* Many guided imagery CDs are available at the library or on-line. I recommend Andrew Weil, M.D.; Martin Rossman, M.D.; Jon Kabat-Zinn; or Belleruth Naparstek. Some websites have a few free downloads.

Body based

- *Alternate Finger Feeling:* Place your finger tips together. Rub one finger around on the other. Notice that you can direct your attention so that you feel only one finger at a time. Switch fingers.
- *Mindful Walking:* Start by taking very slow and deliberate steps. Notice all the small adjustments your body has to make to keep yourself upright and moving forward. Next walk at a regular pace and notice what muscles your body is using. Think about your feet gently kissing the earth as you take each step. Take a walk outside and notice your environment through your five senses. Use mindfulness to keep your attention on the present moment with each step.
- *Mountain pose:* Imagine a triangle on the bottom of your foot with one point at your heel, one below your big toe, and one below your little toe. Put most of your weight first on one foot and try to distribute your weight evenly on the triangle. Find your balance. Then switch your weight to the other foot and distribute the weight evenly on the triangle of that foot. Find your balance. Now distribute your weight evenly on both feet, again thinking of the triangles. Find your balance. Hold for several breaths, noticing the small movements throughout your body that keep you balanced and upright.
- *Tree pose:* This is a classic yoga balancing pose. Stand and begin following your breath. Find a small dot on the floor about six feet in front of you (look down the tip of your nose) and stare at it to help with balance. Settle your weight on one leg and bring the other foot to the inside of your ankle, leg, or knee. Turn the bent knee out to the side and place the bottom of your foot against the inside of your standing leg. Bring your palms together in front of your chest and slowly raise your arms above your head, keeping your hands together. Your balance will improve as you focus on breathing and staring at the small dot on the floor. If you can count your breaths, try

to maintain your balance for up to ten breaths, increasing slowly with practice. When finished slowly lower your arms and legs and shake them out, then repeat on the other leg.

- *Child's pose*: This is a classic yoga relaxation pose. Kneel on the floor on a rug or a mat or other soft surface. Point your toes so the tops of your feet are on the floor. Bring your hips down so your sitting bones are on your heels. Fold forward from the hips, sliding your ribs forward along your thighs, and bring your forehead to the floor. Your arms can reach forward above your head with your palms and forearms relaxed on the floor, or you can bring them down alongside of your legs with the palms up and the backs of the hands resting on the floor. Imagine your lower back muscles relaxing away from your spine. Focus on your breath and stay in this position as long as it is comfortable to you.

Meditations

- *Connection to the Universe*: Focus on one little thing that you appreciate (socks, hot water, music, etc.) and create a link to all of the people and processes that have put in effort for you to have that particular thing. Example: To be looking at my candle I needed a match to light it. Someone invented the match and many other people were involved in creating the match that I used, including the people who transported it to the store and sold it to me. Likewise with the candle. Be as detailed as you can in your thinking about how many people were required to put in effort so you could have what you have.