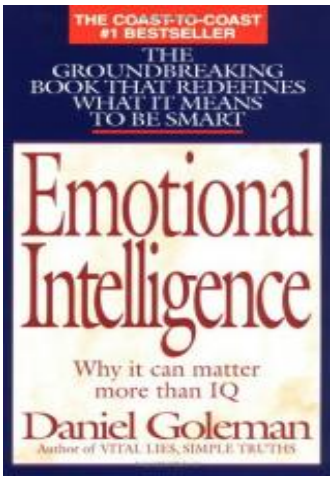
Emotional Intelligence

by Daniel Goleman



About the Book

What is Emotional Intelligence *about?*

A groundbreaking book, *Emotional Intelligence* refutes the outmoded idea that IQ alone determines destiny. It proposes that personal skills like self-awareness and empathy influence your degree of success in life as much as--or more than--IQ. Further, it argues that emotional intelligence can be taught, with wide-reaching benefits to our lives.

Emotional Intelligence offers a broad new framework for viewing and evaluating your personal and interpersonal experiences.

This book will show you just how emotions affect your behavior, your professional and social successes, even your degree of physical well-being.

Emotional Intelligence is the product of the author's years-long reporting on studies of emotions and the brain. Based in scientific research, its message is both optimistic and pragmatic. No matter your age, it asserts, you can learn how to strengthen and deepen your relationship with yourself, and with others.

Dr. Goleman says we each have two minds--the emotional and the rational. Ideally, these two minds work together--our feelings inform the rational mind, and the rational mind refines the input of our emotions. When they team up, both emotional intelligence and intellectual ability are stronger.

In accessible language and convincing detail, the book explains the brain's emotional circuitry. You'll learn what feelings are, how they work when we manage them well, and how emotional illiteracy can lead us astray.

An emotion, says Dr. Goleman, is an impulse to act. Impulses to fight, flee, laugh, cry, celebrate, play, or relax have been "hard-wired" into us by evolution. Sudden bursts of anger or fear may have had high survival value for our early

ancestors ...but these emergency responses don't always work in our high-stress modern world. A key challenge of present-day life, then, is to manage our surges of feeling. According to the author, a widespread failure to master emotional literacy is at the root of crime and a host of other social problems.

Emotional Intelligence introduces schools with pilot programs designed to teach students emotional skills such as empathy and impulse control. It also explores recent research suggesting that emotions have powerful effects on health. For instance, a pessimistic attitude has been found to interfere with some patients' recovery--whereas patients with a more optimistic outlook often reap the benefits of their bright expectations.

This book redefines the word "intelligence." Reading it will change the way you will look at your own emotional landscape--indeed, it will alter the way you interpret human behavior overall. *Emotional Intelligence* will add new layers of meaning to your daily experience, lending insight to your feelings and to your dealings with others--whether your boss, your mate, your friends, or strangers you meet in passing.

Are you Emotionally Intelligent?

Aristotle spoke of the rare ability "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 just one example of how emotional intelligence manifests in life.

The Ingredients of Emotional Intelligence:

Self-awareness: the cornerstone of emotional intelligence--a capacity to recognize your feelings as they occur

Emotional control: an ability to manage your emotional reactions, control impulse, and to recover from life's upsets

Self-motivation: skill at using your emotions in the service of a goal, staying hopeful despite setbacks

Empathy: emotional sensitivity to others; a talent for tuning into others' feelings, and reading their unspoken messages

Handling relationships: grace in dealing with others--strong social skills are the key to popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness

How do you measure up?

Science shows that we each have a basic temperament with emotional "setpoints" for each of these capacities ... but that's not the whole story.

The brain is extraordinarily flexible. Your initial strengths and weaknesses may be determined by your brain circuitry, but each of these five skills can be improved.

Through conscious effort and learning, we can increase our emotional intelligence at any age.

Drawing on unparalleled access to business leaders around the world and studies in more than 500 organizations, Goleman documents an astonishing fact: in determining star performance in every field, emotional intelligence matters twice as much as IQ or technical expertise.

Readers also discover how emotional competence can be learned. Goleman analyzes five key sets of skills and vividly shows how they determine who is hired and who is fired in the top corporations in the world. He also provides guidelines for training in the "emotionally intelligent organization," in chapters that no one, from manager to CEO, should miss.

WORKING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE could prove to be the most important reference for bottom-line businesspeople in the first decades of the 21st century.

Discussion Guide

1. *Emotional Intelligence* proposes that empathy and other emotional skills can be taught--and that schools should teach students how to handle and express their emotions appropriately. However, a *Time* magazine cover story about emotional intelligence argued that, "The danger is that any campaign to hone emotional skills in children will end up teaching that there is a 'right' emotional response for any given situation." Do you believe it's appropriate--or possible--for schools to teach emotional skills to students? If parents don't teach these skills, and schools shouldn't, who should?

2. The book portrays a society suffering from a breakdown of emotional intelligence. It cites the following statistics: Violent crimes by young people are up by a factor of four over the past 20 years. Suicides have tripled among young people in the same period, and forcible rape has doubled. Though he acknowledges that factors such as poverty play a role in the creation of violent criminals, Dr. Goleman says, "Every time we read about another senseless murder, it's a sign of emotional intelligence gone awry." What current or recent events in the news strike you as possible examples of emotional illiteracy? Do you believe there's hope for improving our collective social life by teaching emotional skills to individuals?

3. Are women more emotionally intelligent than men? Dr. Goleman doesn't believe so. He finds that each gender has its emotional strengths and weaknesses. Women are trained to be more empathetic--thus, they are often better than men are at picking up "the subtle, unspoken emotional dimension" of communication. On the other hand, women are treated for depression at twice the rate men are. Men are often better at managing their moods--a key component of emotional intelligence. What other patterns of strength and weakness might be attributed to the sexes, respectively? Do you believe boys should be trained to be more aware of others' moods? Do you think girls could be given skills that would help them be more optimistic? Do you believe there are innate differences in the emotional capacities of the genders?

4. Contrary to popular wisdom, *Emotional Intelligence* argues that venting anger--by yelling, for instance--can cause more harm than good. The author believes catharsis has an undeserved popularity as a method of handling anger. He cites studies which show that the net effect of lashing out is to prolong rage rather than to end it. Do you think it's desirable--or possible--to avoid emotional displays of anger? In what other ways can extreme frustration be expressed? Have you ever regretted an unplanned outburst of rage? Ever seen a tantrum produce a desired result?

5. According to the author, emotions are impulses which compel us toward--or away from--various courses of action.

"Formal logic alone can never work as the basis for deciding who to marry or trust or even what job to take; these are the realms where reason without feeling is blind." He believes that gut reactions and intuitions are more than mere momentary whims, that they are sophisticated calculations based on a quick-but-careful review of past experience. Are your important life decisions based more on rationality, or on an emotion-based "gut instinct?" Can you recall any occasion when an instantaneous decision reached by your emotional circuitry steered you right ... or wrong?

6. A previous bestselling book, *The Bell Curve*, asserts that one's intellectual capacities are fixed: *The Bell Curve*'s authors claim there's no way to transcend the IQ you were born with. *Emotional Intelligence* defines intelligence more broadly, positing that there is an emotional brain which greatly influences the workings of the rational brain, that both contribute to one's level of intelligence, and that emotional skills can be improved on. Which view of intelligence do you find more valid, and why?

7. Tests of aspects of emotional intelligence, such as "The Marshmallow Test," have proven to be strong predictors of future success. Some four-year-olds who took "The Marshmallow Test" were able to restrain their desire for a treat in favor of a greater reward later. This triumph over the urge for immediate gratification turned out to have a far-reaching impact later in life. As high-school seniors, those who had "passed" the test "were more academically competent: better able to put their ideas into words, to use and respond to reason, to concentrate, to make plans and follow through on them, and more eager to learn. Most astonishingly, they had dramatically higher scores on their SAT tests." Given such evidence that emotional skills affect one's capacity for success, do you believe children should be given standardized tests which measure not just IQ, but also emotional intelligence?

8. The book offers compelling evidence that parents' degree of emotional skill goes far toward determining their childrens' level of emotional intelligence. Can you recall ways in which your parents enhanced or deterred the development of any of the five components of emotional intelligence (self-awareness; emotional control; self-motivation; empathy; handling relationships) in you or your siblings?

9. Empathy is a key component of emotional intelligence; sensitivity to others' feelings is a prerequisite to developing strong relationships. Researchers believe that 90% of emotional communication is non-verbal. What are some examples of unspoken cues people use to express their feelings?

10. Dr. Goleman says modern medical care often lacks emotional intelligence. "Medicine's inattention to the impact of emotions on illness neglects a growing body of evidence which indicates that emotional states can play a significant role in vulnerability to disease and in the course of their recovery." He claims that "there are many ways medicine can incorporate new knowledge about the impact of emotions on health into its view of patient care." Have you, or has someone you know, experienced emotional insensitivity at the hands of medical professionals? How far should the health-care delivery system go in concerning itself with patients' emotion?

Author Bio

Daniel Goleman, Ph.D., is Founder and CEO of Emotional Intelligence Services, an affiliate of Hay/McBer, in Boston, Massachusetts. He covered the behavioral and brain sciences for the New York times for twelve years and has taught at Harvard (where he received his doctorate). In addition to Emotional Intelligence, his previous books include **Vital Lies, Simple Truths; The Creative Spirit;** and **The Meditative Mind.**

Critical Praise

"An original contribution to a question that has fascinated thinkers for millennia: How are we to use the passions to understand our circumstances and engage in communal life? "

Emotional Intelligence

by Daniel Goleman

Publication Date: June 2, 1997

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Bantam

ISBN-10: 0553375067

ISBN-13: 9780553375060