

Living with an Open Heart

The
Art of the
NEW
Emotional Intelligence

By
Dr. Leigh Kibby

<http://www.kinematic.com.au>

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The Importance of Emotions : Using the Intelligence of Emotions

Three years ago I was teaching a group of GP registrars (Doctors training to be General Practitioners) the “How to of Emotional Intelligence” by teaching them skills that use the Intelligence of Emotions. Early in the training, one experienced and older GP began practicing his listening skills by listening to a younger doctor who was talking about an older patient who was facing death. In facing death, the older patient was touching the life of the young doctor in a way that neither had felt before. The young doctor spoke about her fear for the older patient, her sorrow at the thought of his expected death and how she was now looking at life in a new, more sympathetic and human way having seen both death and life through the eyes of her patient.

The experienced GP’s response to the young doctor was that she would get over it, that the medical condition of the older person was treatable, the success rate was known, long-term survival was questionable and that

he could provide her with advice about the best treatment. The young doctor froze, she said no more and looked deeply withdrawn.

I walked over and asked how the listening was going. “Great,” replied the older doctor, “I told her what she needed to know.”

“Do you know how she feels?” I asked the older doctor.

“No,” he replied.

“Does she know what her feelings are and what they are telling her?” I asked.

“No,” he replied. “Is that important?” he then asked.

The answer is YES! It is important because our humanity lives in our hearts as well as our minds. It is equally important because health and well-being is determined by the way we respond to our emotions and how we manage our feelings (see Pennebaker and Beall 1986).

The young GP described in the example above was beginning to feel the importance of her emotions. Her life was changing, becoming richer within her by the perceptions and life vista her feelings and emotions were opening up. She was receiving new sight and awakening from a world of clinical darkness into a world of human colour.

Clearly, the older GP did not understand what was happening when the younger woman was speaking about her feelings. He did not the importance of emotions and what emotions do for us as human beings and, because he did not, he failed to hear her feelings despite his clear commitment and desire to help. The older GP failed to use the Intelligence of Emotions to help the young doctor explore her feelings and by doing so help her understand herself and her place in the world with greater depth and human understanding. In this failure, he could not help the young doctor use her emotions intelligently so that she could learn from them and be a happier person and better doctor.

In essence, the older GP did not understand the intelligence of emotions, how they speak to our souls nor how emotions enrich our lives as people and professionals. If he had done so, both he and the young doctor would have been better off.

The message of this book is that you have a choice. You can choose to discount your emotions and deny the message they send to you or you can choose to listen to your emotions knowing that emotions are important and that they have an intelligence of their own that helps us live in a richer and more meaningful world.

If you choose to use your emotions, the techniques and stories in this book will help you to use the Intelligence of Emotions, an intelligence that can help you learn more about yourself and others. The Intelligence of Emotions is a life intelligence that can guide choices, help you plan action and see a broader more diverse world.

By using the Intelligence of Emotions you can be Emotionally Intelligent. The secret is to know how to use the Intelligence of your emotions and this book tells you how based on extensive research and many years of practice as a counsellor, consultant and professional coach.

In this book I will explore insights I have gained and those from over 2000 people from all works of life who have attended training programs designed to help them use the Intelligence of Emotions both personally

and professionally. These insights provide a new approach to emotions called the New Emotional Intelligence (NEI), a technique that can help you increase your emotional intelligence.

NEI is a total approach to emotions based on the intelligence of emotions themselves. NEI also respects differing approaches to emotions because all responses to emotions have a purpose and appropriateness. The key is to find a response that matches the context. The NEI helps you find that response using techniques that are practical and informative.

The NEI will help you avoid the mistakes that others so often make in high emotions situations. For example, I was teaching Mentoring skills to a group of teachers and social workers. One social worker was using a technique described as “Active Listening.” This technique involves the use of body language such as head nodding, smiling, head tilts etc. to communicate to the person speaking that she/he is being heard. Suddenly, the listener froze with a look of horror on her face. The young male social worker who had been telling his story as part of the training then slumped forward looking at the floor and saying nothing.

I walked over.

The man who previously had been speaking said nothing and remained looking at the floor. The listener said it was going OK until a few moments ago and then “.... he won’t speak anymore.”

I knelt by the young man who was slumped forward, saying nothing for awhile. I then said, “You feel sad,” an NEI technique.

The man nodded.

“You feel sad because you want to.....” I stated pausing.

Again, we waited.

“Because I want to feel clean again,” said the young man.

Here all of us paused and I then asked the young man if we could explore what was happening for him so that the three of us could learn something from what had happened to him. He agreed.

“I did not say he was dirty,” interjected the woman who had been his listener.

“I think you had,” I replied. “I think you said it very loudly and clearly.”

“How?” she asked.

“If you can, please tell her?” I asked of the young man who was by now looking up.

“It was on your face,” he said. “The look on your face.”

“I was horrified by what happened to you,” the woman replied.

“I didn’t know that,” he said. “All I saw was your face and that told me all I needed to know.”

And so, the young man was saying that he had interpreted the change in body language, reading a message of approval one instant and disapproval and disgust the instant that body language changed from the affirmation of Active Listening to the horror of her personal judgement. That look of horror on the listener’s face had said something to him. Not

what it was intended to say but something that he was always going to hear given his life story.

By using NEI techniques, the three of us explored what had happened, the insight being that our bodies speak. When emotions are high someone listening to that body language will hear many messages. The key is to be very sure about the messages we send as listener's and avoid sending a message that can cut like a knife when old hurts and wounds are reopened in dialogue.

How often do similar things happen in our daily lives. Someone is telling us a story and we end up in an argument or you are sharing a great intimacy and personal fear and suddenly feel exposed and judged and you don't know why. The problem is that we do not know how to listen to emotions intelligently so that we do not judge and do not denigrate. As people, few of us know how to listen so that we and the person who is speaking can use the intelligence of the emotions they are experiencing to discover the message of the emotions and use that message to be healthier and happier.

NEI is an approach that will help you avoid such mistakes as those of the young social worker so that you become a better listener and help emotions reveal a pathway to happiness rather than being a minefield in which an explosion leads to psychological maiming.

NEI skills are common, everyday techniques that caring people can use with one another when someone is sharing high emotions. The skills are also designed to prevent someone counselling or people becoming pseudo-psychotherapists. They are skills all human beings can use to help us as a community become more emotionally intelligent and so be happier and healthier together.

Emotional Intelligence : Facts and Fictions

Peace, happiness, being a great leader. They are all attributed to having EQ, or emotional intelligence as it is known more commonly.

Great leaders are said to be good with emotions. Insightful managers are described as being emotionally intelligent. EQ scoring is the latest trump card in recruitment and professional development, even though the scores might provide scant advice and offer little hope to the under-achievers. Likewise, management gurus have sold emotions as the latest answer to business woes, some with little idea of what emotions are, how they make a difference and what to do about them.

Books on EQ and emotional intelligence have sold in the millions with business leaders striving to have that missing ingredient and gain the edge by using the heart to gain solid profit even though one might ask “What value is a book when emotions are at play?” – a reasonable and almost poignant question. Even more importantly, “Why does EQ matter and why is it important to you?” To answer this question, we need to separate You and EQ.

To survive in modern management circles, and to talk the talk, you need to know about EQ. But, to live your life, you need to engage in EQ. That is the difference between EQ and the EQ-Factor. The NEI is not the same as having emotions or having an EQ, which you already have anyhow. NEI is about engaging with your emotions. NEI is about understanding

what emotions mean, what they are telling you and how to harness the intelligence of emotions. In fact, you need NEI firstly because it is important to you as a person, secondly because it can help you as a professional.

There are many researchers examining the field of emotional intelligence. Names include Goleman, Bar-On and Mayer (Goleman, 1994, Bar-On 1996 and Mayer et al 1990). Many of these researchers have greatly expanded the field of emotions knowledge and broadened our understanding of emotions and the impact they have on us as people and professionals. However, whilst contributing to our overall understanding of emotions, these researchers tend to focus on the outcomes of emotional intelligence i.e. using emotions in intelligent ways to achieve outcomes or goals.

Unfortunately, these researchers tend to say little about the skills of Emotional Intelligence. They have been busy devising more accurate tests of our emotional intelligence, our EQ, rather than helping us learn how to be emotionally intelligent.

For example, one large Australian company is using an Emotional Intelligence test to assess its current leaders. When leader scored very poorly. His response was, “What do I do now?” but the testers could not tell him more than his score, a useless and hurtful response. The test provided no value to either the person who undertook the test nor the organisation who wanted its staff tested.

In essence, the field of Emotional Intelligence is filled with hyperbole and data, saying little about the message of emotions nor the actions our emotions can lead us to take when we do not use the intelligence of our emotions based on ethics, values and principles of respect, compassion and decency. In fact, in the field of Emotional Intelligence there seems to be little interest in the type of goals emotions can lead us to pursue nor the ethics of those goals and the morals of using emotions to achieve them.

Clearly, a Copernican revolution is needed and emotions need to be viewed in a new way. We need to turn emotions around 180 degrees. Instead of emotional intelligence, we ought to talk about the intelligence of emotions.

Rather than events, emotions need to be seen as information providers. Rather than as outcomes, emotions need to be seen as creators. Rather than as things that happen, emotions need to be seen as advisers that speak to us with inner wisdom and help us see ourselves more clearly and others more compassionately. Emotions are guides that can help us navigate life, rather than being only our responses to life's events. In fact, life and emotion are inseparable.

In summary, it is far more intelligent to use the intelligence of emotions that it is to be emotionally intelligent.

To use the intelligence of emotions is to hear what emotions are saying in our minds and from other people's mouths. Using the intelligence of emotions can help us and help us help others. The secret is in being able to understand the language of emotions. This means more than hearing the words or knowing the facts. Hearing the intelligence of emotions means listening in a new way, hearing the sub-text and reading between the lines.

The fact is that you and your EQ are inseparable because emotions are as much a part of life as your body and your mind. We all have emotions

albeit some are released wildly at inappropriate times or suppressed, remaining dormant in our lives and loves. The difference between NEI and emotional intelligence is that NEI helps you understand, embrace and use your emotions to gain insight, act appropriately and become more alive and enlivened.

You need NEI if you want to be emotionally intelligent and get a higher EQ because the NEI creates emotional intelligence by using the intelligence of emotions. Whereas emotional intelligence might give you a vague idea about what you score, which has questionable value, NEI can tell you how to score better by doing something that has values in the world of emotions. Whereas emotional intelligence can give you the idea, NEI can give you the experience and the answer. In fact, you are already having the experience, NEI will help you see, interpret, understand and use that experience to help yourself and others.

Emotions have an intelligence because emotions have a message and a meaning, they are a locked door into new insight and understanding. The key for you is to listen to your emotions and learn from them. NEI is that key helping you understand that “you feel...because you want to....”

“You feel because you want to”

Your Emotions and You

“You feel” and it is that feeling, the emotion, which makes the difference in all your life as it does in all our lives. Without emotions we would be husks, merely biological robots without rhyme or reason for our existence. Emotions in many ways are our reasons for being and without them we would probably have gone the way of the dinosaurs.

“You feel” and it is that feeling that makes the difference. Our emotions colour our lives adding all the variety of the rainbow. Through our emotions we become more alive because our emotions add a uniquely human dimension to our existence. Without our emotions we would be “human do-ings” living our lives day in and day out through the grey monotone of job achievement which could not fulfil us nor inspire us. But thank goodness for our emotions. Our emotions make us more than machines and greater than robots or science can ever be without the human dimension that emotions provide. With our emotions we become “human be-ings”, creatures with a soul that can take flight, feel love and be touched by compassion and graceful humility.

“You feel because you want to” is the missing link in our lives because it joins heart and mind and unites our two greatest gifts, thought and feeling.

“You feel because you want to” and it is the “because you want to” that provides the link between the rhyme and reason in our lives. When we know what our emotions seek, when we understand the desire of our feelings, then we can use our emotions, and the messages they tell us, to take charge and direct our lives. By following our

emotions we can achieve our desires, experience greater fulfilment and become more fully alive and in control.

What about You?

Your emotions would not exist without you. Nor would you exist without your emotions because without emotions we would all be the same doing the same thing for the same reasons without anything to mark us as different nor unique. But, you are still important. It is your “you-ness” that needs to be kept alive and well. You need to remain the central point, not your emotions. Emotions are simply the states of your experience, not the totality. So, it is important to understand you and keep you in control.

Emotions are a two edged sword. They carry us aloft on flights of fancy or send us adrift in seas of rage. We are given this sword but not told how to hold it, when to keep it sheathed and how to avoid hacking those we love and care for. Nor how to avoid the harm we inflict when our emotions run unchecked. “You feel because you want to” changes all that. This simple phrase gives you power over your emotions and places control for your lives back in your hands.

When used with others, “You feel because you want to” checks emotional tirade, calms the ravaging sea and helps reveal insights and messages that only our emotions can tell us.

You know yourself and your needs better than anyone else. Or do you? Perhaps your emotions know even more. By harnessing the insights of our emotions, by using the Intelligence of Emotions, we can see ourselves more clearly, understand ourselves better and make better choices.

Emotions speak to us about desires and needs. Your emotions speak to you, but are you listening. Those you love and care for are also talking with the language of emotions but can you understand what they are saying?

Emotions are more than feelings or reactions, they are messages with a hidden code that can deepen relationships and broaden understanding and intimacy. The secret is to understand the message beneath the emotion.

Emotions are the tip of the human iceberg. “You feel because you want to” helps you see beneath the surface of your life and, when

used with others, helps them look into the deep and by so doing see more of themselves and be liberated with insight and opportunity.

“You feel because you want to....” is the key to NEI, it is a phrase and strategy that makes emotions intelligent and transforms emotions.

Using the “you feel..... because you want to...” phrase is the central skill of emotional intelligence, a key technique that breaks the emotional code and changes it into ideas that can be shared, understood and enacted with awareness and common sense. “You feel because you want to....” makes emotions thought filled and links our hearts and minds thus providing profound insight and making us fully human and more alive.

The rest of this book will help you better understand emotions and use NEI tools so that you can help yourself and others.

You will not need to be a counsellor because NEI tools are designed for everyday use by everyone. They are the tools that differentiate the best of friends from common acquaintances. They are the tools that make leaders great and managers magnificent. Learn them here and learn for life because NEI is about life and living it to the full with our emotions rather than emotionally, when we have no control, or emotion-less when

nothing matters.

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