

Emotional Intelligence

DEVELOP YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is both an ability you are born with, as well as a skill that can be nurtured and improved upon. Increasing your emotional knowledge—learning how your emotions work—can improve your effectiveness in social situations, and in life. It takes some work and a lot of practice, but is well worth the effort.

Five Ways to Develop Your Emotional Intelligence

1

LEARN HOW TO QUICKLY REDUCE YOUR STRESS LEVEL

When overwhelmed by stress, it is often difficult to think clearly and act effectively. Learn to recognise the early signs of stress, then learn to de-stress quickly (e.g. take ten slow deep breaths or visualise a calming image, like a waterfall). The ability to stay calm and in control under difficult circumstances is a very important life skill.

2

LISTEN TO YOUR FEELINGS

When we feel uncomfortable, we tend to avoid the discomfort by distracting ourselves. Instead, try to stay open-minded with the uncomfortable feelings, and explore them—they may be trying to tell you something important.

3

WRITE IT DOWN

Since we sometimes experience complex mixes of emotions, our feelings may not seem to make sense. When you write down what you think and how you feel, you may get a clearer picture of what is going on in your life.

4

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS

If you make a mistake, do something wrong, or hurt someone's feelings, apologise. People are usually more forgiving when you try to correct things, instead of just ignoring them. Apologies can go a long way towards repairing hurt and confused feelings and enhancing your relationships.

5

LEARN TO COMMUNICATE WELL

Effective communication involves more than just verbal skills. How you say something can be just as important as what you say. Learn to strengthen your relationships by being more aware of your body language and other people's body language (e.g. eye contact, hand gestures, and posture). When you effectively communicate nonverbally, you convey understanding and acceptance of other people's feelings without using words.