



.MOOD & EMOTIONS

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MOOD AND EMOTIONS

Your beliefs influence your thoughts and your thoughts influence your emotions. In this booklet you will discover for yourself the connection between thoughts and emotions and how you can learn to manage them. The advent and acceptance of emotional intelligence, largely inspired by Daniel Goleman's book, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, published in 1996 may well have been a breakthrough for what has long been a stepchild topic.

In the business world of recent years, the emphasis on technology has led to a somewhat intolerant attitude towards this subject. There is often an inclination to pretend that there is no place for emotions in the workplace. The result is that people are treated as if they were machines. However, we see examples of emotional behaviour every day at work and emotions are an integral part of what it is to be human.

How aware are you of the emotions you are experiencing at work? For example, a survey identified public speaking, a common event in business, as the number one universal fear across the world. How often do you feel nervous before a presentation or meeting, or when giving bad news to a colleague or client?

Consider some of the meetings you have attended where people have been too nervous to express an opinion, or where someone became angry. Consider the feelings you have during a difficult telephone call. Consider also the feeling of excitement when you win a new client or are enjoying the challenge of a new project.

Your emotions can motivate or demotivate you and result in helping or hindering your work performance. You can learn to manage them and become "emotionally intelligent". First, however, you must learn to become AWARE of them. The next few exercises help you to develop a greater understanding of your own responses and of the connection between your thoughts and your feelings.

Emotional Checkup

Consider how might you feel in the following situations. When answering these questions please make sure that your answers are emotions you would feel rather than actions you would take. For example different types of emotions are: anger, fear, anxiety, joy, excitement, enthusiasm, sorrow, depression, resentment, frustration, irritation.

	Emotion?
1. You have been invited by a national television business show to appear on a controversial talk show this Friday.	
2. You missed a deadline in submitting a proposal and have now lost the opportunity for a big contract.	
3. You lift up the telephone and you hear that your banker is withdrawing your overdraft.	
4. An independent market research firm advises you that in the last month you have increased your market share by 12%.	
5. A new technology is announced which will mean that when you implement it you will be able to save 25% of your fixed costs.	
6. You receive an offer from an overseas competitor to buy you out at a huge premium.	

The object of this exercise is simply to become more aware of your emotions in your business life and the effect they may be having on you.

The fact that you are able to experience emotions is healthy. A fully alive human being is full of emotions rather than being emotionless. Emotions do not necessarily have to be justified in a rational sense: they just exist. The trick is to tune into them but not to act solely upon them. Start now to consider on a daily basis how AWARE you are of the effect your emotions are having on you. For example, when feeling angry do you start to raise your voice? When feeling fearful do you walk away from a difficult situation?

To help you to start managing your emotions, complete the following short self-assessment questionnaire.

Emotional Management in Business

Evaluate how effective you are in business situations at:

		Weak	Needs Developing	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
1.	Knowing what you are feeling	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Knowing why you are feeling it	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Managing your emotions	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Controlling your temper	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Following your intuition	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Knowing what you want	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Avoiding conflict	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Expressing your needs	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Accepting your emotions	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Managing emotions under pressure	1	2	3	4	5

If you have scored 40 or more, this indicates that you have good understanding of how to manage yourself. If you have scored less, then use this part of the booklet to tune into the thoughts behind your emotions.

Consider different ways of thinking about thinking and see if it affects your emotions. If a thought is stimulating negative emotions then challenge your thoughts and notice if your feelings change. For example, if you are thinking "I can't stand the noise in this office" try thinking "I can manage to focus on my work despite the noise". When commuting by bus or train, we are often able to tune into a book. We can use that same capacity to tune into work in an open-plan environment. It is a matter of mental focus and practice.

Your thinking affects your emotional state. You are often attempting to move away from pain and towards pleasure. However, the contradiction to this is that risk-taking, an essential part of creativity, does involve a certain amount of discomfort in order to be successful. This would account for why a certain amount of stress is healthy. The key is to find the balance that suits you. Think back over some of the major decisions in your life and ask yourself what part emotion played in them:

Decision-maker

1. **Buying your first car**
2. **Buying your first home**
3. **Choosing a business partner**
4. **A major business deal**
5. **A change in career**
6. **Moving to a new city or country**
7. **Making a major investment with your own money**
8. **Deciding to get married**
9. **Deciding on a course of study at a college or university**
10. **Discovering a strategic business plan is flawed and informing your superiors.**

Consider whether logical analysis came first in your decision chain or whether the feeling you experienced inspired you to develop the rational arguments necessary to acquire what you wanted emotionally. As adults, we are often trained only to listen to logic and reason and forget that emotions are themselves a form of intelligence. As emotions are processed through the limbic area of your brain closely linked to memory there is evidence to suggest that your feelings develop from your personal experiences of life and are therefore giving you valuable information.

The thoughts and expectations you have of a situation drive your emotions. For example, if you expect that your boss should give you a day off when you ask for one you may well feel extremely disappointed if he or she does not do so. The result has not come up to your expectation of your desired outcome, so you feel upset.

Similarly, if you are making a presentation to a prospective client and expect that you must perform perfectly because you believe that otherwise the client will not give you the job, you are likely to feel extremely anxious. If, on the other hand, your expectation is that you will do the best that you can - i.e. pursue excellence rather than perfection - and have an expectation that even if you don't get a job from this client you will get one from another client, you are likely to feel calmer.

These thoughts and expectations have a direct affect on your feelings. Therefore, by changing our thoughts and expectations we can change our feelings.

Use the following exercise to explore your expectations and the emotions you experienced in a recent situation.

THE ABCDE THINKING MODEL

This powerful model will enable you to:

- become aware of your thoughts and emotions (ABC, as below)
- dispute your own response to the situation (D)
- if appropriate, exchange your old thoughts and replace them with more supportive inner-voice messages. (E)

In this model, ABCDE stands for the following:

A stands for the Activating Event

B stands for the Belief or Expectation you have of yourself, other people and/or the situation in general

C stands for the Consequential Emotion

D stands for Disputing your response

Here you dispute your responses to the situation in three different ways:

- (1) is it logical?
- (2) would everyone take the same viewpoint?
- (3) is it helpful to you?

E stands for Exchanging your thinking with more constructive thoughts

Study the following example, before completing the next exercise

- A. Activating Event** - Lack of time to meet a deadline
- B. Belief** – eg “I will never do this in time” “I am no good if I don’t manage to finish this perfectly”. “My boss should not have done this to me”. “There is not ‘enough’ time”
- C. Consequential Emotions** - Fear and stress
- D. Dispute:**
- (a) Just because it is preferable that you manage to meet the deadline is it logical to believe that you MUST? What law of the universe says that you must?
 - (b) What is the evidence that everyone in this situation would manage to meet the deadline?
 - (c) How is it helpful to you to believe that you MUST manage and that you are no good if you don’t?
- E. Exchange:** What would be a more helpful way of thinking? Eg “It would be preferable if I manage but I can still accept myself if I don’t”, “I have enough time to do the best I can”.

NB: Negative thinking affects your performance. Watch generalisations and over-dramatic responses to a situation. “Enough”, for example, is a subjective word. What does not feel ‘enough’ time to you, may be ‘enough’ time for someone else, or vice versa. You are more likely to reach your deadline if you remain calm and think clearly, pursuing excellence rather than perfection.

Please complete the following exercise:

Your ABCDE Model

What follows demonstrates the close relationship between emotions and thoughts. How have you faced up to these?

Write down:

A: A challenging situation you faced, preferably at work. Try to take a specific recent incident:

B: What beliefs, thoughts and expectations were you holding of yourself, other people and/or the situation in general:

(i) Yourself: (eg 'I should/must')

(ii) Other people involved: (e.g. 'the other people should have ...')

(iii) The situation in general: (eg. meetings should adhere to the agenda ...)

C: The emotion you experienced when you faced this challenge:

D: When you look at the thoughts and expectations listed in B, ask yourself whether or not they were rational and helpful to you. You can do this by disputing your thinking in the following way:

(i) Just because, in your construction of an ideal situation, you would prefer the situation to be this way, is it logical to believe that it must be that way?

(ii) Would other people all respond to this situation in the same way?

(iii) Was your thinking actually helping you to achieve your desired goal?

E: How might you prefer to think if you experienced this situation again?

What can you learn from how other people might respond to this situation?

How might changing your thinking affect your feelings?

How else might you learn to respond in the future?

By aligning your expectations to realistic and achievable goals of excellence, considering the time available, resources and acceptable standards of quality, you can now develop constructive emotions that support you.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

By becoming aware of your thoughts you can begin to manage your emotions. If you have a tendency towards perfectionist thinking you may well be more stressed than someone who is willing to make a few mistakes. Become more attuned to your feelings. By heeding early warning signals of how you are feeling you can manage the consequences of these emotions.

There are many examples of people who are “hijacked” by emotions they did not acknowledge at an early stage. Psychiatrist, Steve Peters calls this your inner chimp. He gives examples of incidents of “road rage”, violence or people storming out of a meeting with little thought to the consequences. We all have an inner chimp and it’s our responsibility to manage it.

Now that you have begun to understand more about your emotions, it’s time to take an in-depth look at what it means to be “emotionally intelligent”:

The Five Steps to Emotional Intelligence:

1. Knowing what you feel - learning and staying with your feelings long enough to identify your emotion. "When I am frightened I feel tension in my neck. It is OK to feel frightened."
2. Knowing why you feel it - whether the feeling is based on a belief, an expectation, past experience, imagination or a situation you face. "This emotion is the result of my imagination as I am worrying about being made redundant but this has not actually happened to me."
3. Acknowledging your emotion: "Yes I do feel angry".
4. Expressing your feelings openly, honestly and appropriately. Sharing your feelings responsibly "when you do that I feel upset".
5. Knowing how to manage yourself and how to help yourself to feel better. "I can handle this situation by changing my thinking and taking the required action."

The models introduced in this booklet are designed to help you to manage your emotions.

Memory can also help you access good feelings. The following memory exercise will assist you access pleasurable emotions.

REMEMBERING THE PAST

Part A: Consider 3 moments in your life when you felt particularly happy. List them below and describe each incident and situation in a few words.

Situation One.

I felt happy when (describe the incident / situation)

What was it about the situation that made me feel happy?

Where was I?

What was I doing?

Were other people involved?

Situation Two.

I felt happy when (describe the incident / situation)

What was it about the situation that made me feel happy?

Where was I?

What was I doing?

Were other people involved?

Situation Three.

I felt happy when (describe the incident / situation)

What was it about the situation that made me feel happy?

Where was I?

What was I doing?

Were other people involved?

Part B: Try to feel happy now, as you think about those times. You can use your memory to bring back the sensations of happiness. Memory works through the five senses, as this is where information comes in to your brain. In any situation you experience, your five senses are alert and absorbing information into your memory bank. It is therefore possible to revive those feelings again through concentrating on the memory of an experience.

Part C: Take your strongest experience from the three listed above and think about what it looked like, sounded like, smelt like, felt like, tasted like. Stop now and take three minutes to sit quietly and bring that sensation into your present moment. Imagine it is happening now by activating your memory and imagination to recreate the experience.

Part D: When you consider these three moments in your life can you find any themes or ingredients that are common to all 3?

If so, how might you incorporate these ingredients into your life more often?

There are numerous ways in which you can begin to bring more pleasurable emotions into your everyday worklife. There are many hints about this in this booklet. Here are some suggestions to help you.

THREE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT INTERVENTIONS

1. Use the ABCDE model to identify and change your thinking to support you.
2. Get creative and think of as many methods as possible to help you improve the situation physically and emotionally.
3. Experiment with new ways of thinking and behaving.

The Three Cs

There are three immediate techniques in which you can tap into and address strong emotions: one is by **changing your thinking**, the second is by **changing your physiology**, and the third is by **changing the circumstances** in which you find yourself. Let's examine each of these in turn.

Technique One: Changing your Thinking

How easy it is to get bogged down in a problem. Often people fall into a pattern of negative discussion regarding a situation or a person at work. A new phrase that has been coined in the UK is "blamestorming", where people look for someone to blame for the situation in which they find themselves. Is it not uncommon to hear the phrase "it is the management's fault!"

Much as it can be helpful to share experiences and get support, the sharing and berrating are unlikely to alter the factors influencing that situation. It is extremely important, therefore, to consider what changes you would like to experience.

Having emotional intelligence means taking personal responsibility for the situation in which you find yourself and devising active remedial solutions. There will be some situations that you cannot change. However, you can change the way you look at it. This next Inner Modeling technique helps you focus on a positive result.

OVER TO YOU

Outcome - decide upon it and make it positive (what would you like to happen?)

Visualise - your successful goal (what would it look like if you got there?)

Emotional check - enthusiasm factor (if you had this tomorrow, would you really want it?)

Review methods - analyse your methods to reach your outcome (how can you get there?)

Try - first steps (what is the first thing you can do?)

Observe - your thoughts and make them constructive (is your thinking supporting you?)

You - can make some mistakes (are you learning from different methods?)

Observe - review and adjust methods and goals (how else could you do this?)

Upwards - and onwards success is a continuous process!

Keep this acronym in your emotional intelligence tool box, for the next time you have a problem and need to focus your mind on the positive outcome.

Visualisation can be a powerful technique as it enables you to influence your brain into thinking you have already achieved your goal by building up pictures and sensations of what it will be like when you get there. This helps you to change your emotions by imagining the confident or exhilarated feeling associated with that achievement. Visual imagination sends signals from your visual cortex that change your bio-chemistry to release endorphins into your system. Endorphins are associated with pleasurable feelings.

Therefore if you are experiencing a difficult situation at work create an imagined video of yourself gradually feeling better every day. Build up pictures, thoughts and feelings in your mind of how your life at work might improve. Think of this as often as possible as it will develop the neural networks in your brain to support your actions.

Make sure that your language also supports your goal. Sometimes fear of failure influences people to talk negatively or dismissively of the thing they want to achieve. For example you hear people saying "I'll never learn to speak French", although their goal is to speak French because they are being transferred to an office in France. Align your language, therefore, to your goals as this supports your thinking. It also gives clear signals to those around you about the goals you are working towards and they may be able to help and support you.

Your mind is your tool for managing your emotions. Through memory, imagination and changing your thoughts to support your goals you can enjoy more positive experiences every day even if the circumstances themselves cannot be changed.

Technique Two: Changing your Physiology

Your body has an intelligence of its own that signals to you when you are not listening to your emotions closely enough. Notice physical symptoms. What are they trying to tell you?

Altering your physical position can, in itself, improve your emotional state. For example if you notice that your shoulders are hunched and you are stooping, try shaking your neck and shoulders a little and standing more upright. Feel your spine go straight, your shoulders go back a little and your lungs expand. Stand a little taller each day, not stiffly but in a relaxed way, lengthening your spine, softening your shoulders and opening your lungs. This simple action can help you to feel better even in the midst of a difficult situation. Try this now.

Technique Three: Changing your Circumstances

What actions could you take to change situations that are stimulating negative emotions? Sometimes a simple action will help you manage yourself. The courage required to make changes can, in itself, stimulate your self-esteem.

Changing the Circumstances can be as simple as moving your desk into a different position, or improving your filing system. Small things like this can improve your emotional state. It could alternatively involve quite large changes, such as moving office or job, or starting your own business.

Chunk your goals

Chunk your goals into manageable steps as this will help you to manage your emotions. An entrepreneur we work alongside had been excited and yet nervous about starting her own business. She had not appreciated that the business would evolve and grow over a period of time. It would not suddenly become a massive organisation. At the outset she had been fearful that she would be expected to be the accomplished Managing Director immediately. In fact, when she broke the goals down to one step at a time she realised she could develop herself slowly alongside the development of the business. This eased the anxious emotions she had previously experienced.

Tuning into your intuition

Another route to emotional intelligence is to tune into your intuition. Most of us have an intuitive faculty that can affect our emotions and responses. No doubt you have experienced a time when you “knew” a particular person would telephone you, and perhaps another time when you “knew” that there would be a space to park your car around the next corner!

Your body also gives you intuitive signals. There are times when you may have a negative feeling about something or someone but cannot rationalise it. This may be experienced as tension in the shoulders or stomach. Become attuned to these signals. At other times you may suddenly feel a sense of excitement without being able to rationalise why. Notice it and watch out to see if something nice comes your way. If it does, learn to recognise that again for the future. These represent your own positive and negative intuitive warning systems.

Intuition is an area of your emotional intelligence and is thought to be derived from the experiences you have had in your life. You are often too absorbed in daily activities to notice these signals, although they can provide useful information, especially when making decisions. Take time to tune in!

THE WAY AHEAD

You may experience some discomfort as you become aware of your emotions and start to develop your own methods of managing them. It may be that you have gone to lengths to avoid tapping into certain emotions. Indeed, many people at work believe this is the “mature” and professional way to deal with emotions.

However, as we said earlier, if you want to avoid being hijacked by your emotions it is best to listen to them and deal with them chunk by chunk as you progress through life. Any discomfort you might feel is a healthy sign that you are trying to think and respond differently. If you experience no discomfort this may indicate that you are using the same formula as before. However, seek support or professional advice if the discomfort becomes difficult to handle yourself.

To move forward we need to change the focus of our thoughts. These in turn alter our emotions and drive new actions. Measure your progress. Notice which events and activities give you negative emotions and which support your positive enjoyment of work.

A recent survey in the UK reinforced the fact that people in business now expect to enjoy their work. If you are not enjoying your work you are unlikely to be working to your full potential.

There may be setbacks along your path but you are starting a journey towards feeling more powerful and in control.

Enjoy the journey and stay positive!