

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotions, especially positive ones, make life worth living! And emotions can be messy. They can get in the way of thinking clearly, and they can pull us in different directions. Here we look at the skill of working intelligently with our own and others' emotions.



## HELPFUL TIPS:

### What is Emotional Intelligence?

Often abbreviated to EQ, it's the ability to identify, understand, and handle emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, build wellbeing, communicate effectively, overcome challenges, and build healthy relationships.

There are 5 main characteristics of EQ: **self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation** and **social skills**.

### Why is EQ important?

- ▶ Emotions are always with us. Taking time to feel, manage and reflect on our emotions can help us better navigate the ups and downs of life.
- ▶ If you feel happy, take time to appreciate it. Noticing what makes us happy can help us feel happier more often.
- ▶ If you feel angry or frustrated, take a moment to reflect while not pretending everything's fine. This way, we can more easily find ways to resolve conflicts and problems.
- ▶ It's not just about our emotions. EQ is also about getting better at noticing and identifying others' emotions so we can relate more easily with other people and build relationships based on trust and care.

### The good news about EQ is that there are things you can do to enhance it:

- ▶ Be present when you are with others and create opportunities for connection.
- ▶ When discussing something, take time to invite others to share their perspectives and listen to how they feel, not only to what they are saying.
- ▶ Tune into your own emotions: A helpful way to do this is at the end of each day, write in a journal what emotions and moods you experienced. If you have trouble identifying them, you can use this list as a starting point: joy, fear, sadness, disgust, anger. How did your emotions feel in your body? How did they influence your decision making and behaviour? How did they impact those around you?
- ▶ When you notice you are highly emotional, take some time to calm down by using breathing or exercise before engaging with others or making decisions.
- ▶ Take a risk, and be vulnerable with someone you trust.
- ▶ Related questions that can help raise your EQ include: What is important to you? What motivates you? What are your values?

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