

SCRIPT OF AN EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION TO INTRODUCE THE 2017 EI CAMPAIGN

October 2017 is the eleventh annual Emotional Intelligence Awareness Month. This campaign provides an excellent opportunity each year for informing groups like this that understanding our emotions better does matter! Emotional intelligence is truly a healthy mind development initiative. With healthy behavior being the number one factor that leads us to a more civilized society, developing better understanding about our emotions can be one of the greatest contributions toward a more emotionally stable world.

Emotional Intelligence Awareness Month is intended to assist us in realizing the importance of educating our society regarding the many helpful and harmful ways that emotions impact our lives. Such understanding helps us to govern our minds more healthfully. Unfortunately, traditional educational programs and life experiences do not necessarily teach us early enough or well enough to realize the mass of information that we need to know about our emotions— or healthy mind development, itself— for that matter.

Emotions affect most every thought, feeling, and behavior. If we don't learn to operate our emotions in an educated manner, they more naturally influence us, inappropriately. Allowing emotional intelligence to develop on its own or by chance is no different than leaving any other important aspect of our formal education to abstract ways of learning.

The theme for this year's Awareness Campaign highlights the need for a well-designed blueprint to develop healthier minds. Emotional intelligence is that blueprint, because it is meaningful to everyone, regardless of spiritual, racial, or philosophical backgrounds.

The concept of *emotional intelligence* was first introduced in 1995 by author Daniel Goleman in a revolutionary best-seller entitled, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than Our IQ*. This work became the most widely read social science book in the world after just seven years. Today you will find thousands of websites about *emotional intelligence* and *healthy mind development* on the Internet.

Intelligent emotional conduct has long been considered to be important and honorable behavior by various cultural philosophies and religion, helping people along the way to become more emotionally civilized. Generation after generation has shared such wisdom and guidelines on this subject—commonly referred to as ethics, morals, manners, virtues, or religious precepts. So, what's new and different about the modern-day study of emotional intelligence?

1. It places the purpose and criteria for emotional intelligence in an extremely meaningful research perspective for everyone— regardless of their spiritual or cultural background.
2. It provides more comprehensive insight into the scope and depth of such wisdom and guidelines.
3. It emphasizes more clearly that through our own intellect we can outwit damaging emotional sensations that adversely affect us.
4. It helps us to recognize that we can comprehend (and need to know) much more about our minds, particularly our emotions, than has traditionally been possible to learn in the past, or even thought necessary.

Thus, the study of emotional intelligence teaches us from a less controversial perspective about healthier and safer ways to apply our minds.

Personally, our emotional development plays an incredible role in building the overall power of the human mind. Almost every decision, choice, action, or reaction we experience involves an emotional element. Educating ourselves emotionally can reduce a myriad of frustration as we learn to better identify, qualify, and reject ill-reasoning.

Emotional intelligence (EI) training improves our ability to learn and succeed. We develop healthier relationships by more cautiously avoiding self-centered indulgences, dishonesty, and under-educated opinions. Thus, improving EI provides a healthier structure for our thoughts, communication, and behavior, thereby making life much more meaningful and balanced, as well as a lot less stressful.

Developing better understanding of our emotions also enhances our personal and professional relationships, as well as more worldly kinships.

Applying EI reduces government costs from a number of social problems. With increased understanding, emotionally, we can reduce crime, unemployment, divorce, cultural bias, accidents, illness, addictions, carelessness, wastefulness, neglect, abuse, and even world tension. What a myriad benefits we have to gain when we embrace emotionally intelligent ideals— the psychological basics of healthy mind development.

The evolution of humanity has relied heavily on one particular profession to improve our understanding of almost every subject imaginable. That profession is research.

The book, *The Craft of Research* tells us that “research is the source of most of what we all believe... and the most critical catalyst in the development of new ideas and better understanding in almost every realm of life.” *The Craft of Research* reminds us that “Today research is the world’s biggest and perhaps most important industry.”

Researchers have enabled us to live more knowledgeable, secure, and comfortable lives. Now behavioral science researchers are challenging us to build healthier minds and a behaviorally safer world. How many of us realize that, with technological advancements and increased research during the past twenty-five years or so, more has been discovered about this three pound mass in our heads than in all previous history? That’s incredibly substantial new understanding!

Physiologically, researchers tell us that the human brain is the most complex object in the universe. Yet their findings now stress that, even with all its complexities, the most important frontier in the whole universe to explore may very well be right behind our very own eyes!

In the 20th Century, behavioral scientists became much more familiar with the intricate circuitry, function, and dysfunction of this fascinating, human computing tool. They were able to identify and validate a vast number of factors that stimulates healthier development—as well as those that prevent it.

Through continued research, numerous psychological diseases and disorders have been named and defined, as well as maladaptive and dysfunctional behaviors — many of which have been plaguing humanity for centuries, I might add. Healthful treatments have been recognized through such research, and for some problems, cures discovered.

Technologically, the similarity that our minds have with computers has assisted behavioral researchers in better understanding. Various studies indicate that, just as in operating a computer while knowing only a few navigational functions can limit our capability, our limited understanding of efficient use of the mind is a prime reason that we operate the mind at between 2% and 10% of its real capability.

We know that special computer training has empowered those who intelligently navigate through many confusing software functions with ease. Doesn't it make sense that, by learning more about the intricate workings of our minds, we can more intelligently steer our thoughts and behavior?

We might also compare the ways we learn to improve our emotional intelligence to the manner in which we learn to become physically healthier. We know that understanding the effects of diet and exercise better equips us for developing healthier bodies.

SIMILARLY, BETTER AWARENESS OF THE EFFECTS OUR EMOTIONS HAVE ON OUR THINKING AND LEARNING ENABLES US TO DEVELOP HEALTHIER MINDS. (You may want to repeat this last profound sentence.)

Author and psychologist, Madeline Levine published a very enlightening book in 2012 entitled, *Teach Your Children Well*. In this work, she shares important findings. Notably that, (quote) "Researchers have found that the very characteristics that are most likely to encourage our children's emotional well-being are the same ones that will make them successful in the classroom." (end quote)

Psychologist Levine also explodes the myth that good grades, high test scores, and college acceptance should define the parenting endgame, and explains why values and coping skills matter more than grades, trophies, or fat pay checks. Dr. Levine is among many in the psychological field who advocates for education reform, student well-being, and parent education.

A child who learns little about the nature of emotions compares to a child who learns only part of the multiplication tables. No doubt, the child would have difficulty with such mathematical calculations throughout life; all too similarly, a child with little understanding of emotions will too easily miscalculate harmful influences and establish dysfunctional habits that lead to behavioral problems. After becoming adults and parents themselves, they may also too easily pass along these dysfunctional habits to the next generation.

IF WE ARE EVER TO ELIMINATE THIS CONTINUUM OF BAD HABITS, YOUNG PEOPLE MUST BE TAUGHT A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR EMOTIONS.

In another wonderful book titled, *The Growth Of The Mind*, Dr. Stanley Greenspan stresses definitively that *emotions*, not *cognitive stimulation* serve as the mind's primary architect. This is an obvious finding when we consider that almost every idea, decision, action, or reaction often involves a subtle psychological element.

FOR THE BALANCE OF MY TALK TODAY, I will clarify a few more of the benefits we acquire for improving the emotional architecture of our minds, and then share ways you can better understand and manage your own emotions.

Among the number of benefits from heightening emotional intelligence, include reducing emotional hardships, unhealthy behaviors, and unnecessary conflicts. With such clarity, society would witness less carelessness and wastefulness, obsessions and addictions, over-confidence and low self-esteem, as well as neglect and abuse.

Improving the emotional architecture of our minds has a positive effect on our general attitude and demeanor. By design, we can improve our outlook and sensitivity toward health, safety, and meaningful endeavors. We CAN learn to pay closer attention to life's purposeful measures by successfully managing our emotions. Such understanding helps us reduce misleading assumptions, exaggerations, denials, frustrations, and fears, as well as self-centered over-indulgences.

Let's take a look now at ways you can better understand and manage your own emotions. First, we must understand that there is a difference between accepting our immediate natural reaction to stressors versus applying our emotional intelligence to investigate whether there could possibly be a more civilized or healthier reaction.

In comparison, think of how a minor paper cut to a finger can immediately feel like a serious injury that requires stitches. Only when we measure the extent of the injury, intellectually, do we feel a sigh of relief. Similarly, too, without considering to reason with our emotional intelligence, we can treat a \$5 issue, emotionally, as though it is more like a \$100 or even \$1000 issue—and vice versa—we can treat a \$1000 issue as though it is a \$5 one.

We can also act similar to an animal that is not sedated while a veterinarian tries to take a splinter out of its paw—in just a little more complex situation.

We know that the animal can't reason intelligently enough, and the creature may bite the veterinarian trying to remove the splinter. An animal doesn't consider the further harm the splinter could create, nor does it have the intellect to recognize that the splinter is being removed in a medically effective manner.

Let me share a few common examples of situations that demonstrate how our natural defenses can be as inappropriate as that of less intelligent creatures. Consider how easily our minds can become uncooperative about doing something we don't want to do, even when it's a meaningful accomplishment. Think about how easy it is to make any exaggeration or assumption in defense of our own behavior.

Another way the mind can react inappropriately is by luring us into blaming others or stretching the truth without questioning whether we are being honest with ourselves. How often do we prematurely judge others with little investigation, by merely accepting our under educated opinions with too little inquiry?

The rise of Internet "Fake News" is also making investigation most important! Our quick assumptions can make our lives more troublesome than necessary and prevent us from overcoming more sophisticated emotional challenges. Thus, it is important to remember that self-honesty is as important to our emotional balance as our credibility is to our relationship with others.

Depending on time restraints, you may want to add the scripted Self-Awareness Speech linked from the EI Month Material's page here, or suggest that another person share that speech as a separate presentation during your event.

IN CONCLUSION, I hope you will remember that the primary architect of the mind is *emotion*. As such, the accuracy of our judgment relies upon our emotional intellect. Without emotional training, we may draw conclusions too prematurely or aggressively. We can, unfortunately, be too unguarded and accepting of unhealthy thoughts, just as easily as we accept eating unhealthy foods— and often similar to health consequences from poor eating habits— only after serious psychological consequences are we forced to accept wiser judgments.

Developing healthier minds requires us to comprehend how *nature* can influence our ideas, decisions, actions, or reactions each and every day— through our emotions. When we consider improving our emotional intelligence, we are more readily empowered to connect with our logical thinking process— allowing us to define what is more sensible and practical.

Thus, emotional intelligence training heightens our psychological senses for being more honest with ourselves, which in turn reduces the possibility of fretting about the wrong things—and in the wrong ways. With healthy direction, we can learn to pause and analyze what's appropriate to do whenever we get aggressive feelings toward others, rather than just naturally reacting in a hurtful manner.

In the larger picture of life, what we learn (and don't learn) about our emotions affects our very path through life— and what we do learn also helps us make this world a safer, healthier, and happier place. Indeed we CAN, emotionally, become better architects of our own minds!

I thank you for listening and hope this presentation has given you a glimpse of how crucial it is for us to educate children and adults alike about the helpful and harmful influences that affect this primary architect of our mind. Understanding emotions better does matter and is exactly what this *Emotional Intelligence Awareness Month* campaign is all about!

In some ways, we may think the achievements of the 20th Century created a tough act to follow. Yet, what stronger effects on civilization could we hope the 21st Century will bring, than improving the emotional architecture of our misunderstood minds.

I look forward to sharing more information during this campaign event—while helping you to improve your-- emotional intelligence capabilities.