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1 How to Use This EQ Self-Study Program

1C LESSON
How our Emotions Stifle Learning

This lesson reveals ways that nature stifles learning and emotional development. Nature's ill influence makes it impossible to attain a high level of emotional intelligence without scholarly direction, much akin to that of our formal education.

1C



"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist, lecturer, and poet. (1803 – 1882)

RECOGNIZING HOW EMOTIONS *STIFLE* LEARNING

Our 1B Lesson highlighted healthy ways that emotions nurture learning. Behavioral research warns us, however, that the mind's emotional development is influenced by both *nurture* and *nature*. The troubling tendencies of emotions have been explained by psychologists in numerous books authored over the past several years. Improving our comprehension of nature's ill influence can reduce our susceptibility to numerous emotional mishaps.

In a sense, the new understanding of the mind's natural tendencies has lifted psychologists' awareness from the depths of the emotional dark ages. They are now cognizant of how important it is for us all to examine emotional influences in more scholarly ways. Without such educated know how, emotions can too often seem justified, no matter how damaging.

Inadequate direction and too limited understanding have historically allowed new generations to continue developing dysfunctional and often harmful learning behaviors that otherwise could have been avoided. Even our own past learning experiences affect our current ability to learn. Past habits can either direct positive behaviors toward learning or disable, discourage, or disrupt the process. Knowing to watch for emotional influences aids us for intercepting stifling learning habits.

To nurture our mind's development, we could all study something comparable to an equipment operator's guide. An in-depth operator's manual for the mind would take up volumes and include not only specific directions and guidelines, but also a myriad of warnings, precautions, and troubleshooting techniques.

A complete manual would undoubtedly include the challenges and distortions noted in this lesson, and would also remind us that we must, at times, do what feels unpleasant, for the sake of health, safety, or other necessary priorities. EII's full program includes critical knowledge that any operator's manual for the mind would need to contain.

Recognizing how emotions stifle learning reminds us *that dealing with any learning issue can be challenging when we lack adequate understanding of emotions. Emerging from the emotional dark ages relates to our having better understanding and more power for managing and overcoming harmful emotional influences. We must remember that emotions are influenced by both nurture and nature. We can nurture positive behaviors or allow nature to discourage, disrupt, or disable our learning potential.*

GRASPING THE CHALLENGES OF *REGULATING* EMOTIONS

Throughout the 20th Century, thousands of ingenious gauges were invented to assist in regulating the safe and efficient operation of new machinery— a task that was otherwise impossible to monitor. Today, many of these gauges monitor the operations of sophisticated industrial equipment, as well as the vital apparatuses in our homes and automobiles. We also have such gauges as calorie counters, scales, and nutrition-labeling that help us monitor our health. To avoid minor problems or even downright catastrophes, we know that we must pay close attention to these gauges.

1C

Learning how to gauge our emotions is also required for better regulating them. When a person has only a superficial understanding of emotions, the broad scope of nature's influence allows the mind a far greater tendency to malfunction— more frequently than it should. Anyone with an emotionally under-educated background can experience difficulty in recognizing the many ways that nature is interfering with healthy mind development. Such a lack of understanding can be catastrophic.

We must surrender to the fact that healthy alternatives contribute to our very quality of life, yet are often more challenging to accept. To regulate our emotions healthfully, we must ingeniously create our own internal precautionary gauges. Below is a list of common ways we are challenged to regulate our emotions. You will find that extra effort to memorize this list will help you recognize and hopefully better regulate these challenges.

12 Challenges of Regulating Emotions

1. *We too easily fail to consider whether our feelings are inappropriate or caused by nature's ill influence.*
2. *We can be limited in EQ understanding and practice, causing us to be less conscious of ways we CAN regulate our emotions.*
3. *Some EQ guidelines are simple to understand, yet comprehensive and tricky to apply without a strategy and lengthy practice.*
4. *We can fail to recognize our ineffective or inappropriate behavior, which allows us to further develop unhealthy habits.*
5. *If we don't familiarize ourselves enough with important emotional guidelines, we tend to omit or forget necessary EQ direction.*
6. *There is a similarity between unhealthy foods and unhealthy thoughts. Both may feel very satisfying, yet cause serious problems.*
7. *Sometimes we must get downright angry with ourselves before deciding to practice healthier alternatives.*
8. *When in the midst of a stressful situation, it may take a stroke of enlightenment to identify nature's ill effect on our emotions.*
9. *The mind can too easily exaggerate a $10.00 issue in the "heat of the moment," making it feel more like a $1000.00 calamity.*
10. *We may practice unhealthy habits for so long that we become insensitive to the value of improving our EQ as a worthwhile endeavor.*
11. *We can too easily accept others inappropriate suggestions and mirror their poor behavioral role-modeling.*
12. *We must sometimes brace ourselves to manage potent emotions and don't realize such leverage is necessary or possible.*

Perhaps this list has revealed a few reasons why your own EQ learning has been challenging.

The challenge of regulating emotions reminds us *that just as gauges are required for safeguarding complex equipment, dealing with the complexities of the mind, in turn, requires similar internal gauges. Considering nature's ill influence on emotions, our having better internal precautionary guidelines for monitoring the mind may be a real lifesaver. Without such guidelines, we can more easily become complacent or overwhelmed. Emotional sacrifices can seem too difficult to bear.*

UNDERSTANDING NATURE'S ILL EFFECTS ON LEARNING



BOUNTIFUL HARVESTS
Result from knowing nature.

As mentioned in Lesson 1B, a horticultural student must determine what enhances bountiful harvests, while also controlling exactly what *inhibits* a garden's growth. Similarly, we must learn what enhances our mind's development, while at the same time, study ways for reducing the abundance of invading foes. Possessing the right repellents makes our job much easier.

1C

Please realize that the mind requires continuous watchful guidance. When applying our thinking, we should *remain* concerned about our mind's operation, realizing that negative emotional impact is multi-faceted— with a multitude of learning inhibitors. At first, our attention may slip from time to time. Similar as the task of sitting up straight while working busily at a computer, we can release our grip without realizing the subtle change.

12 DISTORTED Ways Nature Reduces EQ Learning Potential

1. When we don't adequately investigate for distortions, such limited scrutiny may cause a variety of ill or warped interpretations.
2. When we haphazardly forget or excuse our mistakes, learning from them becomes virtually impossible.
3. When we over-rate our creative license to do as we please, we tend to underestimate the resulting risk of problems and consequence.
4. When we don't grasp what is relevant to learn, we can easily over-emphasize the value of less important subject matter and spend little time on what's truly meaningful.
5. When we don't consider how easily we can become stressed over minor disappointments, such ill reasoning can prevent us from achieving major breakthroughs.
6. When we don't regularly prioritize meaningful concerns and address them, we can mistakenly quiet the conscience, thus becoming indifferent toward such responsibilities.
7. When we are driven by comfortable, yet poor choices, we easily avoid the sacrifices that are required of wiser options.
8. When we don't develop strong enough EQ skills, we can too easily set ourselves up for failure in many important endeavors.
9. When we overlook critical direction toward healthy outcomes, we more easily opt to ignore other quality direction in the future.
10. When we don't question the quality of our reasoning and honestly screen out inappropriate ideas, we become less guarded and more prone to accepting ill reasoning.
11. When we easily surrender to relief or self-gratification without trying to endure difficult yet healthier options, we can become impatient and less forceful against distortions.
12. When we are dishonest with ourselves and others, we may more readily distort information, thus reducing our ability to reason rationally.

Understanding emotions' distorted effects on learning reminds us *that nature allows us to stretch beyond healthy limits. We too easily fall prey to under reacting and postponing healthy agendas, avoiding meaningful choices, and neglecting timely maintenance. With nature's easy adverse influences combined with the complexity of nurturing healthy judgments, we must remain diligent to improve good learning habits and reduce poor ones.*

REDUCING NATURE'S ILL EFFECTS ON THE MIND

As mentioned earlier, an unsedated animal's natural reaction can make treatment difficult for a veterinarian. Similarly, nature's negative influence on human emotions can often create difficulties for accepting the very choices that would improve mind development. Left to our own whim, the mind will too easily gloss over important precautions.

Without adequate governance of the mind, we are more susceptible to learning important lessons the hard way. Just as there are many important precautions we must abide by to keep ourselves physically safe, we must learn to comply with a multitude of important precautions to keep ourselves emotionally safe.

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By not learning to *question* and *redirect* our thinking, emotions gain far too much power over the mind, contributing to many of our health problems, relationship issues, and other preventable heartaches. Lesson 4C will provide more in-depth direction for redirecting our thinking.

As mentioned in Lesson 1B, when we AREN'T STRIVING to learn, we are susceptible to develop more casual ways of thinking that allow us to: 1. Exceed tricky limits without concern, 2. Accept poor judgments without even considering wiser options, and 3. Choose to follow easier EQ guidelines, and ignore harder ones.

10 Necessary Precautions for Healthier Mind Operation

- ❑ *Take care in what you allow your mind to spend time doing, or what you permit your mind to convince you to do.*
- ❑ *Command and direct the mind to the best of your ability toward a higher level of accountability and self-management.*
- ❑ *Realize that the emotionally under educated mind has more difficulty recognizing and heeding subtle warnings.*
- ❑ *Watch that your mind doesn't become complacent so as to allow you to develop a fool-hardy attitude toward important priorities.*
- ❑ *Be careful not to think too casually or the mind may ignore critical direction toward healthy outcomes, including survival.*
- ❑ *Realize that to do as you please may be over-rated and jeopardize your relationship with others and the environment.*
- ❑ *Be aware that the mind has a tendency to forget our mistakes, as well as many important precautions and guidelines.*
- ❑ *Use care to identify particular ideas, issues, and actions that can adversely influence you.*
- ❑ *Realize that intelligent concentration on EQ learning equates to choosing wisely, while ignoring emotional interest to do otherwise.*
- ❑ *Be alert to monitor thoughts for validity: appropriateness, value, efficiency, and other healthful implications.*

Reducing nature's ill effects on the mind reminds us *that we must strive to better understand and practice necessary precautions. Developing the mind to a healthier level may be a complex endeavor. However, the journey along the way is quite rewarding when we strive for better understanding and stay mindful of the precautions.*

REDUCING EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN SOCIETIES

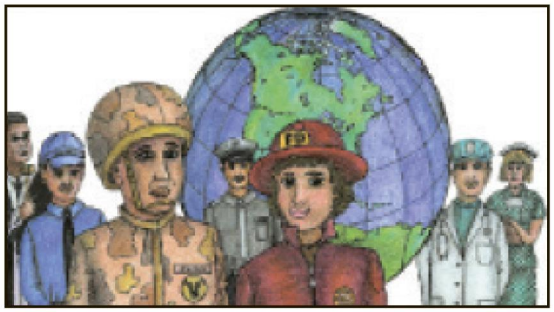
Individuals and societies will have much to gain by advancing beyond the emotional dark ages. Most of us have learned enough about managing our emotions to avoid criminal behavior and its obvious consequences. Yet, without acquiring sufficient emotional understanding, we are still susceptible to a myriad of other problems.

Our too limited understanding adversely affects the quality of our lives more than may have ever been considered. The study of emotional intelligence is known to decrease conflicts and improve relationships, as well as increase stability, continuity, and harmony in our lives.

By better educating ourselves regarding emotions, we can reduce everyday frustrations, depression, and dysfunction, as well as curbing neglect, abuse, divorce, and other everyday problems in society. We can mitigate unemployment, lawsuits, accidents, diseases, world-tension, wastefulness, and even criminal behavior. There have been needless costs to insurance companies, businesses, and governments because of the calamities caused by society's reduced psychological understanding. Learning more about ways we can manage ourselves emotionally really does matter to us all!

Through our overemphasizing cognitive stimulation (IQ) as a way of educating young minds, while at the same time underrating the importance of EQ, we have avoided the very education and practices necessary for realizing a behaviorally safer and more civilized world. Since almost every decision, choice, action, or reaction involves a psychological element, our stepping beyond the emotional dark ages en masse should eventually make a significant difference to the world.

1C



WE STRAIN THESE SERVICES NEEDLESSLY
Because we live in an emotionally under educated world.

By leaving our psychological development to chance in the past, we have experienced similar results as we would from leaving any other important aspect of our formal education to more primitive ways of learning. Just as children would have lifetime difficulty in arithmetic by not having practiced the multiplication tables, learning too little about the psychological aspects of the mind makes navigating through emotional obstacles much harder. We must be taught to recognize difficult-to-define emotional factors that contribute to ill reasoning and then learn what is required to stifle them.

The United States has more liberties than probably any other country in the world. Yet it also has an ever growing number of laws and other social guidelines that restrict our liberties to improve our safety and well-being, our relationships with others and the environment.

Reducing emotional problems in societies reminds us *of the many benefits. Better understanding of the mind's troubling natural tendencies helps us realize that the emotional illiteracy of generation after generation has caused centuries of unnecessary problems. By the end of this century, there is hope that the inhabitants of this planet may be better educated emotionally. No doubt, the future holds a more advanced psychological era for those who discover the wonders of managing their emotions successfully.*

"Those who have no desire to improve their EQ probably need to do so, more than those who truly wish to advance."

IMPROVING THE MIND'S *ARCHITECTURE*

The Neurosciences Institute in San Diego, California tells us that the human brain is not only the most complex organ in our anatomy, but also the most intricate object in our known universe. Nonetheless, each of us has had equal to an architect's responsibility in creating a sound structure to this complex computing phenomenon, no matter how little we have understood about it. With emotions being considered the most powerful force in the workings of the mind, understanding how to regulate its harmful and helpful emotional influences is crucial.

1C

We are already familiar with a long list of guidelines that can help us to survive and stay healthy. Yet we can too easily let our guard down, quiet our conscience, and ignore wiser options. Without intelligent leverage, nature's ill influences can discourage rather than boost our stamina. Only with intervention can we reduce the indifference that leads to lethargy, a rather sedentary feeling that is too easily rationalized and excused.

Christopher Reeve, the deceased Hollywood movie star, best known for his role as Superman®, spoke of his fear of lethargy as though it were *Kryptonite,* shortly after becoming a quadriplegic from a horseback riding accident in 1995. He recognized the importance of discovering exercises that he could still perform—even though paralyzed—that would prevent his mind and muscles from becoming lethargic and prone to atrophy.

Have you ever noticed yourself becoming less concerned with what interferes with your health and well-being, rather than addressing the problems head on? Could a lack of concern become your own emotional Kryptonite? Indifference to lethargy prevents us from paying attention and studying seriously what helps to improve the quality of our thoughts and behavior. Whenever we let our guard down, nature may easily convince us to avoid healthful actions, and intensify such poor choices in the future. Below is a list of ways our program will continue to assist you in reducing what stifles learning.

8 Ways We Teach You to Reduce Nature's Ill Influence on the Mind

1. ***You will learn to practice particular exercises that reduce indifference and lethargy thus improving overall attention to efficiency, safety, productivity, and conscience.***
2. ***You will learn how to identify and reduce misjudgments based on under educated opinions and biased reasoning.***
3. ***You will explore your thinking in a way that will reduce your susceptibility to missing or misinterpreting important criteria.***
4. ***You will study the symptoms of self-centeredness, so that you can reduce possible selfishness, unfairness, and apathy toward others.***
5. ***You will learn to consider self-honesty regarding your own inappropriate behavior.***
6. ***You will become familiar with symptoms of self-pity and conceit, so that you can more accurately assess and redirect such emotional exaggerations.***
7. ***You will learn to better recognize rebellious and self-righteous thinking patterns that have a tendency to increase carefree, dishonest, and devious behavior.***
8. ***You will participate in special activities that help you better manage anger, frustrations, and other social stresses for reducing unnecessary stress and conflicts.***

Can you recognize the ways such learning will improve your overall life?

Becoming a better architect of our own mind reminds us *that by striving to better understand emotional intelligence criteria and what influences emotions, we can improve the blueprint for a more balanced life. The more we learn about how nature distorts our thinking, the more empowered we are to avoid perpetuating damaging habits, to build healthier ones instead. The more we can discriminate between helpful and harmful reaction to emotions, the more success we have at applying our mind more healthfully. With quality training and practice, we can learn to become better architects/masters of our own minds.*

Similar to the vital requirements that engineers must follow for keeping us safe, learning, itself, has such requirements that must be followed. Unfortunately, little understanding of these requirements leads to inadequate concern and poor learning habits. When we clearly know the do's and don'ts and the effort necessary, we can more readily motivate ourselves to apply such requirements.

Without adequate knowledge, training, and encouragement, we can more readily tell ourselves that something is too difficult, frustrating, or uninteresting, rather than steadfastly plodding ahead, applying necessary pressure and self-initiative.

Thus, the learning involved in emotional growth and for keeping ourselves safe unfortunately requires hard choices. We must be able to motivate ourselves when we don't want to do important, yet difficult tasks. For an inspiring list of motivational self-talk mantras, please see Lesson 4A's supplement. At this point, familiarize yourself with these mantras as well as the *Do's* and *Don'ts* listed below for guiding your inspiration toward learning.

1C

Do's and Don'ts that Improve Learning

DO NURTURE attention and interest toward learning to spark your effort.

- Do seek to understand the purpose.
- Do seek to understand ill-influences.
- Do accept responsibility for improving.
- Do consider the benefits of learning.
- Do familiarize yourself with helpful learning tools.

Do accept difficult challenges and sacrifices required for advancing your learning.

- Do search for and follow helpful direction.
- Do spend adequate time studying/memorizing.
- Do watch for ill-influences requiring avoidance.
- Do willfully avoid more comfortable alternatives.

Do take command of your mind; monitoring and nurturing healthy development.

- Do nurture a healthy attitude.
- Do practice healthy self-talk and self-honesty.
- Do devote time to the learning process.
- Do overpower nature's ill-influence.

Don't allow nature's ill-influence to deceive you and warp your reasoning.

- Don't over-value trivial pursuits.
- Don't under-value meaningful tasks.
- Don't quiet your conscience.
- Don't avoid sacrifices of wiser options.
- Don't let your guard down against ill-influences.
- Don't avoid what's difficult, yet beneficial.
- Don't encourage any kind of cheating.
- Don't avoid learning about ill-influences.
- Don't be indifferent about consequences.
- Don't avoid helpful suggestions.
- Don't let yourself think too casually.
- Don't let impatience override patience.

An Introduction of a complete healthy mind development manual would undoubtedly include the challenges and distortions noted in this lesson, and would also remind us that we must, at times, do what feels unpleasant for the sake of health, safety, or other priorities.

IN CONCLUSION: Empowering the Mind Improves EQ Learning

As we mentioned at the outset, the purpose of this first section of lessons is to set the tone for learning and thereby prepare you to comprehend the rest of the lessons more effectively. We have reminded you with a clearer perspective of how your ability to regulate emotions affects learning. Quite frankly, you can't be accountable and lackadaisical at the same time. Lesson A group has given you a myriad of reasons to embrace emotionally intelligent ideals. After reading about what enables and stifles learning, we hope you are encouraged to continue. Please remember that some behaviors are harder to apply than they are to understand, while ill-influences don't require much effort or intelligent strategies to accept and apply.

1C

As mentioned, we suggest that you make a copy of the many lists mentioned in both lessons 1B and 1C for reviewing often, perhaps even while waiting during mindless moments. This process will help you to more easily remember the information for becoming more self-aware. Self-awareness is explored further in Lesson 2A and beyond.

Again, if comprehension or application of other lessons becomes an issue, please reread and study this section of lessons further to ensure that you have understood and are applying the content appropriately. Depending on your current level of emotional intelligence, these first few lessons may make more sense when read again after studying other lessons in our program. Please do not hesitate to contact our Institute via e-mail concerning any problems or questions regarding your study at info@e-ii.org.

We have not discussed in these early lessons the serious disorders and bizarre behaviors that play havoc on mind development, or the effects of alcohol and other mind-altering substances that allow us to abandon our better judgment. As is revealed in the 2001 movie, *The Beautiful Mind*, learning to become more self-aware can even help us to recognize symptoms of serious mental problems. The movie was based upon the life of John Nash, a Nobel Laureate in Economics, was able to recognize that he was suffering from illusions caused by mental illness by monitoring his own experiences and behavior. To better understand these kinds of serious problems, please consider accessing the vast number of resources available on the Internet.

Again, this first lesson group does not include the activities and other resources that accompany most other lessons. At this point, if you have not read much about emotional intelligence, we recommend that you read a short seventy-page primer entitled, *Emotional Intelligence* by Linda Wasmer Andrews. Also on the Internet, you can find a number of articles that specifically address emotional influence on learning for an even more in-depth understanding.



"We can gain greater understanding and more power for managing and overcoming harmful, emotional influences."

NOTES



Emotional intelligence is an unnatural educated reaction to emotions