

# Introduction to Emotional Intelligence

Most of us grew up with a limited view of what it meant to be intelligent. We thought about those tests they gave us in school at the end of the year and the grades we earned. We thought about vocabulary words or math skills or reading comprehension. We took for granted that intelligence was important. And it is. We knew what IQ was about. But what about EQ? Emotional quotient, or EQ, is a measure of another form of intelligence. Intelligence is broader than we once thought and extends far beyond book learning or innate ability; it includes how we understand and use our emotions and relate to others to produce positive outcomes. The more we learn about emotional intelligence or EI (which is what EQ measures), the more we understand that well-developed EI may predict our future success and satisfaction better than our “book” intelligence or grades in school. Chapter 19 in *The Student EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Academic and Personal Success* (Stein, Book, & Kanoy, 2013) outlines the many benefits of EI to students in academic settings. And the influence of EI is equally important in predicting our personal and professional success.

Maybe you already knew how important EI is and that's why you're taking this class or participating in this workshop. Or maybe it's a requirement. Either way, if you are motivated (that in itself is a form of EI!), willing to adapt your behavior based on what you learn (again, another EI skill), and participate fully in all the leader asks (another EI-related ability), you will benefit. How? Here's one example. Schulman (1995) found that the EI skill of optimism was a better predictor of first-year students' college GPA than their SAT scores. And in a dissertation project involving 783 college students studied over a five-year period, Sparkman (2009) found the following:

- Social responsibility, impulse control, and empathy (all EI skills) were the three strongest positive predictors of college graduation.
- Self-actualization, social responsibility, and happiness (all EI skills) were positive predictors of cumulative GPA, but very high independence and interpersonal relationship skills were negative predictors of cumulative GPA (more about that later).

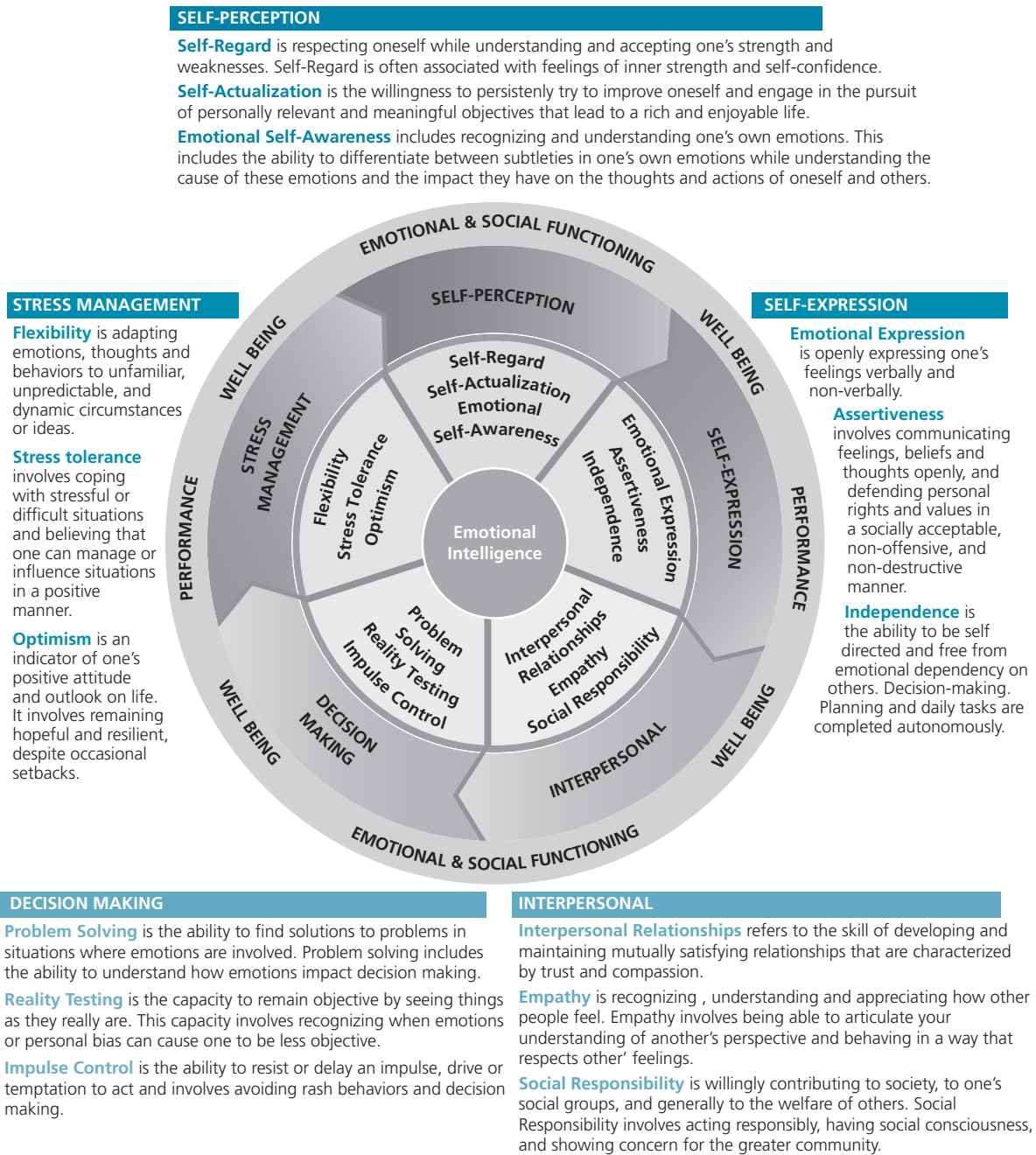
Finally, many employers seek graduates who can work well independently and in teams, control stress, solve problems, change directions when necessary, and relate well both to coworkers and customers. In fact, Shivpuri and Kim (2004) found that employers ranked interpersonal skills as the number one skill they wanted students to possess!

## Emotional Intelligence Overview

EI is “a set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way” (*The EQ Edge*, 2011, p. 13). Figure 1.1 shows the five realms and sixteen scales of EI. Consult *The Student EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Academic and Personal Success*

## Figure 1.1 Emotional Intelligence Defined

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(Stein, Book, & Kanoy, 2013) for additional information about each scale.

We assume you'd like to make good grades, have meaningful and healthy relationships, and graduate and begin your career. Developing your EI will help you accomplish those goals. So let's get started!

## ● A Word About EI Scales and Skills

The model of EI presented in *The Student EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Academic and Personal Success* and in this companion workbook identifies 16 scales. You can also think of these scales as *skills you can develop*. For example, assertiveness is both a scale in the EQ-i 2.0 model and a skill you can develop.

## ● *The Student EQ Edge: Student Workbook: An Overview*

This workbook serves as a companion piece to *The Student EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Academic and Personal Success* and thus covers the same EI scales in the same order. The workbook will help you to gain a better understanding of the EI scales, reflect about your behavior in those areas, and practice some skill development.

Chapter 2 provides you with case studies; observing others' behavior makes it easier to identify how important EI is in our daily lives.

**Self-Perception**—In Chapters 3–5 you will gain a greater understanding of who you are, your strengths and limitations, how you process and reflect about your emotions, and how well you have identified meaningful goals and activities for your life.

**Self-Expression**—Chapters 6–8 will help you understand how effectively you express your emotions, whether you can be appropriately independent in various situations, and how assertive you are.

**Interpersonal Relationship**—Chapters 9–11 will help you understand how well you connect with others, how well you understand and connect with others' emotions, and how much you try to contribute and cooperate to make things better for everyone.

**Decision Making**—Chapters 12–14 cover your decision-making skills. How well do you assess the facts in a situation without over- or underemphasizing them? How do your emotions

affect the way you view situations and how you problem solve? Do you problem solve effectively when you are emotionally charged? And can you maintain control over your impulses in a variety of situations so that you think before acting?

**Stress Management:** Chapters 15–17 will help you understand how well you cope with stress. Are you able to remain internally calm and focused when stressed out? Are you able to change your behavior when circumstances change, or does change stress you out? Do you remain optimistic even when you confront obstacles?

**Well-Being:** Chapter 18 examines your happiness and overall well-being and how that is influenced by some of the topics covered earlier.

## ● Why Reflection?

Each activity ends with some questions that will help you reflect about what you have learned. Reflection improves academic performance and can be graded based on the depth of your analysis and the quality of your insights. High-quality reflection will help your course grade, but even more important, it will help *you!*

Consider three possible responses to a question that appears in Chapter 3 of this workbook: “What concerns do you have about developing emotional self-awareness?”

*Sarah:* “None; I think it will be fun. I love doing exercises and finding out more about myself. It’s always interesting to see how I compare to other students.”

*Carlos:* “I don’t like talking about my feelings. My girlfriend always wants me to do more of that. I don’t understand what the big deal is about emotions.”

*Aisha:* “I sometimes find it hard to talk about my feelings. But if I become more aware of my feelings and what causes them, maybe I’ll feel more comfortable talking about them.”

Even though the lengths of the three answers are not different, their depth of reflection is very different. The first student talks only about how much she enjoys exercises. She's dodged the question. Carlos starts off with some reflection but then ends his statement by challenging the notion that it's an important question to consider. Aisha, on the other hand, takes stock of her emotions and behavior and reflects effectively about how things might change. Reflections don't have to be long or even too personal, but effective reflection will help you understand yourself better, ultimately leading to better outcomes.