



TOUCHSTONES

a monthly journal of Unitarian Universalism

August 2026

Emotional Intelligence

Wisdom Story



Introduction to the Theme

In 1983, Dr. Howard Gardner, a professor of education at Harvard University, introduced the theory of multiple intelligences in his book, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. He suggested that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing, was far too limited. Gardner defined multiple intelligence as a set of abilities, talents, and mental skills. Gardner proposed eight intelligences: musical-rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic, to account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults.

Critics of his theory suggested that

rather than the word “intelligence,” Gardner should have used the word “ability.” In response, Gardner wrote, “I balk at the unwarranted assumption that certain human abilities can be arbitrarily singled out as intelligence while others cannot.” The theory of multiple intelligences has played an important role in education.

Psychologist Daniel Goleman’s 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ*, was inspired in 1990 when Goleman, who was working as a science reporter at *The New York Times*, read an academic journal article by psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey that offered a formulation of a concept they called “emotional intelligence,” which is sometimes referred to as EQ. Goleman’s book was widely influential. It was on the *New York Times* bestseller list for a year-and-a-half, a best-seller in many countries, and translated into 40 languages.

Goleman noted that his model of

(Continued on page 6)

Emotional Intelligence & Deepening Connections

Our connections with each other are influenced by emotions, both positive emotions and those that can be experienced negatively. Family systems therapists suggest that negative experiences and emotions may lead a person to cut themselves off from someone while ironically remaining connected to that person despite distance. We are better when cultivating emotional health for ourselves and with others. Emotional intelligence promotes emotional health through self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. Both words in the term are important. Our emotions are valuable in themselves and as feedback about our experience. To then reflect on our emotions is to bring our intelligence to bear. Use emotional intelligence to live life more fully and connect more deeply with others.

Touchstones is committed to exploring liberal theology. This journal is supported by subscriptions from Unitarian Universalist congregations. For daily meditations, photos, and more visit/like Touchstones at <https://www.facebook.com/Touchpossibility/>

Heaven & Hell: A Zen Parable

from Tapestry of Faith

Long ago in Japan, a samurai—a warrior of those ancient times—went to visit a monk named Hakuin. The samurai was elaborately dressed in armor, and by his side swung a gleaming, sharp sword. He was a big, proud fellow, used to getting whatever he wanted.

“Hakuin,” the samurai bellowed at the temple door, “I want to have a word with you right now!”

Unruffled, the monk ended his meditation with a slow bow. He rose from his meditation bench and took some time to stretch his legs before turning toward his visitor. The large figure of the impatient samurai blocked the temple entrance.

“Well, monk,” grunted the samurai, “If you know so much and are so wise, tell me all you know about heaven and hell!”



Hakuin inspected the fierce-looking samurai closely. Finally, he replied, “You disrupted my meditation to ask something every fool knows? What kind of

(Continued on page 2)

Deepening Connections

(Continued from page 1) **Wisdom Story**

second-rate soldier are you? You look like a tramp in that outfit! Did you steal that sword from a child? It wouldn't slice a cucumber! Leave this temple and never bother me again!"

If you can picture the reddest plum you've ever seen in your life, you can picture the color of the insulted samurai's face. He was furious! No one ever dared to speak to a samurai rudely—they would surely lose their life before they had time to apologize! In a flash the samurai unsheathed his sword and raised it high over Hakuin's head. "You will die for those words little monk!" he roared.



Hakuin looked directly at the warrior. "This is what hell feels like," said the monk calmly. The samurai froze, his sword poised in mid-air. In an instant he understood that his anger did feel like fire—the fires of a terrible place! The samurai slowly lowered his sword to his side and resheathed it. By the time his gaze met the monk's, his anger had vanished as quickly as it had appeared. He felt as if cool water had extinguished the fire: he was grateful and calm.

"And this is what heaven feels like," said Hakuin, looking at the samurai's peaceful face.

Source: <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session3/115178.shtml>

Another version of this story was included in the book *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman

Spiritual Intelligence

In recent decades a new concept of Intelligence has emerged called Spiritual Intelligence or SQ. It has nothing to do with religion and is not belief or faith-based. It is a secular paradigm of spirituality informed by neuroscience, cognitive psychology, transpersonal psychology, and philosophy that seems to be a logical extension of Emotional Intelligence. Stephen Covey wrote, "Spiritual Intelligence is the central and most fundamental of all the intelligences because it becomes the source of guidance for the others...." He defined Spiritual Intelligence as "conscience," which has characteristics that include enthusiasm, intuition, taking responsibility, morality, wisdom integrity, servant, humility, fairness, ethics, abundance, compassion, and respect.

Cindy Wigglesworth defines spiritual intelligence as, "The ability to behave with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the situation." She suggests that we need to reflectively ask questions like, "What is the wise and compassionate action to take today in this situation? What is in the highest and best interest of all players — including me, my co-workers, friends, family, company, society, and the planet?"

Danah Zohar, has written about 12 *Principles of Spiritually Intelligent Leadership*. These consist of the following:

- ♦ **Self-awareness:** Knowing what I believe in and value, and what deeply motivates me.
- ♦ **Spontaneity:** Living in and being responsive to the moment.
- ♦ **Being vision- and value-led:** Acting from principles and deep beliefs, and living accordingly.
- ♦ **Holism:** Seeing larger patterns, relationships, and connections; having a sense of belonging.
- ♦ **Compassion:** Having the quality of "feeling-with" and deep empathy
- ♦ **Celebration of diversity:** Valuing other people for their differences, not despite them.
- ♦ **Field independence:** Standing against

the crowd and having one's own convictions.

- ♦ **Humility:** Having the sense of being a player in a larger drama, of one's true place in the world.
- ♦ **Tendency to ask fundamental "Why?" questions:** Needing to understand things and get to the bottom of them.
- ♦ **Ability to reframe:** Standing back from a situation or problem and seeing the bigger picture; seeing problems in a wider context.
- ♦ **Positive use of adversity:** Learning and growing from mistakes, setbacks, and suffering.
- ♦ **Sense of vocation:** Feeling called upon to serve, to give something back.

In a similar vein, Unitarian Universalist minister Kendyl Gibbons invites us to consider ten spiritually intelligent qualities. They are

- ♦ the ability to enter into a covenant
- ♦ the ability to celebrate and also to mourn
- ♦ an attraction to beauty, mercy, and justice
- ♦ fluency in the use of metaphor
- ♦ a capacity for intensity and also for ambiguity
- ♦ *Mitake Oyasin*, from the Plains people of this continent, the Lakota and the Ojibwe, and others: connection to the earth and other creatures, "all our relations"
- ♦ *Memento Mori*: the constant awareness of death; acceptance of mortality and dedication to life regardless
- ♦ *Islam*: submission to circumstances and recognition of power, our own and also power we cannot control
- ♦ *Tonglen*, from the Buddhist tradition: the ability to absorb and transform suffering
- ♦ *Teshuva*, from Judaism: the ability and willingness to repent

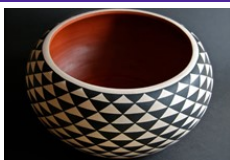
What qualities would you add to these lists? What three or four do you find most compelling? What people do you consider to be exemplary human beings? What characteristics do you admire in them? How can our congregations help cultivate these?

Source: Touchstones

Readings from the Common Bowl

Day 1: "Emotions can get in the way or get you on the way."

Mavis Mazhura



Day 2: "Emotional self-control—delaying gratification and stifling impulsiveness— underlies accomplishment of every sort." Daniel Goleman

Day 3: "The only way to change someone's mind is to connect with them from the heart." Rasheed Ogunlaru

Day 4: "Our feelings are not there to be cast out or conquered. They're there to be engaged and expressed with imagination and intelligence." T.K. Coleman

Day 5: "In a very real sense we have two minds, one that thinks and one that feels." Daniel Goleman

Day 6: "Life is a juggling act with your own emotions. The trick is to always keep something in your hand and something in the air." Chloe Thurlow

Day 7: "Socrates's injunction 'Know thyself' speaks to the keystone of emotional intelligence: awareness of one's own feelings as they occur." Daniel Goleman

Day 8: "Emotional health is more important than a fit body. Unknowingly, most of us focus on the latter hence the lack of inner-happiness, peace, love, and fulfillment." Maddy Malhotra

Day 9: "I feel therefore I am." Amit Abraham

Day 10: "Emotional versatility is the art of making peace with the entire emotional spectrum by honing your capacity to channel various feelings along creative and constructive lines. It is not about controlling or condemning your feelings." T.K. Coleman

Day 11: "There is no weakness in being able to love fully. It takes courage, tenacity, and an emotional intelligence that most people are incapable of." Alafia Stewart

Day 12: "Shift your attention, and your emotion shifts. Shift your emotion, and your attention shifts." Frederick Dodson

Day 13: "Our emotional mind will harness the rational mind to its purposes, for our feelings and reactions—rationalizations—justifying them in terms of the present moment, without realizing the influence of our emotional memory." Daniel Goleman

Day 14: "We all have the same pallet of emotional paints. It is how we pigment them on the canvas of life that dictates our artistry." Ged Thompson

Day 15: "Emotions are the richest source of energy we possess." Karla McLaren

Day 16: "The essence of all spiritual life is your emotion...." The Dalai Lama

Day 17: "Emotional intelligence begins to develop in the earliest years. All the small exchanges children have with their parents, teachers, and with each other carry emotional messages." Daniel Goleman

Day 18: "The human mind and what we've achieved with it is remarkable. But it does not come close to what we can do, be, see, and heal with our hearts." Rasheed Ogunlaru



Day 19: "Bad feelings make us miserable, but they often come bearing gifts. A negative emotion's gift sometimes comes in the self-examination it provokes." Evelyn Whitehead

Day 20: "Emotions are *movements* between us and the world. The meaning of *e-motion* in the literal significance of its root is a 'movement out' both from the person to the world and from the world to and through the person." Glen Mazis

Day 21: "When it comes to love, we are emotional illiterates." Sam Keen

Day 22: "If your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far." Daniel Goleman

Day 23: "To develop emotional ... intelligence we need to practice enlarging our inner passion at every moment. It doesn't matter what's going on in our world, or even how we feel about ourselves in the moment." Alexandra Katehakis

Day 24: "An emotion does not cause pain. Resistance or suppression of emotion causes pain." Frederick Dodson

Day 25: "Feelings are self-justifying, with a set of perceptions and 'proofs' all their own." Daniel Goleman

Day 26: "When time and emotions gel, a new awareness forms." Joel McGrath

Day 27: "The world of the living contains enough marvels and mysteries as it is—marvels and mysteries acting upon our emotions and intelligence in ways so inexplicable that it would almost justify the conception of life as an enchanted state." Joseph Conrad

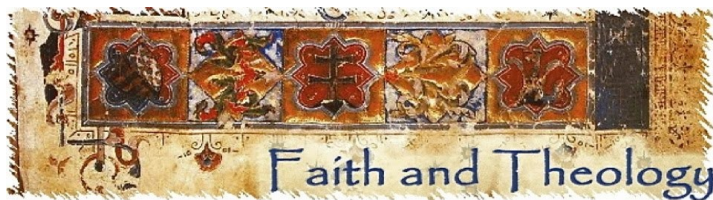
Day 28: "For better or worse, intelligence can come to nothing when the emotions hold sway." Daniel Goleman

Day 29: "I never met a pig I didn't like. *All* pigs are intelligent, emotional, and sensitive souls." Sy Montgomery

Day 30: "The finest emotion of which we are capable is the mystic emotion. Herein lies the germ

of all art and all true science. Anyone to whom this feeling is alien, who is no longer capable of wonderment and lives in a state of fear is... dead...." Albert Einstein

Day 31: "The way I see it, our emotions are music and our bodies are instruments that play the discordant tunes. But if we don't know how to read music, we just think the instrument is defective." Charlette Mikulka



Faith and Theology

Affect Theology

Thandeka

a brief excerpt from *Affect Theology: A Roadmap for The Continental Gathering of Unitarian Universalist Seminarians* (2013)

...Liberal theology was created for atheists, theists, humanists, artists, scientists, seekers, persons from different religious traditions, and persons without a religious identity at all. Thanks to this liberal theological tradition, Unitarian Universalism can encompass an extraordinary array of personal interests, individual standpoints, and disparate beliefs. Our communities, by liberal theological design, are made up of religion's enlightened believers as well as its cultured despisers. There is just one major thing this rich theological tradition does not equip us to do as a religious movement: grow [emotionally and spiritually.]

Liberal theology's loss of its own affective foundation compromised our ability to create Unitarian Universalist communities that grow stronger and more vibrant with each succeeding generation. Three major points explain why.

First, liberal theology—at its inception as an academic field of study two centuries ago—affirmed human feelings and the personal experience of an exalted change of heart as foundational to liberal faith. But the investigation of the affective dimension of human experience was excluded from liberal theology's design.

Second, ministry students have studied faith traditions ...to interrogate their religious ideas as an academic field of inquiry. Ministers thus learned how to sideline the heart of their own faith....

Third, the sanctuaries these academically trained ministers served became "corpse-cold," as Emerson noted almost two centuries ago. The ...heart of liberal faith froze.

...Friedrich Schleiermacher [1768–1834], ...set out to write a systematic theology for the Evangelical Church of Prussia that could be affirmed by both Lutherans and Calvinists. The shared foundation ...could not be their respective creedal beliefs and doctrines.... What, then

was left as their shared foundation of faith? Schleiermacher's answer: Feeling. More precisely,

emotions....

...To make this common ground of faith self-evident to his readers, Schleiermacher did two basic things. (1) He first redefined the term "affect" [*Affekt*]. He did so to help his readers think about *affect* as a physical fact of the human spirit rather than simply as another term that referred to the human spirit [*Geist*] as disembodied. (2) He then invited his readers to track how their own triggered emotions get changed into pious emotional states. Schleiermacher wanted them to gain first-hand self-knowledge of the role their own bodies play in creating religious experiences.

...To "care for souls," in Schleiermacher's lexicon, now meant to pay attention to human affections. ...They were the primal reference for discourse on faith, i.e., theology. Schleiermacher's new theological system was thus an "*Affekt Theology*," if you will, a way of tracking religious claims, feelings and ideas from the standpoint of triggered emotions.

Accordingly, Schleiermacher's new theological system did not refer to God, the Holy Spirit, or to Christ as its first and primary reference. ...Schleiermacher called the primary affective state for theological reflection the feeling of being utterly dependent upon, and an inextricable part of, life itself.

...[Unfortunately] seminaries, theology schools, and religious studies programs became progressive collections of interest groups without a shared foundational ground [like *Affect Theology*].

... Our ministers are trained *to think about religion* rather than also to *practice it* affectively.... Congregants, just like their ministers, focus on ideas.

...We don't "do" emotions. Most of us do not know how to grab hold of raw human emotions like anger, fear, rage, and anxiety and turn them into religious feelings that shore folk up when they are let down. Instead, we explore ideas, ignoring—or worse yet, running roughshod over—human feelings.

Source: <https://revthandeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Affect-Theology-A-Road-Map-for-CGUUS-Thandeka.pdf>

Heal this Divide

Respecting the Deep Story

Arlie Hochschild

...If you want to ...build a public conversation about ...big issues..., you have to really be good at emotion management.



...The idea of emotion being basic and foundational to social and political life is not new. Max Weber talked of it and Emile Durkheim.... But ...we didn't have a language, a way of conceptualizing it that was useful.

...When you're emotional, you are seeing the world in a particular way, and you have thoughts about the way you see it; you are thinking. ...These two are intertwined in ways we have not carefully understood. ...The "deep story" ...is a way of thinking about emotion. ...A deep story is what you feel ...that's very important to you. You take facts [and] ...moral precepts out of the deep story. ...The metaphor for the right-wing deep story ...is that you're waiting in line for the American dream that you feel you very much deserve. ...But then you see ...somebody cutting ahead of you. Why are they getting special treatment?

...Then ...Barack Obama ...seems to be waving to the line cutters. In fact, "Is he a line cutter?" ...And then [those on the right] felt like strangers in their own land.

...There are facts. ...But the deep story—and again, we all have a deep story—...repels certain facts that don't fit it, and it invites other facts that do.

...I think we have to reach out looking for potential common ground.

...You can be exactly who you are and take your alarm system off, climb an empathy wall, and get to know people on the other side of it.

...I use the word "empathy." ...We ...carry around empathy maps of who we should and shouldn't feel empathic with. And we need to enlarge those maps and shift them... to see if "OK, let's see if we can heal this divide."

Source: <https://onbeing.org/programs/arlie-hochschild-the-deep-stories-of-our-time-oct2018/>

Seven Keys for Children

Daniel Goleman

A child's readiness for school depends on the most basic of all knowledge, how to learn. ...The seven key ingredients of this crucial capacity—all relate to emotional intelligence:

1. **Confidence.** A sense of control and mastery of one's body, behavior, and world; the child's sense that he is more likely than not to succeed at what he undertakes, and that adults will be helpful.
2. **Curiosity.** The sense that finding out about things is positive and leads to pleasure.
3. **Intentionality.** The wish and capacity to have an impact, and to act upon that with persistence. This is related to a sense of competence, of being effective.
4. **Self-control.** The ability to modulate and control one's own actions in age-appropriate ways; a sense of inner control.
5. **Relatedness.** The ability to engage with others based on the sense of being understood by and understanding others.
6. **Capacity to communicate.** The wish and ability to verbally exchange ideas, feelings, and concepts with others. This is related to a sense of trust in others and of pleasure in engaging with others, including adults.
7. **Cooperativeness.** The ability to balance one's own needs with those of others in group activity.

Whether or not a child arrives at school on the first day of kindergarten with these capabilities depends greatly on how much her parents—and preschool teachers—have given her the kind of care that amounts to a "Heart Start," the emotional equivalent of the Head Start programs.

Source: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7067662-a-child-s-readiness-for-school-depends-on-the-most-basic>

Family Activity: The Mood Meter

Maria Kubitz

The Mood Meter is designed to help us learn to recognize emotions.... It provides us with a "language" to

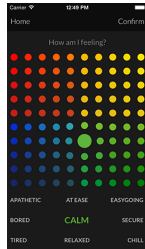
talk about our feelings.

The Mood Meter is a square divided into four quadrants—red, blue, green, and yellow—each representing a different set of feelings. Different feelings are grouped together on the Mood Meter based on their pleasantness and energy level—RED feelings: high in energy and low in pleasantness (e.g., angry, scared, and anxious); BLUE feelings: low in energy and low in pleasantness (e.g., sad, disappointed, and lonely); GREEN feelings: low in energy and high in pleasantness (e.g., calm, tranquil, and relaxed); YELLOW feelings: high in energy and high in pleasantness (e.g., happy, excited, and curious).

...Encourage family members to plot their feelings several times throughout the day or week. You can use the colors of the Mood Meter to discuss your feelings or inquire about your child's feelings. For example, you could say: "It seems you're in the red and you want to feel more green, is there something I can do to help?"

Once you've gotten used to identifying feelings with your child using the four colors, try attaching a specific word to the feeling. For example, if your child is in the blue and feeling sad—ask your child if there's another word that better describes how she feels. Is she lonely, disappointed, ...? Say what you see, as you notice how your child is expressing his or her feelings.

...Like anything worthwhile, developing emotional self-awareness takes practice.



moodmeterapp.com/. The process used by the App is called RULER (recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating emotion)].

Family Activity:

How to Build Emotional Intelligence in Your Child

Anna Partridge

1. **Help your child recognize their own emotions.** Once you help your children "name" their own emotions, whether it be frustration or anger or disappointment, they can start taking ownership.

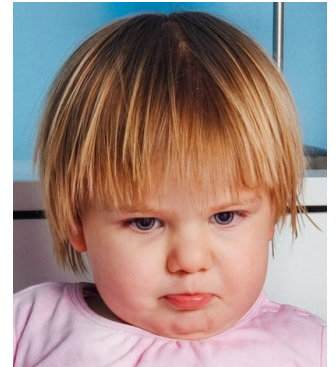
Here you will not only spell out what they are feeling, but in what context it is affecting others.

When they are feeling upset or discouraged, ask them to describe what they are feeling.... Don't forget to do it with good emotions too.

2. **Talk about your own emotions with your child.** The best way to foster emotional intelligence is to show it. Tell your children how you are feeling and allow them to perceive it for themselves

3. **Recognize the mood or feeling inside your house.** The mood and feelings change within your house. If you have people over, it might feel fun and jubilant. If you wake up on a Sunday morning and the house is quiet, it might feel calm and relaxed. Discuss these differences with your children.

4. **Recognize the mood or feeling when you go places.** Going into a crowded shopping mall will "feel" different from being at a playground. Talk to your children about the different moods. ... Try this activity with new and familiar places you go and at different times. So, if you go to the supermarket and it is really busy, ask them what mood they pick up and then if you go the next time and it is really quiet, they will pick up another mood.



Source: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-to-build-emotional-intelligence-in-your-child_b_7578640?guccounter=1

Seeking Emotional Freedom

(Continued from page 1) **Intro to Theme**

emotional intelligence built on Gardner's model of multiple intelligences. He wrote, "In my theory, self-awareness and self-regulation are the intrapersonal abilities, and empathy and social skill the interpersonal." These emotional competencies are not innate talents. They are learned capabilities that can be nurtured in children and adults, although, Goleman believes that individuals are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potential for learning emotional competencies. These emotional competencies are defined as follows:

1. "Self-awareness—the ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effects on others.
2. "Self-regulation—the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods related to emotions; the propensity to suspend judgement—to think before acting.
3. "Motivation—a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status; a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence.
4. "Empathy—the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people; skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions.
5. "Social skill—proficiency in managing relationships and building networks; an ability to find common ground and build rapport."

While the concept of emotional intelligence first appeared in a 1964 paper by Michael Beldoch, it was foreshadowed in 350 BCE in *The Nicomachean Ethics* by



Aristotle. In Book IV in the section on temperament, Aristotle wrote, "Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right

degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—this is not easy. (adapted)" Thomas Buckley writes that, "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." The difference between these two observations about the anger is emotional intelligence. It is emotional intelligence that allows us to cross the bridge of sadness.

Judith Orloff writes that, "Anger can be a healthy reaction to injustice such as cultures fighting to free themselves from repressive regimes. ...On a personal level, anger can be good if it's expressed in a focused, healthy way rather than using it to punish or harm others." In her book, *Emotional Freedom*, Orloff writes "Our society is in the midst of an emotional meltdown. People are restless, volatile, our tempers about to blow. ...Domestic violence occurs in one out of six households. Fifty percent of drivers who're cut off respond with horn honking, yelling, obscene gestures, or even road rage. Half of our marriages end in divorce. None of this is how we want life to be. Our pressure cooker society pushes us to our emotional limits. ...Though we commonly think of freedom as uncensored speech, emancipation from slavery, and the right to vote and worship as we choose, you can't achieve total freedom until you learn to take charge of emotions, instead of them running you. This is a radical paradigm shift we all can make, regardless of our present anxieties or past hardships."

In his 1995 book, Goleman suggested that emotional intelligence or skills such as active listening, reciprocity, empathy, use of dialogue, and openness can help create the conditions necessary for reflective dialogue.

An especially effective approach to reflective dialogue called *nonviolent communication* (NVC) was developed by Marshall Rosenberg. His 1999 book, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, provides a comprehensive method to pro-

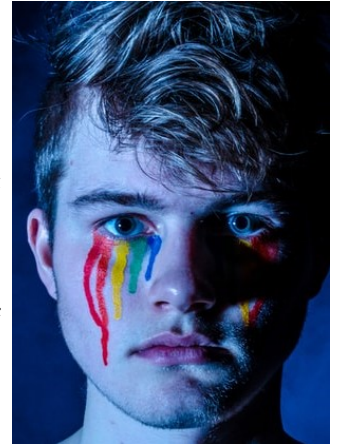
(Continued on page 8)

Your Emotional Tears

The Importance of Crying

Robert Augustus Masters

...When we weep, we open the heart, ease the belly, quiet the mind, soften the body. It is a loosening up and deep cleansing, a washing-out of ...psychic debris... The composition of emotional tears



is different than that of tears ...from an irritant in our eyes. Emotionally shed tears contain more toxins ... —thereby helping cleanse the body—but also contain *leucine enkephalin*, an opiate. ...Tears both cleanse and ease us.

Crying keeps us from drying out. It is easy to slip into aridity, hardening ourselves against the painful or hurtful aspects of life. We may find ...safety in... greening our deserts of abstraction with oases of distraction, but still sadness stirs in us. ... The more we suppress crying, the shallower our lives become.

The most painful part of crying is right before its onset. As soon as our tears are flowing and our throat is open, we hurt less, unless we're fighting and tightening up against our undammed tears. Even if waves of deeper hurt arrive once we've begun weeping—as when the details of a betrayal freshly seize us—the pain pulses through us with less obstruction than before our crying started. There is hurt, but it is the hurt of contracted tissues expanding and stretching from the pressure of what's seeking to flow through us.... When we don't resist it, the ...pain ...subsides fairly quickly.

Each deep loss crucifies our attachment / Our ribcage unable to hold all the ache / It is not our heart that cracks / But its ossified shield – its bulletproof glass / A guardian from a much younger time / Crumbling to less than dust / As all constructions must.

Source: <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/28061>

A Path to Awakening

Thinking and Feeling

Richard Davidson

...The brain does not honor ...[the] anachronistic distinction between thought and feeling. Thought and feeling are absolutely intermingled in the brain, and so there are no areas of the brain that are exclusively dedicated to one and not the other. There's a lot of interconnectivity. When a child ...is subjected to adversity, and the adversity gets under the skin, it will impair cognitive function in addition to producing emotional difficulties. These are intimately interwoven in the brain.

...We know ...that when we think about the really complex decisions in our lives ...we cannot make [them] based on a cold, cognitive calculus. We consult our emotions.... And if our emotions were disrupted, it will really impair our capacity to make those kinds of decisions. ...Emotions actually play a really key role. They can be both facilitating of our behavior and cognitive activity, and they can also be a disrupter. ...They're an intimate part of everything that we do.

...[Ironically], the very mechanisms in the brain that allow adversity to get under the skin are also the mechanisms that enable awakening. They're the same mechanisms.

...[For awakening,] empathy, ...a necessary prerequisite for kindness and compassion, starts with experiencing in your body the emotions that another person may be experiencing ... in order to help take the perspective of another. ...This is part of self-awareness.

...To paraphrase the bumper sticker, stuff happens. We can't buffer ourselves; that's the nature of life. What really is important is how we relate to these challenges. And if we can come back to baseline more quickly, that is really powerful ...for our psychological wellbeing....

Source: <https://onbeing.org/programs/richard-davidson-a-neuroscientist-on-love-and-learning-feb2019/>

Come to My Rescue

My Feelings Are Not Enemies

Miguel Clark Mallet

...As a child, I had a volatile temper expressed mainly at home.... Anger..., especially for someone black and male, was a dangerous way to operate in the world....

...My emotional expressiveness drove me easily to both anger and tears, and I didn't know what to do with this soft self, this permeable, thin membrane that bled feeling so easily.

...In high school, I joined the debate team, trying to build the thickness of my rational, reasoning skin, hoping that it could protect me from the passion always so tightly attached to my values and reactions.

I don't need to look far for the source of my opinions about emotions. ...To describe someone as "emotional" was rarely a compliment. ...The message was ...better decisions and solutions lay through reason and rationality alone.

...I spent much of my early adulthood caught in the gap between my emotional disposition and the calm exterior I was supposed to project.

Through the years, anger and sadness have warred inside me, and when I suppressed both feelings they reemerged as uncertainty and self-reproach, anxiety and depression. ...Neuroscientist

Antonio Damasio ...contends that emotions and feelings are central to human consciousness and they play a critical role in reasoning itself. "Rather than being a luxury, emotions are a very intelligent way of driving an organism to certain outcomes," he has said.

...I no longer see my depression and grief, anxiety and anger, as enemies. I try to treat them as messengers sent to caution me: to remind me of the need for self-care; to help me reassess and release attachments; to encourage me to reexamine values; to suggest that it's time to revisit and revise the story of my identity. To come to my rescue.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/miguel-clark-mallet-my-feelings-are-not-my-enemies/>



Raising Your EQ

Living Emotional Intelligence

Justin Bariso

...**Think about feelings.** ...Self- and social awareness [is] the ability to recognize emotions ...in ...you ...and others.

...**Pause.** ...Stop and think before you speak or act ...Pausing helps you refrain from making a permanent decision based on a temporary emotion.

...**Strive to control your thoughts.** ... Control your reaction to ...emotions by focusing on your thoughts... ...Live in harmony with your goals and values.

...**[Welcome] criticism.** ...When you receive negative feedback ...keep your emotions in check and ask yourself: How can this make me better?

...**Show authenticity:** Authenticity ... means saying what you mean, meaning what you say, and sticking to your values and principles....

Demonstrate empathy. ...Work ...to see things through [other's] eyes. Empathy [is] ...striving to understand..., to build deeper, more connected relationships.

...**Praise others.** ...Focus on the good in others. ...By sharing ...what you appreciate, you inspire them to be the best version of themselves.

...**Give helpful feedback.** ...Reframe criticism as constructive feedback, so the recipient [experiences] it as helpful instead of harmful.

...**Apologize.** Emotional intelligence helps you realize that apologizing doesn't always mean you're wrong. It *does* mean valuing your relationship more than your ego.

...**Forgive and forget.** ...Prevent others from holding your emotions hostage—[releasing them and] allowing you to move forward.

...**Keep your commitments.** ...Make a habit of keeping your word... develop a strong reputation for reliability and trustworthiness.

...**Help others.** ...Positively impact the emotions of others [by helping] them.

...**Protect yourself from emotional sabotage.** ...When individuals attempt to manipulate ...[your] emotions... to protect yourself.

Source: <https://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/13-things-emotionally-intelligent-people-do.html>

Small Group Discussion Guide

Theme for Discussion Emotional Intelligence

Preparation prior to Gathering: (Read this issue of the journal and *Living the Questions* in the next column.)

Business: Deal with any housekeeping items (e.g., scheduling the next gathering).

Opening Words: “Channeling emotions toward a productive end is a master aptitude. Whether it be in controlling impulse and putting off gratification, regulating our moods so they facilitate rather than impede thinking, motivating ourselves to persist and try, try again in the face of setbacks, or finding ways to enter flow and so perform more effectively—all bespeak the power of emotion to guide effective effort.”

Daniel Goleman

Chalice Lighting (James Vila Blake) adapted (In unison) *Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law. This is our covenant: to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, to serve human need, and to help one another.*

Check-In: How is it with your spirit? What do you need to leave behind in order to be fully present here and now? (2-3 sentences)

Claim Time for Deeper Listening: This comes at the end of the gathering where you can be listened to uninterrupted for more time if needed. You are encouraged to claim time ranging between 3-5 minutes, and to honor the limit of the time that you claim.

Read the Wisdom Story: Take turns reading aloud parts of the wisdom story on page one.

Readings from the Common Bowl: Group members read selections from *Readings from the Common Bowl* (page 3). Leave a few moments of silence after each to invite reflection on the meaning of the words.

Sitting In Silence: Sit in silence together, allowing the *Readings from the Common Bowl* to resonate. Cultivate a sense of calm and attention to the readings and the discussion that follows (*Living the Questions*).

Reading: “In his brilliant book *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman describes seven key abilities most beneficial for human beings: the ability to motivate

ourselves, to persist against frustration, to delay gratification, to regulate moods, to hope, to empathize, and to control impulse.” Gavin de Becker

Living the Questions: Explore as many of these questions as time allows. Fully explore one question before moving on.

1. What did you learn about feeling and expressing emotions as a child? Was this helpful or not? Why?
2. How did you learn to manage your emotions? What about learning to recognize what other people are feeling and going through?
3. How do you know if your words or actions have a positive impact on others? A negative impact?
4. How do your emotions affect you?
5. Which emotions do you find the most difficult to manage? Why?
6. What kinds of activities help you get a better handle on your emotions?
7. How might emotional intelligence help you take the perspective of and find compassion for someone who you really disagree with?
8. Which of the abilities listed by Gavin de Becker—the ability to motivate ourselves, to persist against frustration, to delay gratification, to regulate moods, to hope, to empathize, and to control impulse—do you find most important? Why?

The facilitator or group members are invited to propose additional questions that they would like to explore.

Deeper Listening: If time was claimed by individuals, the group listens without interruption to each person who claimed time.

Checking-Out: One sentence about where you are now as a result of the time spent together exploring the theme.

Extinguishing Chalice (Elizabeth Selle Jones) (In unison) *We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.*

Closing Words Rev. Philip R. Giles (In unison) *May the quality of our lives be our benediction and a blessing to all we touch.*

Nonviolent Living

(Continued from page 6) **Intro to Theme**

mote reflective dialogue.

NVC is based on the following four steps:

1. Observe a situation as objectively as possible without evaluating, blaming, or moralistically judging yourself or the other person;
2. State how your observation is making you feel, (i.e., what emotions are arising in you) and not what you think about what is happening, which can lead to judging, criticizing, or blaming;
3. Identify a need/value that is not being met like trust or understanding, which may include trying to understand what need/value is not being met for the other person; and
4. Based on the first three steps make a request specifically and clearly about what you want or need from the other person.

Initially, the process may seem cumbersome or contrived, but it's application of emotional intelligence can lead to healthier and more meaningful relationships. More information about NVC, can be found at the Center for Nonviolent Communication at <https://www.cnvc.org/>

While the emphasis on emotional intelligence has often been focused on leadership and workplace success, it is critical for our individual and collective wellbeing as we struggle to address the many challenges of contemporary society.

Attribution for Images

Page 1: Samurai Warrior outside Sensō-ji Temple, by Don Kelloway, July 12, 2008, (CC BY-ND 2.0), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/commodon/5524087724>

Page 2: Mountain Monks, Katexic Clippings Newsletter, July 5, 2020, (CC BY 2.0), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/katexic/50079771431>

Page 3: Round Melon Shape Bowl, by Wicker Paradise, August 25, 2013, (CC BY 2.0), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wicker-furniture/9592646138>

Page 3: Emotional Faces, photo by woodleywonderworks, November 23, 2000, (CC BY 2.0), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwworks/5269987754>

Page 4: Map, photo by Nik Shuliahin on Unsplash

Page 5: Pouting, photo by Alexander Dummer on Unsplash

Page 6: Anger, photo by Aarón Blanco Tejedor on Unsplash

Page 6: Tears, photo by Christian Sterk on Unsplash

Page 7: Feeling, Photo by National Sculptors' Guild on Unsplash