

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



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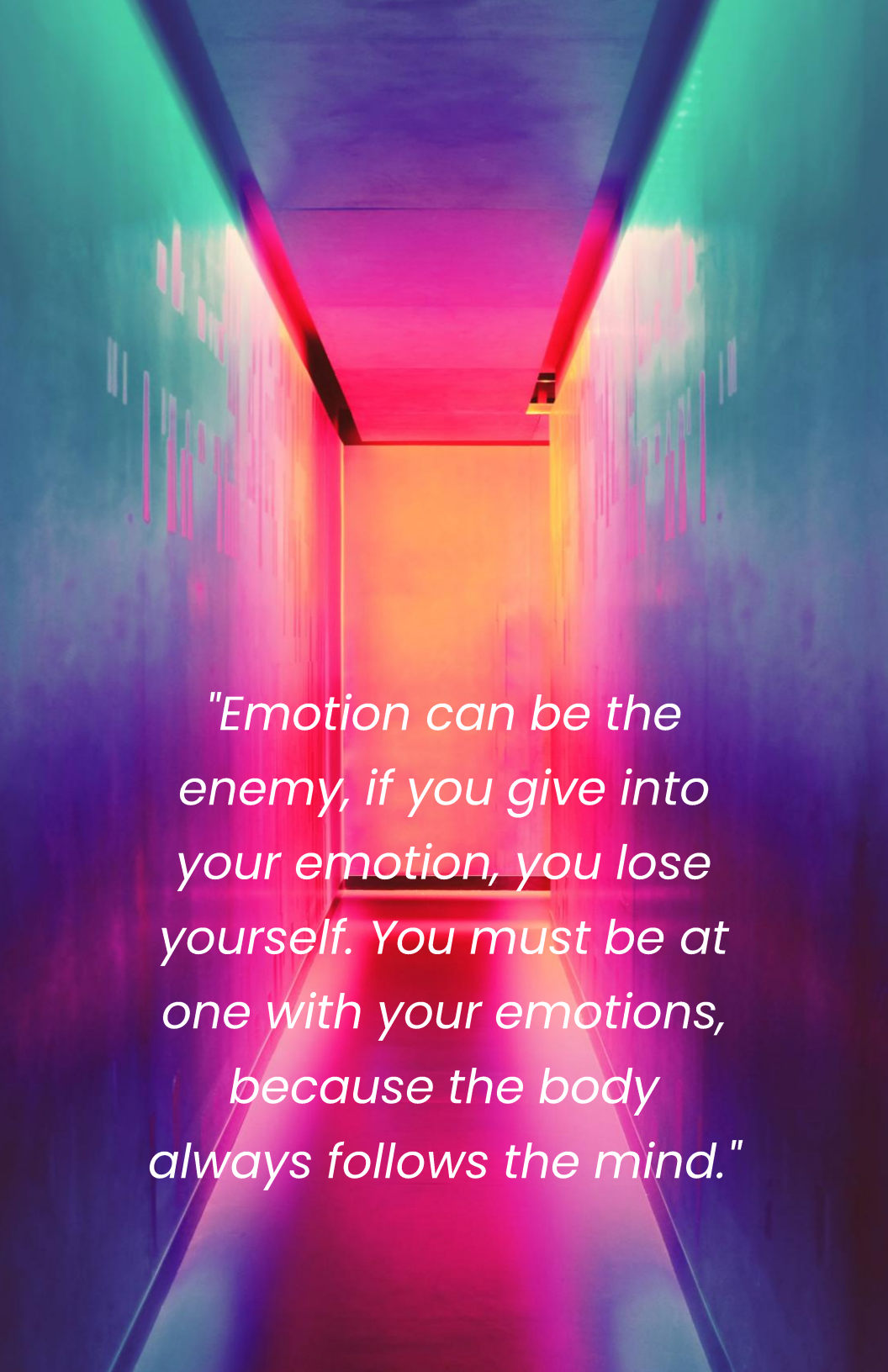
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"Emotion can be the enemy, if you give into your emotion, you lose yourself. You must be at one with your emotions, because the body always follows the mind."



What exactly is *emotional intelligence*?

Let's take a look at a couple of definitions:

- “The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically”
(*lexico.com*)
- Being able to recognize, understand and manage our own emotions, as well as to recognize, understand and influence the emotions of others

As you can see, emotional intelligence is not only good for your relationship, but also for you and everyone around you! Those with poor emotional intelligence rarely make good life partners or friends.

Emotional intelligence isn't the only thing that matters if you want to be part of a successful relationship, but it counts for a lot. Those with low emotional intelligence consistently disappoint their partners emotionally.

If you have low emotional intelligence, you are a threat to the self-esteem of everyone around you.

“When you make people angry, they act in accordance with their baser instincts, often violently and irrationally. When you inspire people, they act in accordance with their higher instincts, sensibly and rationally.”

– PEACE PILGRIM

Those with low emotional intelligence have several tell-tale signs:

1. They are unable to accurately read the emotions of others. People with low emotional intelligence lack the skill necessary to predict the emotional responses of other people.
- They also fail to pick up on social cues that telegraph

emotions to those with emotional intelligence.

2. They are not in control of their feelings. Some people are good at managing their emotions and dealing with them appropriately. Those low in emotional intelligence are not one of those people.

- Emotions tend to be exaggerated, because they lack the skill to soothe themselves.
- Negative emotions also lead to poor decision-making in those with low emotional intelligence.

- Those that are easily stressed are often suffering from low emotional intelligence.
3. They behave and speak inappropriately. If you're emotionally intelligent, you understand that some things are appropriate, and others are not. Inappropriate behavior and speech are common occurrences in those with low emotional intelligence.
 4. They lack the ability, or interest, in sympathizing or empathizing with others. If you're low in emotional intelligence, it's difficult to impossible to help others emotionally with their challenges. People require support, empathy,

and sympathy from time to time.

5. They often lack assertiveness. Do you know what you want? Are you open about your wants and needs? Can you ask for what you want? Those low in emotional intelligence will answer “no” to those questions.
6. They have poor self-control. This is related to poor emotional control and inappropriate behavior. Impulsive behavior is a common sign of low emotional intelligence.

Fortunately, emotional intelligence is highly alterable. Unlike your IQ, your emotional intelligence can be raised through education and effort. You can literally train yourself to be more

emotionally intelligent. Some people are born emotionally intelligent, but others have to learn this important set of skills.

This means you can greatly improve your ability to be part of a successful relationship. By the end of this eBook, you'll know how to enhance your emotional intelligence and spot it in others.

Emotional intelligence is based on just a few attributes or skills:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Regulation
- Empathy
- Social Skills

By mastering just these four items, you can be much more emotionally intelligent, and your relationship will be much more satisfying to you and your partner.

“Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection, and influence.”

– ROBERT K. COOPER, PHD

SELF- AWARENESS

Self-awareness is perhaps the most important component of emotional intelligence. We tend to have a very inaccurate opinion of ourselves. We can see right through the people we know well, but we have a very difficult time seeing ourselves. We fool ourselves, and we're very easy to fool.

See how your level of self-awareness affects you and your relationship:

1. Understanding how you come across to others can be very useful in your relationships. Unless you've

put substantial work into examining yourself and your behavior, others don't view you the same way you view yourself. Your partner isn't getting the message you think you're sending.

- You're a more effective and accurate communicator when you're able to accurately predict how others will perceive your words and actions.

2. Self-awareness provides a foundation for understanding your emotions and yourself. When you lack self-awareness, your perception of reality is off. You can't make effective decisions in your

relationship unless you have a foundation of reality to work from.

- Self-awareness includes awareness of your emotions. This includes knowing the triggers for your positive and negative emotions.
- When you know your triggers, you have a lot of control over how you feel. You can set yourself and your relationship up so that you experience pleasant emotions a lot more frequently than negative emotions.

3. It provides the possibility of acting proactively instead of reactively.

Having a general awareness of your emotional state gives you the opportunity to respond more appropriately and intelligently.

4. You take fewer things personally.
Self-awareness provides some healthy distance between you and your emotions. You can view your flaws more dispassionately. You understand that your reaction to things is something that you do, rather than something that you are.
 - Having a thicker skin can be useful in many relationships. When you understand that you sometimes say and do things you don't really mean, you also come to understand

that others can behave in a similar way.

5. Your errors become a tool for positive change. Self-awareness makes your mistakes and misjudgments apparent. You can then use those errors as a way of improving yourself.

- You can't fix what you don't identify. Self-awareness allows you to identify your mistakes. This is great for your relationship! Imagine making a relationship mistake and then becoming better, stronger, and more capable from it. Your partner

will be grateful!

6. You're more present. Self-awareness requires attention. You're not self-aware when you're daydreaming or otherwise not present in the moment. Putting an emphasis on self-awareness keeps you grounded in the present moment.

- This is great for your relationships, too. It allows you to notice what's happening with your partner in real time.

How self-aware are you? There are very few people that can accurately consider themselves to be self-aware. It takes a lot

of attention and work to know yourself and understand how others view you.

It's not always pleasant to discover more about yourself, but it's necessary if you want to have the best relationship possible.

“We define emotional intelligence as the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions.”

– SALOVEY AND MAYER

Build Self-Awareness

How does one become more self-aware?

You must be deliberate and courageous.
You might not like what you find, but understanding yourself provides the possibility of making positive changes.
Your relationship is worth the effort!

Use these strategies to increase your self-awareness and benefit yourself and your relationship:

1. Know your values. The first step to gaining self-awareness is to become aware of your values. Take

all the time you need to think about and list your values. Avoid simply regurgitating the values you developed as a child.

- Question and analyze your values. Create a list that represents who you are and what you believe at this time in your life.
- Analyze how you spend your time compared to your values. Are you living your values? What would a casual observer guess to be your values based on your words and actions?

2. Know your relationship goals. What are your goals for your relationship? Do you want to get married? Do you want to have children? Where do you want to live? What do you want your relationship to look like?

- When you know your goals, you have a better understanding of what you need in a partner. Life will be very challenging if you want to skip having children and live in the city, while your partner wants to play homesteader in a rural setting with seven kids.

3. Track your emotions. Maintain a constant awareness of your

emotional state.

- Just pay attention and notice when your emotions shift. When they shift, record the reason. What happened right before your emotional state changed? What was said? What were you thinking?
- Pay extra attention to your strong emotions. What led to you feeling exceptionally good or bad? Identify your triggers for these strong emotions.
- You can learn a lot about yourself just by paying

attention and recording.

- Avoid judging your emotions in the moment. Just notice that you're jealous, annoyed, or elated, and understand why.

4. Take a bird's eye view. When you have interaction with anyone that doesn't go according to plan, revisit that situation in your mind. Imagine that you're an invisible bystander just taking it all in.

- What do you think while watching and listening to yourself? Do you think your actions and words were received the way you

intended? What could you change to make things go more smoothly next time?

5. Review your day. At the end of each day, do an overall review.

- How did you spend your time?
- What did you enjoy?
- What did you dislike?
- Did you lose your temper? If so, why?
- What was the best thing that happened to you? What was

so great about it?

- What was the worst thing that happened?
- What would you change about the day?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- How did you do in your relationship today? What did you learn about your partner? What could you have done better?

6. Ask a friend for insight. It might be challenging to find a friend willing to give you an honest opinion but

beg if you must. Make it clear that you need to know the truth so you can make some positive changes in your life.

- Ask your friend how others perceive you. Ask how someone else would describe you.

Self-awareness is simply paying attention and increasing your understanding of yourself. Self-awareness is ultimately a habit applied over a long period of time. While it can take a decade to truly know yourself, you can make huge strides very quickly!

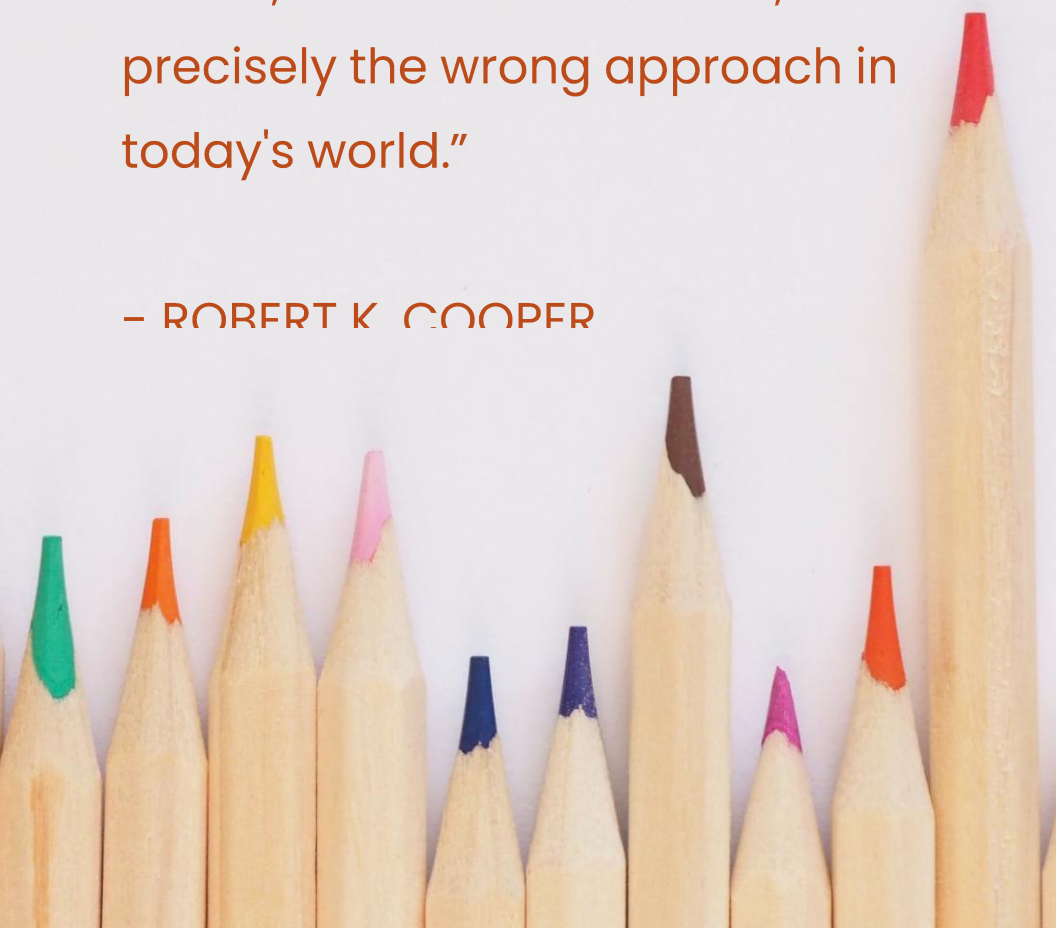
Self-awareness isn't for the weak! It's not always pleasant to learn about yourself.

We lie to ourselves so we can salvage a little self-esteem. The truth is that we're naturally oblivious to ourselves. Most of us don't have an accurate opinion of how the world views us.

Knowing yourself will boost your emotional intelligence and enhance your relationship.

“If we lack emotional intelligence, whenever stress rises the human brain switches to autopilot and has an inherent tendency to do more of the same, only harder. Which, more often than not, is precisely the wrong approach in today's world.”

– ROBERT K COOPER



REGULATION

It's not enough to just notice and understand the triggers for your emotions. It's also important to regulate yourself.

For example, it's great that you know you're becoming furious, but do you have the self-control and the necessary skills to:

- Contain your emotions?
- Avoid acting impulsively?
- Make good decisions?
- Know when to walk away?

There are two types of self-regulation:

1. Emotional self-regulation. The ability to control or influence your emotions.
2. Behavioral self-regulation. The ability to make decisions and act in your long-term self interest in accordance with your values.

Self-awareness is the first step to self-regulation. For our purposes, we're going to define self-regulation as the ability to choose your emotional or behavioral response.

Let's consider a few examples of poor self-regulation:

- Impulsively quitting a job because your boss upset you

- Suddenly giving up on your dreams after years of hard work
- Eating after you're no longer hungry
- Skipping the gym after making plans to go
- Eating unhealthy food
- Telling off someone, such as a boss, that has some control over your future
- Calling up an old flame when you know you shouldn't
- Using drugs or alcohol as a way of making yourself feel better
- Procrastination
- Staying up late when you know you need to get up early
- Spending money poorly
- Unnecessary spending when you have a goal to save

If your ability to regulate your emotions and behavior are poor, it will have negative consequences in your relationship. This is easy to see. It's not hard to cause damage to your relationship when you have little control over yourself. Your relationship can't be consistently better than your ability to manage yourself.

"Some people think only intellect counts: knowing how to solve problems, knowing how to get by, knowing how to identify an advantage and seize it. But the functions of intellect are insufficient without courage, love, friendship, compassion, and empathy."

– DEAN KOONTZ

Enhancing Your Ability to Self-Regulate

Just as you can learn to play tennis or to play the piano, you can learn to regulate your emotions and behavior. This is a very powerful skill that can make your life better in countless ways. We're our own worst enemies. Self-regulation allows you to turn yourself into your greatest ally.

Use these activities to learn how to manage your emotions and the resulting behaviors effectively:

1. Meditation. Meditation is a powerful tool with many wonderful benefits.

One of the greatest benefits that meditation has to offer is the ability to self-regulate and provide self-awareness. Meditation requires monitoring yourself and returning your attention to a focal point.

- Meditation helps you to notice when your attention strays. This ability extends to noticing when your emotions are getting off-kilter.
- The ability to maintain, and return to, a meditative state is great practice for bringing your emotions back in line,

too.

- There are countless resources for creating a meditation practice. Find a few and get started. Just 20 minutes a day can change your life.

2. Mindfulness. Mindfulness is simply non-judgmental awareness. Mindfulness is a pathway to seeing life as it really is. You're staying in the moment and maintain an awareness of your emotional state. It provides a way to observe your emotions without becoming too involved with them.

- Practice mindfulness by keeping your attention on the

simple tasks you perform each day. Showering, folding laundry, driving to work, and washing dishes are a few examples.

- Stay aware of your thoughts and emotions throughout the day.

3. Get sufficient sleep. It's been shown that you're more prone to making poor decisions when you don't get enough sleep. You're also more likely to be impulsive and have less control over your emotions.

- Experiment and determine your sleep requirements. Your relationships are bound to be

happier for the both of you if you're both getting enough sleep.

4. Eat a healthy diet. Processed foods can be detrimental to your energy levels and your ability to focus. Sugar can also be your enemy when you're trying to regulate your thinking and behavior.

- You already know what's healthy and what isn't. Getting yourself to eat a healthy diet can enhance your ability to self-regulate.
- Keep track of the foods that make you feel slow, sluggish, distracted, or affect your

mood in a negative way.
Avoid these foods in the
future.

5. Exercise regularly. Exercise reduces anxiety and can provide a healthier perspective on life. It's easier to manage yourself when you feel fit, healthy, and relaxed.
6. Build your self-confidence. You think and act in a more predictable manner when your self-confidence is high. You're less concerned about what others think. This makes it easier to stay true to your values and stay focused on your goals.
 - When you're not feeling good about yourself, you're more

likely to do something silly to make yourself feel better.

- Think positive thoughts. Dress nicely. Be kind. Remember your successes. Stand proud and tall. Build your skills. Achieve a few small goals. These are all simple things that can boost your self-confidence.

7. Practice self-soothing. The vast majority of your poor decisions and choices are the result of feeling bad. If you had an effective way of making yourself feel better, you wouldn't have to do something counterproductive to lift your mood.

- If you can learn to self-soothe appropriately, you don't need to rely on food, drugs, alcohol, or casual sex as coping mechanisms. You'll also be less likely to act out or make impulsive decisions.
- Investigate non-negative ways to enhance your mood. You might try thinking positive thoughts, exercising, guided meditation, visualization, writing in a journal, deep breathing, listening to music, or taking your dog for a walk.
- Just sit with your negative emotions. Notice how you

experience them. Where do you feel the emotion in your body? How would you describe it? Now, just observe it. In time, it will dissipate.

- When you can self-soothe, you don't have to rely on your partner as much. This creates less strain on your relationship. You're also less likely to say or do something you'll regret later.

8. Practicing self-discipline. When you know what needs to be done, it's great if you can actually get yourself to do it! Self-discipline is something you can learn, and you learn it by forcing yourself to do

things you don't particularly want to do.

- Make a list of a few things you know that you should do but don't feel like doing. Pick the easiest thing on the list and just do it. Avoid thinking about how much you don't like doing it. Just keep your attention focused on performing that task.
- Once you've completed the task, give yourself a pat on the back. Acknowledge that you have self-discipline. You just proved it to yourself.

- Self-discipline can be very useful in a relationship. It decreases the likelihood of cheating. It increases the likelihood of having those challenging, but necessary, conversations.
- It also allows you to fulfill your promises to your partner, even when you're not in the mood. Self-discipline makes you more reliable!

9. Take a long-term perspective.

Before opening your mouth or making any other type of decision, ask yourself if you're considering the long-term consequences of your options. It can feel good to yell

at your partner or to give your boss a piece of your mind. However, that's a short-term perspective.

- Ask yourself what is the best decision that you can make for the future. You'd probably be better off if you started looking for a new job instead of quitting and stomping out of your workplace in a blaze of glory.
- A doughnut tastes great now, but a carrot would be better for you in the long-term.
- Those with a short-term focus struggle. Those with a long-term focus thrive. Your

relationship will be helped in multiple ways if you take a long-term perspective.

When you can manage yourself effectively, you open up a whole new world to yourself. You can accomplish much bigger goals and stop sabotaging yourself and your relationship. This is hard work, but worth your effort.

“Emotional intelligence is a way of recognizing, understanding, and choosing how we think, feel, and act. It shapes our interactions with others and our understanding of ourselves.”

– J. FREEDMAN

EMPATHY

Empathy is a primary component of emotional intelligence. Empathy is the ability to feel and demonstrate compassion for the feelings of others. It's not sufficient to be able to predict or to understand what others in your life are feeling. You must be able to respond appropriately.

True empathy requires a response that makes sense for the situation.

We all know this person: “Wow, it stinks that your dad died this morning. Remember that we're all meeting for beers tonight at Bill's Tavern. See you tonight. Later!”

This is a typical example of someone lacking in empathy. You'll struggle tremendously to have a successful and meaningful relationship if this is how you regularly operate in the world.

See how empathy can enhance your relationship in many ways:

1. Empathy feels good. If you give empathy a chance, you'll find that it feels good to help someone else. It's a wonderful boost for your self-esteem. Empathy can be one of the best feelings in the world.
2. Empathy helps to build the connection between you and your partner. When you are able to demonstrate to your partner that

you're there for them, it brings you closer together. Your partner is also more certain that you're a good match.

- Shared negative experiences have been shown to increase the bond people feel for each other. This is why people that share trauma experiences, such as war, tend to become and stay close.

3. Empathy encourages sympathetic behaviors. You're more likely to give help to your partner when you're empathetic. This is another way of strengthening the bond between the two of you.

- Imagine the opposite.
Suppose you were having a hard time with something, and your partner just blew you off. Would you feel greater closeness or distance in your relationship?

4. You feel more connected to others in general. When you have more meaningful relationships with others, it lessens the load that your intimate relationship has to carry.

- You can't expect your partner to be everything you need 24/7. It's unreasonable and unfair. It puts too much strain on your partner and your

relationship.

- Building strong relationships with a variety of people can help your intimate relationship to thrive.

Empathy is an important part of any relationship. There is such a thing as being too empathetic, and it's obvious when this occurs. If you're taking better care of everyone else than you are yourself, you should consider giving yourself more attention. There's not enough time in the world to be highly empathetic to everyone you meet.

However, your relationship can't thrive without empathy.

Reasons for a Lack of Empathy

Some people have a higher degree of empathy than others. Those with low empathy often struggle with relationships, and there are established reasons for a lack of empathy. Once you understand why you fail to display enough empathy to your partner, you can begin working on the cure.

A lack of empathy in an intimate relationship can often be traced to two possible causes:

1. Victim blaming. Many of us have a tendency to believe that people get what they deserve. While it is true that people do make mistakes and

often suffer for it, this isn't true as often as we tend to believe. Also, just because someone created a problem for himself doesn't mean he isn't worthy of empathy.

- Every year, there are parents that hop in their car and accidentally run over and kill a child. You could say, "Well, you should've checked to make sure your kids were out of the way before you backed up. It's really your own fault that your child is dead." Consider how you would feel if someone said that to you.
- Blaming your significant other and failing to show empathy

damages your relationship.

2. Cognitive bias. Have you ever noticed that you tend to blame your own failures on external factors? However, you usually blame the failures of others on their own shortcomings.

- When you talk about your own challenges, it's usually that your boss is a jerk, or you had bad luck, or you had terrible parents.
- When someone else is struggling, it's because they're lazy, hard to get along with, lack social skills, or make

poor decisions. Interesting!

- Give your partner the same benefit of the doubt you would give yourself. Of course, you can offer suggestions to avoid future failures, but do so delicately and at the appropriate time.

There are other causes for a lack of empathy when it comes to strangers, but those aren't relevant to our topic.

A universal cause of a lack of empathy are mental health issues. Those with sociopathy or psychopathy are largely incapable of feeling empathy. If you find yourself never feeling empathy for anyone, there's a good chance you might

be suffering from one of these disorders.
Consider seeking out professional help.

“Whenever you are about to find fault with someone, ask yourself the following question: What fault of mine most nearly resembles the one I am about to criticize?”

– MARCUS AURELIUS, MEDITATIONS

Build and Demonstrate More Empathy in Your Relationship

Being more empathetic can be a serious challenge for some. There are people that just don't care that much about others. Assuming you're not one of those people, you can develop your capacity to be more empathetic. Much of the issue is a lack of awareness for others.

It's interesting how much awareness plays a role in relationships. Self-awareness and awareness of others are pillars of positive relationships.

Try these techniques to enhance your empathy and your partner will blossom:

1. Spend more time helping others. Volunteer. Ask yourself what you can do to help the other people in your life. This will force you to ask yourself what other people need. This is a great way to develop empathy.
 - What does your partner need? Ask yourself this each day. You'll be surprised by the

effect it has on your relationship.

2. Become a great listener. You can strengthen all of your relationships just by becoming a better listener. It's a simple skill, but it's not easy to overcome your urge to tune out and think about what you want to say next.

- Practice keeping your eyes and your attention on the other person and keeping your mouth shut. It's a valuable skill!

3. Imagine yourself in the other person's shoes. Earlier, you were instructed to imagine how you

appear to others. Now, you're going to imagine what it's like to be someone else.

- Before reacting to someone that's struggling, imagine being in that same situation yourself. How would you feel? What would you want and need to hear from someone else so that you would feel better and be in a better position to move forward?

4. Meditate on the well-being of others. A recent study showed that meditating on the welfare of others increased empathy. This is something you can easily do in just

a few minutes each day.

- YouTube is full of guided meditations for “compassion meditation” and “loving-kindness meditation”. Find one that appeals to you and follow along.
- Specifically, target some of this time to feeling compassion for your partner.

5. Share your perspective. When someone shares something with you, be sure to share your perspective with them in an empathetic way.

- For example: “If I lost my job, I think I would be worried about the future, too. But I would also be excited that I had the chance to take a short break and find something more enjoyable to do for a living, too.”

6. Be willing to be vulnerable. Be willing to share stories, information, or feelings that show vulnerability. The more vulnerable you can be with others, the more vulnerable they’re willing to be with you.

- Of course, it’s important to be cautious. Avoid sharing too much unless you’re sure you can trust the other person. It’s

also important for you to be trustworthy, too.

7. Avoid making assumptions. Work with the information you're provided. Avoid the urge to assume you can figure out all the other facts you haven't been given. You'll be wrong more often than you think.

- Extend this courtesy to your partner, too. This is more challenging, because you know your partner well. However, it's harmful to your relationship to jump to the wrong conclusions. Give your partner the benefit of the doubt.

Women are naturally more empathetic than men, but that's not always the case. There are women that are very low in empathy. Regardless of where you fall on the empathy scale, your relationship will be stronger if you show more empathy towards your partner.

“The most fundamental aggression to ourselves, the most fundamental harm we can do to ourselves, is to remain ignorant by not having the courage and the respect to look at ourselves honestly and gently.”



Social skills are handy to have. They're also very necessary to have a happy relationship. Strong social skills benefit your career, social circle, and your intimate relationship. Having strong, healthy friendships is great for your relationship with your partner.

See how stronger social skills lead to a stronger relationship:

1. Social skills allow you to convey your empathy more effectively. You might be the most empathetic person in the world, but how well can you convey that empathy?
 - Empathy is an important part of emotional intelligence, so

social skills are naturally important, too.

2. Strong social skills can boost your income and vice versa. Financial issues can create a lot of stress in a relationship. Earning more money can make financial issues less likely to occur. When you have enough money in the bank, it's one less thing to worry about.

- You're both also able to pursue your hobbies and other interests. Two content people have a more stable relationship than two discontent people.

3. Strong social skills build your social circle. Remember, you can't rely on your partner to fulfill all of your emotional needs. There will be less strain on your relationship if others can fulfill some of your needs, too.
4. A healthy social circle will make you happier, and you'll enjoy your life more. The happier you are, and the more you enjoy your life, the happier your partner will be. It's good for both of you if you have other meaningful people in your life.
5. Good social skills boost your overall success in life. Social skills are universal. They hit nearly every component of your life. You'll enjoy more success in every part of your

life when you enhance your social skills.

- This makes your life easier, and you'll be more attractive to your partner. What could be better?

6. You can establish rapport and connect better when you have strong social skills. The ability to connect and establish rapport with people in your life is powerful. This includes the ability to connect with your significant other.
7. Your partner will be proud to be with you. If you're socially awkward, your partner might love you. But, it's easier to be proud and confident of

your choice in a partner if that partner is socially adept.

- You've dated people that you didn't want to bring to the company Christmas party. You don't want to be that person.

Do you consider yourself to have excellent social skills? Social skills might not seem to be all that relevant in your intimate relationship, but they are. The ability to interact appropriately and effectively with all types of people enhances your relationship with your partner.

A strong social network can provide stability and support to your primary relationship.

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

– LEO BUSCAGLIA

Build Your Social Skills

Your social skills and emotional intelligence influence each other. An increase in one will cause an increase in the other. Building better social skills can be challenging, because we’ve been interacting with people in a certain

fashion for decades. Shyness and social anxiety can also play a big part.

Of course, your ability to build your social skills is ultimately only limited by your commitment.

These strategies will help you to create the necessary social skills to take your relationship to the next level:

1. Ask open-ended questions. It can be hard to keep a conversation going if you ask questions that can be answered with one word. Ask questions that require an explanation.

- “What do you like about your job?” is better than “Where do you work?”
- When conversing with your partner, keep this tip in mind. Avoiding giving one-word answers and avoid asking simple questions. With the right question, you don’t need to do a lot of talking.

2. Learn more about the other person than you tell about yourself. It’s far better to appear fascinated by your conversation partner than to appear fascinating to them. Instead of trying to impress the other person, allow them to impress you.

- Talk more about the other person than you do yourself.
3. Give sincere compliments. Your compliments don't mean a lot if you're giving them out left and right and you're insincere. However, an honest compliment can go a long way.
- Make it a rule to give your significant other at least one sincere compliment each day.
4. Be reliable! Be trustworthy. Do what you say you're going to do. This might not seem like a true "social skill," but it can greatly impact your ability to interact with others. If

people can't rely on you, your relationships suffer.

- Can your partner believe that you'll follow through on what you say? This can affect your relationship significantly.

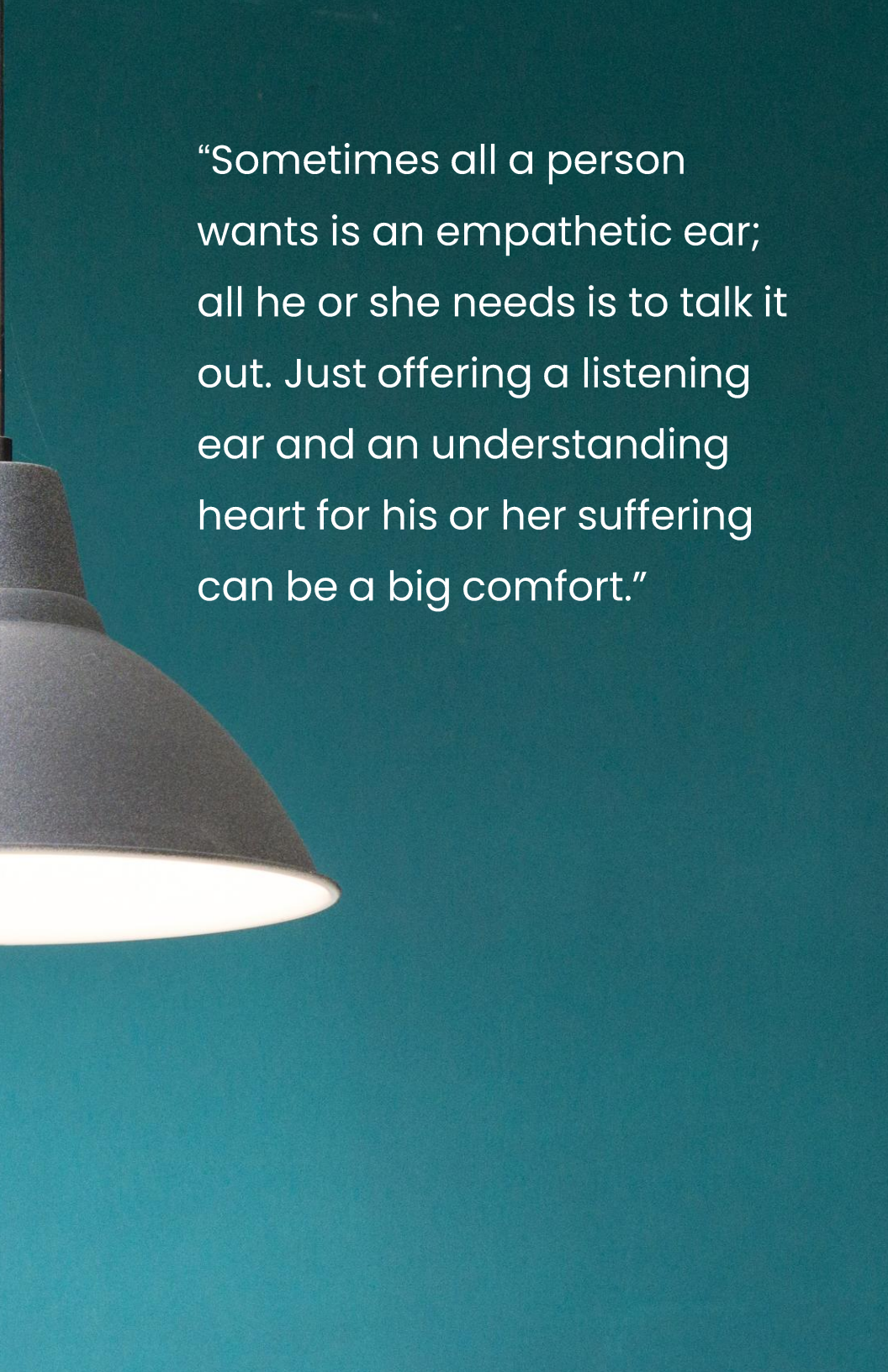
5. Practice. There are lots of people in the world. There are also plenty of resources for enhancing your social skills. There's no excuse for not practicing each day.

- Pick one thing to work on with your partner and begin honing that skill. It doesn't take long to notice the improvements you've made.

6. Listen. Listening is perhaps the most important social skill you can develop. Give your attention to the other person like they're the most interesting and important person in the world.
7. Body language. There are entire books on body language. Pick one up and put what you learn to use.
 - Notice the body language of others. Think about what their body language says to you.

Build your social skills and your relationship will grow. This might seem like an odd connection, but your social skills extend beyond your interaction with your friends and strangers.

Your intimate relationship requires social skills, too. A strong social circle provides support to your primary relationship. Your significant other can't be everything you need every minute of the day.

A dark teal background with a glowing lamp on the left. The lamp has a dark, conical shade and a bright white light source at the bottom. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

“Sometimes all a person
wants is an empathetic ear;
all he or she needs is to talk it
out. Just offering a listening
ear and an understanding
heart for his or her suffering
can be a big comfort.”

Emotional intelligence has a great influence on your career, success, friendships, and intimate relationship. Unlike your intelligence quotient, your emotional intelligence is malleable. You can improve it if you're willing to expend the time and energy.

The four primary components of emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills.

Enhancing these four attributes will allow your relationship to breathe, grow, and reach its full potential.

However, knowledge isn't enough. Make a plan to work on each of those four

categories. Start with your weakest area and make some progress before spending your time and attention on one of the other areas.

Personal growth is challenging work, but the rewards are considerable. You're making yourself more powerful and capable when you increase your emotional intelligence. You'll be surprised by how much easier life – and your most important relationship – become.