

# Emotional Intelligence in Relationships

Matthew N. O. Sadiku<sup>1</sup>, Olaniyi D. Olaleye<sup>2</sup>, and Sarhan M. Musa<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Roy G. Perry College of Engineering, Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, TX, USA

<sup>2</sup>Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs, Texas Southern University, Houston, TX, USA

**Abstract:** Emotional intelligence is a social capacity that plays an important role in our relationships. Groundbreaking studies on EI and relationships indicate that improving emotional intelligence leads to better health and stronger relationships. We know that having successful friendships and romantic relationships brings great benefits in health, wealth, happiness, and longevity. This paper focuses on the role of emotional intelligence in relationships.

**Keywords:** Emotion, Emotional Intelligence, Relationship, Family

## I. INTRODUCTION

As our society continues to evolve, we are becoming more informed, more educated, more knowledgeable, and 'smarter'. In a multicultural society, social awareness is crucial because it plays an important role in how we relate to others and understand social differences. Whether in the United States or elsewhere in the world, dealing and relating with people is difficult. Whether it is one of your co-workers, your friend, your sibling, or your spouse, you need to be emotionally present in order to respond attentively and appropriately.

Today, emotional abilities are considered to be important for social interaction because emotions serve communicative and social functions. Emotions are at the core of human interaction and relationship. Emotion is an evaluative response, with a positive or negative feeling. As illustrated in Figure 1, positive emotions include joy and happiness, while negative emotions include anger, sadness, pain, frustration, and depression [1]. We can use our emotions to channel energy towards tasks and goals that are in the best interest of the relationship.

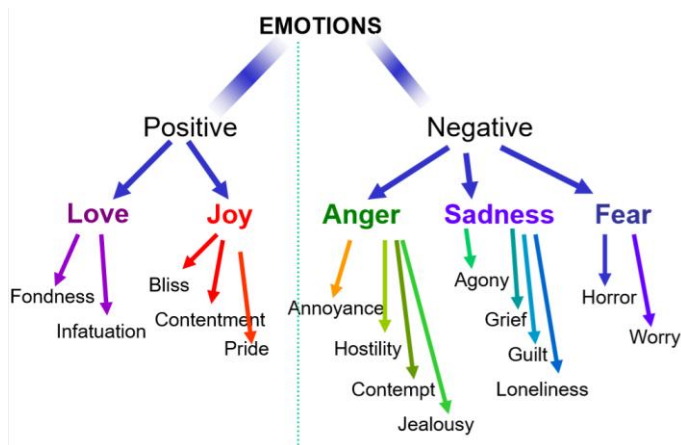


Figure 1 Different kinds of emotions [1].

## II. CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI), measured as a set of abilities, has received a widespread international attention. Its promotion has attracted the attention of the business world, the healthcare sector, and academic community. The most successful people are those who have a high EI. A person with a low EI has difficulty managing their emotions [2].

Emotional intelligence (EI), also widely known as emotional quotient (EQ), describes a person's ability to be aware of, control, and express emotions in a healthy manner. Some experts even claim that EI can be more important than IQ. A person's success in life largely depends on the emotional intelligence (EI) as well as the intelligence quotient (IQ). The relevance of emotional intelligence (EI) to various aspects of our life has been investigated during the last two decades both within and outside the field of psychology. EI has been identified as a factor in success in life, in the workplace, business, and relationships.

The five elements that characterize emotional intelligence were suggested by Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist who helped to popularize emotional intelligence [3].

1. *Self-Awareness:* Emotional intelligence in the workplace begins with the individual and becoming self-aware. Socrates' advice "Know thyself?"
2. *Self-Regulation:* As you become aware of your emotions, you are able to stay calm and direct your behavior towards achieving a positive goal.
3. *Motivation:* This is an ability to pursue goals with energy and persistence. Here is intrinsic energy to continue improving oneself and the business.
4. *Empathy:* This requires that you postpone your agenda and really tune into to what someone else is feeling.
5. *Social Skills:* Social skills are necessary to guide people effectively in a specific direction and influence them. They are highly valued in the workplace because they lead to better communication and job performance.

Thus, emotional intelligence is a combination of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, as shown in Figure 2 [4]. These attributes can be taught, learned, and practiced so that you can increase your EI.



Figure 2 Five components of emotional intelligence [4].

Emotional intelligence can help people to manage their relationships more effectively. It promotes healthy relationships by reducing stress and developing self-esteem. It is essential for long-term relationship. Training is the best way to learn, develop, and improve your EI skills.

### III. EI IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIP

There are different kinds of relationships that people get involved in. These include roommate relationship, employee–employer relationship, workplace friendship, a romantic relationship, parent-child relationship, sibling relationships, social relationship, religious relationship, etc. The main ingredients of a healthy relationship include trust, honesty, communication, emotional maturity, and emotional intelligence. Many relationships have been ruined by blame and shame. No relationship can be sustainable if it is emotionally starved. Therefore, improving emotional intelligence skills may be pivotal for saving a relationship. Thus, the following three factors are important factors of a healthy relationship.

First, you need emotional maturity. Emotional maturity is the ability to handle situations without escalating them. Mature people do not blame others for their problems. They accept full responsibility and accountability for their actions. They are always calm and think carefully before they speak. They know how to deal with anger, control negative thoughts, process constructive criticism, and deal with conflict.

Second, you need to build EI. Building emotional intelligence is hard, but it is a great way to improve how you relate with others. Emotionally intelligent people understand these basic things [5]:

1. They can reason with their emotions and read others' emotions.
2. They can understand and regulate their own emotions.
3. They understand that their thoughts create their emotions, and that facilitating and controlling thought has the ability to decrease the power of their emotions.
4. They people understand the connection between their actions and other people's emotional reactions. They respect boundaries.
5. They know how make good decisions about their lives, who to marry, and how to handle problems with an employer.
6. They are pro-active rather than reactive.
7. They are better at taking perspective and self-monitoring.

Emotionally intelligent and emotionally mature people are able to create healthy and lasting relationships. A factor that determines if any relationship (romantic or friendship) will be successful is the compatibility of two individuals' levels of emotional intelligence.

Third, communication is very important in any relationship, especially in a marriage. It is often the missing link in unhappy marriages [6]. Communication is a gift as well as an art that can be worked on. If properly mastered, communication can serve as a stepping stone towards a more emotionally intelligent relationship. EI impacts the way we communicate in our relationship. In other words, the way we communicate with each other indicates whether or not you or your partner is emotionally intelligent?

When people lack in these three areas, it can lead to a breakup in relationship. People with low EI tend to believe that the

world is against them. They are typically self-centered. Individuals with high EI have strong networks of friends and acquaintances. Someone has suggested that [7]:

Self-Esteem + Emotional Intelligence + Communication = Relationship Satisfaction

### IV. EI IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

An interpersonal relationship is the ability to understand others, cooperating, communicate and connecting with them. It could be relationship between roommates at college, colleagues at work, business partnership, friendship, family relations, romantic relations, etc. How difficult each of these relationships is may depend on how important it is to you and how long you have been in it. However, we can improve our interpersonal relationships. Emotional intelligence helps in building interpersonal relationships. EI skills help people to keep satisfying relationships with others. Since the skills cannot be compartmentalized, if you improve emotional intelligence at work, it will help you at home. Figure 3 shows some interpersonal skills that will help interpersonal relationship [8].



Figure 3: Interpersonal skills [8].

High emotional intelligence helps a person in many ways: better job performance, working better in teams, increased creativity, retention at work, and accepting change. It makes us more empathetic towards our colleagues and helps create a friendly atmosphere in the workplace. Emotionally intelligent people often enjoy better interpersonal relationships at workplace and at home. They are also more cooperative, get along better with others, and have better social skills. In the corporate world, an emotional intelligence employer knows how to engage with his or her employees.

Lack of emotional intelligence affects every aspect of one's life. Because they lack the basic social skills they have trouble holding down jobs, difficulties maintaining friendships, and hard time sustaining long-term relationships. We know the co-worker who blames others for their fault and never takes responsibility for their behavior.

### V. EI IN FRIENDSHIP RELATIONSHIP

At the core of a good relationship is friendship. Emotionally intelligent friends respect each other and have feelings of deep mutual admiration and affection. They stand the test of time because they are friends who support and care for each other.

For example, workplace friendship is the interaction between two or more people for certain purposes at workplace. Good workplace friendship tends to enhance job satisfaction and job performance [9].

As friends, there will be moments of disagreements and differences in your relationship. Although blood may be thicker than water, people have limits. If you have tried it all, and there is no change, there is no reason to hang in there or continue the friendship. If you cannot be emotionally honest with your friend, find somebody else.

## VI. EI IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP

Managing a loving or romantic relationship is not easy. In dating, we are encouraged to find a partner who has assets (physical, money, and material). If we focus on looking for someone who's perfect, we set ourselves up for failure. Lost in their romanticized ideas of love, individuals often fail to realize that their lover does not function in an identical way. The relationship can quickly turn into nightmares if the two parties refuse to understand and accept another perspective. In fact, most of the grudges couples hold against one another are directly linked to emotional mismanagement.

How can we apply emotional intelligence in our romantic relationships? Emotional intelligence is the secret of lasting romantic relationships. Individuals with high EI tend to be better relationship partners. Therefore, couples must learn EI skills that will help them to be successful in their relationship. For a relationship to stay healthy, both partners need to grow together in their EI. You can use EI to strengthen your partnership, increase intimacy, stay connected, and build a marriage that lasts. EI will help you achieve deep intimacy, mutual kindness, real commitment, soulful caring, unconditional acceptance, and other things we dream of in intimate relationship.

Your spouse wants to be loved, cherished, and celebrated for who they are. Be prepared to work at your relationship. You can improve your loving relationship by practicing the following tips [10]:

- Maintaining a transparent communication, discussing and finding solutions to points of contention.
- Active listening and meaningful engagement with the inner worlds of one another.
- Before speaking, focus on the positives that could come from the conversation.
- Take time to consider the feelings as well as the words that you want your partner to hear.
- Light-hearted humor, which can relieve stress and making challenging situations easier to handle.
- Part of your acceptance comes from laughter.
- Use change as an opportunity to grow your relationship.
- Apologizing to one another when necessary.
- Forgiving one another when necessary.
- Sacrificing and letting go of certain things for the sake of the relationship.
- Taking care of and helping one another, encouraging interdependence.
- Relieve one another from the stresses of life and provide unconditional emotional support.
- Doing little things in an unexpected way, to show them that you care.
- Be grateful, by telling the other how lucky they feel they have one another.
- Praying together and for one another.
- Know what works best to calm you and your spouse down.

- Occasionally, plan a romantic trip, e.g. catch a flight to Orlando, Florida and visit the happiest and most magical place on earth.

Men and women differ in their levels of emotional intelligence. For men, we must start by removing the stigma of men showing emotion. Emotions are a natural and integral part of our humanity, which should not be blocked but harnessed. Emotional intelligent man values his wife, and cherishes her opinions and feelings. [11]. A woman with high EI makes a fantastic partner and is an asset to her husband. Communication is her second nature. Although, she is not perfect, she is smart and does a really good job in many ways [12]. Compromise is key when it comes to getting along with your partner.

## VII. EI IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

Families change and evolve with time. Today we have same sex couple families, adoptive families, multi-ethnic families, single parents, etc. Nothing can replace the family, where people are related by blood and marriage. Family member ought to be our closest allies, our greatest sources of love and support. However, a lot can go wrong in a family and members can end up feeling like enemies. This is why emotional intelligence thrives where other efforts at family harmony fail. EI puts you in control of your relationships with parents, children, siblings, in-laws, and extended family members. EI is an effective tool for bringing your family members closer. It will also help you run your family business if you have one. If you manage your business with emotional intelligence, your family business has a better chance to last.

The following ten tips will lead you closer to your family and emotional intelligence [13].

1. Take care of your health if you hope to take care of anyone else.
2. Listen if you expect to be heard. Lack of communication is the loudest complaint in most families.
3. Teach emotional choice. Model behavior that respects and encourages the feelings and rights of others
4. Teach generosity by receiving as well as giving.
5. Take responsibility for what you communicate silently.
6. Don't try to solve problems for your loved ones.
7. Make a lasting impression through actions.
8. Acknowledge your errors to everyone and say you are sorry when you hurt someone you love.
9. Discover what each person's unique needs are.
10. Be generous in expressing love.

Parenting has never been easy. It is hard to figure out how to raise emotionally healthy and intelligent people today. Children want to be loved and accepted. Emotionally intelligent parents are the best role models for their kids. Since emotional intelligence appears to be a strong predictor of success, parents are the most important people to teach these life-changing, world-changing EI skills to their children. Such emotion coaching parental effort produces kids who are physically healthier, do better in school, and get along better with friends. With practice, children improve their capacity for emotional intelligence. Teaching your children to trust and rely on you based on past experience is a sign of high IE.

## CONCLUSION

By increasing our emotional intelligence, we can recognize patterns and alter our behaviors accordingly. The set of EI

skills can be a serious game-changer in virtually every relationship of your life. Since EI skills cannot be compartmentalized, if you improve emotional intelligence in one relationship, it will help you in other relationships. Practicing EI skills in your relationships will make a better person, better employer/employee, better friend, better husband or wife, better parent, and better citizen. It will lead to greater satisfaction in life and will make you to be happier. To learn more about how to apply emotional intelligence in your relationships, consult the books in [14-19] and journals related to it: *Personal Relationships* and *European Journal of Personality*,

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### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Matthew N.O. Sadiku** is a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas. He is the author of several books and papers. His areas of research interests include computational electromagnetics and computer networks. He is a fellow of IEEE.

**Olaniyi D. Olaleye** is a project management professional. He is currently working towards a Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Environmental Policy at Texas Southern University with emphasis on urbanization and infrastructural sustainability.

**Sarhan M. Musa** is a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Prairie View A&M University, Texas. He has been the director of Prairie View Networking Academy, Texas, since 2004. He is an LTD Sprint and Boeing Welliver Fellow. His research interests include computer networks and computational electromagnetics.