

Emotional Intelligence in the Current Generation: A Silent Factor Shaping Our Lives



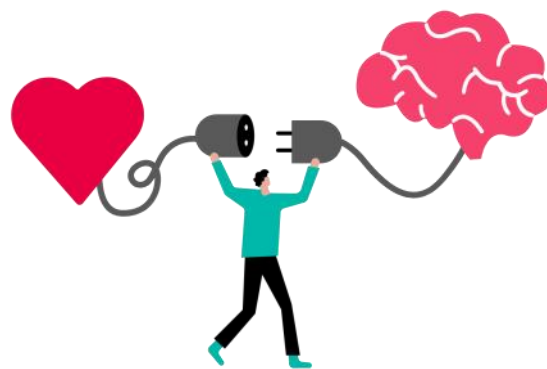
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Imagine this scenario: you accidentally set your alarm on your phone's calculator instead of the alarm clock. You wake up late, face heavy traffic, and risk missing an important meeting. Frustration builds, and your emotions take control—you may drive recklessly or carry negativity into the workplace. This is where Emotional Intelligence (EI) matters.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotion is a mental state associated with feelings such as fear, anger, and love (Gottfredson & Becker, 2023). Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, regulate, and monitor one's own emotions as well as those of others (Gottfredson & Becker, 2023; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).



The term was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer in 1990 and later popularized by Daniel Goleman's 1995 book *Emotional Intelligence*, which highlighted its importance for personal and professional success (Sudhakar et al., 2019). Goleman (1998, as cited in Sudhakar et al., 2019) defines EI as “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships” (p.16).

Why is Emotional Intelligence Important Today?





Once viewed as a “soft skill,” EI is now essential in our fast-paced world. While academic scores and technical skills are widely valued, EI often determines success or failure in school, work, and personal life (Audrin & Audrin, 2023; Singh et al., 2022).

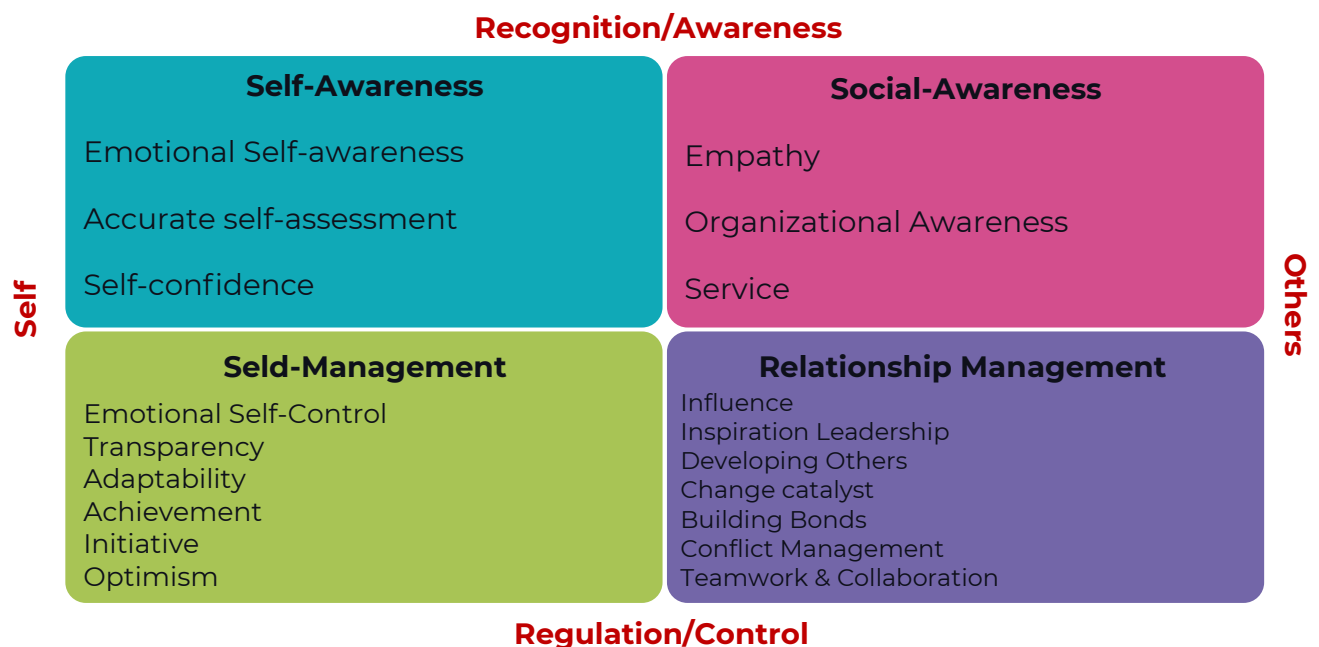
Today's youth are digitally literate and socially aware (Damean, 2023), yet research shows gaps in interpersonal and self-management skills (Evrensel-Inanç et al., 2022). Generation Z often expects workplaces to adapt to them, reflecting underdeveloped adaptability and self-regulation (Sudhakar et al., 2019; Todorova, 2024). Limited social interaction further challenges their ability to build relationships, raising risks of loneliness, a growing public health concern requiring EI-focused solutions (Annamalai et al., 2025).

Without EI, setbacks can become emotional roadblocks rather than growth opportunities (Emre, 2021). People may remain stuck in suffering, increasing risks of mental health issues (Bramson, 2024). Conversely, higher EI is linked to productivity, resilience, reduced depression, and greater life satisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2025; Evrensel-Inanç et al., 2022). Thus, EI deserves as much emphasis as IQ and academic achievement.

The Four Domains of Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman outlines four domains of EI: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Sudhakar et al., 2019).

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Self-awareness: recognizing one’s thoughts and emotions. For example, a student overwhelmed before an exam realizes their anxiety signals the need for better study planning.
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Self-management: responding rather than reacting. For instance, a student who loses unsaved work stays calm and adapts instead of panicking.
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Social awareness: perceiving others’ emotions and responding empathetically (Gola & Martin, 2020). A coworker noticing a colleague’s unusual quietness and checking in is a simple example.
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Relationship management: effectively managing interactions. A leader resolving conflict by calmly hearing both sides before deciding illustrates this domain.



Daniel Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence Quadrant
(Sudhakar et al., 2019).

Building Emotional Intelligence

EI can be developed with practice (Purushothaman, 2021). It should be integrated into education, homes, communities, workplaces, and digital learning (Machová et al., 2020; Todorova, 2024). Parents can model empathy, communities can run youth programs, and e-learning platforms can design simulations to teach skills like empathy and conflict management (Darvishi et al., 2022).

These abilities don't form overnight, they require strategies such as mindfulness, reframing, and problem-solving. Like academic knowledge, emotional skills demand time and effort but yield lifelong benefits (Learn to Develop Emotional Intelligence, 2021; The Heart-First Leader, 2024).

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence and intellectual skills together create a balanced human experience (MacCann, 2020; Purushothaman, 2021). EI shapes resilience, relationships, and overall success. To raise not only smart individuals but wise, emotionally grounded leaders, EI must be prioritized alongside IQ.

Take a quick 2-minute, 10-question EI self-assessment here:

Password:
iknowmyemotions



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