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How RESEARCH Improves Understanding



- Research Clarifies the Importance
- There's an Intricate Engineering Approach
- We can Improve the World–Emotionally
- Helpful Resources to Explore

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3 How RESEARCH Improves Understanding

3A LESSON
Research Clarifies the Importance



"True happiness is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose."

Helen Keller, Famous American author, political activist and lecturer who was deaf and blind. (1880 – 1968)

This lesson highlights the fact that more was learned in the last quarter of the 20th Century about this few pound mass in our heads than in all of previous history. Enough can be explained to initiate a revolutionary change in the way we view ourselves, as well as our relationships with others and the world. Research findings indicate that the most important frontier in the universe to explore may very well be right behind our very own eyes!

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UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF RESEARCH

For centuries scientists and scholars have been fascinated yet baffled by the human organ that is physiologically known as the "brain," while psychologically and mentally referred to as the "mind." As mentioned in the summary above, during the last quarter of the 20th Century, more was learned about this extraordinarily complex human organ than in all of previous history. This remarkable surge in understanding was made possible through tremendous technological advancements and increased research.

Research, itself, has been the driving force behind most every worldwide discovery. Authors of The Craft of Research, WC. Booth, G.G. Colomb and J.M. Williams, tell 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 further explains that *"Research is the world's biggest and perhaps most important industry."* Research has enabled us to live more knowledgeable, secure, and comfortable lives. Now it is challenging us to an even greater cause; developing healthier minds and building a behaviorally safer world. What a phenomenal difference this particular research can make in our everyday lives and the evolution of humanity!

Research findings suggest that better understanding of our minds contributes significantly toward many meaningful benefits. Such revelation helps us make more intelligent choices and decisions— including acting upon more meaningful priorities in a more enlightened manner. Our efforts to improve the way we apply the mind enhance the most valuable assets we have as individuals—namely, our emotional stability, security, physical health, and overall intelligence, as well as our ability to treat others and our environment in healthier, more meaningful ways.

"Research is a critical component of the innovation that improves life for everyone."

Bill Gates, American business magnate, philanthropist, investor, computer programmer, and inventor, co-founder of Microsoft, the world's largest personal computer software company. (1955-)

Understanding the value of research reminds us *that we learn much that is worthwhile from this driving force. Today, research is providing us with a mass of new knowledge that wasn't even considered in previous centuries. We have a new frontier to explore that can make a tremendous difference to humanity. Research findings suggest that better understanding of our minds helps us make more intelligent choices and decisions— including identifying and acting upon meaningful priorities in a more enlightened manner.*

STIMULATING WIDESPREAD INTEREST IN EQ RESEARCH

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During the 20th Century, behavioral scientists defined numerous emotional diseases and disorders, as well as maladaptive and dysfunctional behaviors that have plagued humanity for centuries. Successful research provided healthful treatments and cures for many who suffered.

Experts have become increasingly familiar with the intricate circuitry, function and dysfunction of this fascinating human computing tool— identifying and validating a vast number of factors that either stimulate or prevent healthier mind development. In some respects, researchers have been able to glean increased understanding by comparing the mind's similarities to certain computer intricacies.

Researchers have also discovered the necessity for continuing to exercise our minds for reducing the risk of early deterioration and dementia in later life; additionally, more is now understood regarding the effects of physical exercise and nutrition. Poor diet can adversely impact our minds: energy level and moods, thought and decision process, and other mental and psychological capacities that direct our lives. Thus, the health of the mind not only relies on our EQ, but also a nutritious diet and practical exercise regimen.



For stimulating more widespread interest and advances in research about the brain, President George H. W. Bush and Congress declared the last decade of the 20th Century as *"Decade of the Brain."* Correspondingly, 2000 – 2010 was named *"Decade of Behavior"* by the American Psychological Association. The scientific community declared the decade of 2012 to 2022 as the International *"Decade of the Mind"* in an effort to continue interest in such advancements. EI Institute has also sponsored the international *Emotional Intelligence Awareness Month* campaign each October since 2006.

The complexity of the mind mentioned in Lesson1C may make it impossible for researchers to ever fully understand all of our physiological and psychological intricacies; yet what has recently been discovered is already enough to initiate a revolutionary change in the way we view ourselves, along with our relationships with others and the world. An important area of discovery is, of course, in the realm of emotional intelligence.

The widespread interest and advances in research remind us *that leaders around the world are building a case for healthier mind development in their societies. With the number of technical tools we have today that help us reach incredible distances of the universe, surely we can develop more tools for better understanding ourselves and building a more peaceful world. We should be very aware of how important physical exercise and nutrition are for improving mind development. Poor diet can adversely impact our energy level and moods, our thought and decision-making process, and other mental and psychological capacities that direct our lives. With increasing exploration of the human mind, we can undoubtedly produce incredible results.*

"Way back in the fifth Century BC, Plato explained that all learning has some emotional basis."

(c. 428 BCE–c. 348 BCE)

EXPLORING THE DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Over the centuries, various cultural philosophers and religious leaders have encouraged healthier mind development. Intelligent emotional conduct has long been recognized as honorable wisdom. Generation after generation has shared important guidelines about this subject— historically referred to as ethics, morals, manners, virtues, or religious precepts. With increased research, various characteristics of the modern-day study of emotional intelligence extend beyond previous explorations and guidelines. EI teaches us with greater understanding and clarity of healthier and safer ways for applying our minds.

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Our emotions are crucial determinants of how well we function in everyday life. Thus, researchers have sought to understand how our emotions can best be managed. Emotions can lead us toward wrongdoing when their intensity is exaggerated or whenever they overpower our better judgement and justify misbehavior. Without educating people about emotions, nature's influence can be especially difficult to recognize.

According to Daniel Goleman, author of *EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: Why It Can Matter More Than Our IQ*, researchers now realize that emotional literacy can help to prevent and solve myriad problems that we experience in our personal and professional lives. In that regard, unlike previous research and understanding, the current study of emotional intelligence takes on a broader dimension by relating to people's lives in the following ways:

- Making the purpose and dynamics of emotional intelligence meaningful to everyone, regardless of their spiritual, cultural, or philosophical background.
- Providing new comprehensive insights into understanding and improving mind development.
- Equipping us with modern-day knowledge and strategies that help us overpower damaging emotional thoughts, communications, and behaviors.
- Heightening our awareness of the importance for knowing our minds and emotions in a way that was never thought possible or even necessary until recently.

Promoting EI in Business and Education

Harvard Business Review has hailed emotional intelligence as *"a ground-breaking, paradigm- shattering idea and one of the most influential business ideas of the decade."* Companies worldwide are increasingly looking through the lens of EI in hiring, developing, and promoting employees. Emotional intelligence is not only an ADVANTAGE, professionally, but is increasingly being REQUIRED in leadership and general employment. In the business world, better understanding the skills of a job may get people hired, but emotionally illiterate behavior often gets them fired.



Researchers are finding that emotions play a powerful role in setting the BEST leaders apart from the rest—not just in tangibles, like business results and retention of talent, but also in the important intangibles, such as higher morale, motivation, and commitment. Better understanding of emotions enables leaders to identify and more appropriately resolve problems, along with anticipating and avoiding unnecessary conflicts.

"Commit yourself to lifelong learning. The most valuable asset you'll ever have is your mind and what you put into it."

Brian Tracy, Entrepreneur, public speaker, author, and professional development trainer. (1944-)

Many of today's K-12 social and emotional learning programs are organized under the umbrella of emotional intelligence, including lessons in character development, violence prevention, anti-bullying, drug prevention, and school discipline.

A massive survey was conducted by Roger Weissberg, the director of the *Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning* at the University of Illinois in Chicago— leading the way for social and emotional learning programs to infiltrate schools worldwide. In those schools participating in the program, up to 50 percent of children showed improved achievement scores, while up to 38 percent raised their grade-point averages.

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Emotional and social learning programs have also made schools safer: misbehavior incidents dropped by an average of 28 percent; suspensions by 44 percent; and other disciplinary actions by 27 percent. Simultaneously, attendance rates rose, while 63 percent of students demonstrated significantly more positive behavior.

A community in Spain, San Sebastian, which has become a world-class center for the development of social and emotional learning, is one of three Spanish provinces of the Basque area of Spain that has launched an ambitious initiative for upgrading emotional literacy in the community. Thirty to forty percent of schools there offer curricula in social/emotional learning, and more are being phased in. They have also developed emotional intelligence programs for parents and families, as well as businesses.

Under the leadership efforts of Jose Ramon Guridi Urrejola, who serves as the province's Minister for Technology and Innovation, local scholars, educators, business leaders, and community organizers are creating a social and emotional model for society.

Exploring the dimensions of EI programs remind us *that we are on the right track. We are learning to reduce the dysfunctional behavior that interferes with many important activities in our lives. Schools are teaching kids age-appropriate core competencies to help them become better behaved and more congenial with each other. Business executives' and school administrators' ambitious initiative toward upgrading emotional literacy is contributing to the overall success of these institutions.*

IN CONCLUSION: Research Raises Our Standards

We find solutions that heighten current standards through research and development. During the 20th Century, researchers increased our understanding and contributed toward improving our way of life, significantly. In previous centuries, few people could have even imagined such common tools as computers, calculators, tape recorders, cameras and camcorders, copiers, televisions, VCR's, cell phones, and fax machines. Related discoveries during this past century have improved our perception and perspective. Although many mysteries yet remain, we can be assured that as technological advances continue to assist researchers, a better understanding of ourselves and our world will emerge.

As with the early development of anything conceptual, emotional intelligence researchers and educators continue to search for clearer explanations and better direction. They strive to identify and provide the best EQ testing criteria and steps for developing emotional intelligence programs. Increased understanding of our minds, especially the emotional component, should provide a greater impact on our health and well-being —than we could ever imagine. As students of EI, your own research toward improving self-awareness may become contagious.

PLEASE NOTE: Remember at this point to continue reading through the balance of Lesson 3 group, if you haven't done so previously, before beginning the suggested quizzes and activities.

"We are more apt to experience life to its fullest by better understanding our minds than working to earn millions to spend lavishly."

Sandra Hughes, Director EII

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A scientific research is a search after truth, and it is only after discovery that the question of applicability can be usefully considered.

Henri Moissan, a French chemist who won the 1906 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for work in isolating fluorine from its compounds. (1852 – 1907)