Emotional Intelligence:
Implications for Personal, Social and Academic Success

A Literature Review

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By
Tracy Sanders

Chair: Doug Pelcak
Reader: Amy Foell

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Abstract

This paper looks at what Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is and then reviews some different programs used in schools today: The RULER Approach, the Toolbox Project and several types of Social Emotional Learning programs. It then introduces some examples of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) tests and how School Counselors can effectively contribute to students learning their own EQ and how to implement that into a Counseling program to effectively contribute to student’s success.

Emotional Intelligence techniques provide students with skills necessary to effectively work through their ever-changing emotional worlds. These techniques encourage students to manage emotions, foster healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. By exploring relevant research, the impact of Emotional Intelligence, how it looks in action, and the advantages of incorporating an Emotional Intelligence program in schools we will begin to see how effective this is for student’s personal, social, and academic success.
# Table of Contents

Emotional Intelligence ........................................................................................................... 5  
  History of Emotional Intelligence .................................................................................... 7  
  The RULER Approach ....................................................................................................... 8  
  The TOOLBOX Project ...................................................................................................... 11  
  Social Emotional Learning (SEL) .................................................................................... 14  
Positive Behavioral and Interventions Support ................................................................. 17  
ASCA National Standards .................................................................................................. 17  
Interventions for School Counselors ................................................................................... 18  
Adlerian Perspective .......................................................................................................... 20  
  Encouragement ............................................................................................................... 20  
  Social Interest ................................................................................................................ 21  
  Life Styles .................................................................................................................... 23  
Multicultural Perspective ................................................................................................. 24  
Implications for School Counselors ..................................................................................... 25  
Conclusions ........................................................................................................................ 28  
References ........................................................................................................................... 30
Emotional Intelligence: Implications for Personal, Social, and Academic Success

Students today grow up with technologies that previous generations couldn’t have imagined, such as smart phones and tablets, and these technologies have changed the way students interact and socialize. In addition, the academic pressures on students today are much more intense. In a recent survey by the American College Health Association, about one in five undergraduate students reported feeling of hopelessness during the previous 12 months. More than 60 percent reported feeling very lonely, and more than one in three had felt so depressed that it was difficult for them to function (American College Health Association, 2016). This is very telling of how much stress some of these young adults face today. Some of them struggling to live up to very intense academic expectations. Others, have come from backgrounds with economic uncertainty, neglect, even abuse and trauma. Whatever their situation, the emotional problems these young adults are reporting didn’t start then. They are part of a long course that goes back to early childhood.

Students are often taught to ignore or cover up their emotions. Many Western societies view emotions as a distraction, says University of California-Santa Barbara sociologist Thomas Scheff. “Our emotions can give us valuable information about the world, but we’re often taught or socialized not to listen to them. Hiding one emotion behind another can be damaging and people learn to hide feelings of shame under anger, aggression and violence” (Rubenstein, 2017).

The goal of teaching emotional intelligence is to help children, from an early age, lead healthier, happier, more fulfilled lives. Imagine, if we were to teach Emotional Intelligence to students at an early age in a way that they understood and could be self-aware of their own EQ (Emotional Quotient), the impact this would have on their success personally, socially, and academically.
Emotional Intelligence

Mayer and Salovey, the men who first introduced emotional intelligence, define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Salovey & Mayer, 2004).

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one’s emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships empathetically. It is the ability to identify and manage our own emotions and the emotions of others. It is the key to both personal and professional success. Emotional Intelligence refers to an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, and have the ability to understand and describe this information (Goleman, 1998). Having an understanding of emotional intelligence gives us the ability to identify, understand, use, manage and control emotions. This not only comprises our own emotions but also those of others, including their motivations and desires (Goleman, 2014). Throughout life, from childhood to adulthood, our level of emotional intelligence affects our behavior and interactions with others: family, friends, colleagues, people you don’t know, those you respect, those you want to gain respect from, those you want to impress, those you need, people your fear, and people you love. Our level of emotional intelligence will determine how good we are at engaging with others and drawing people to you (Goleman, 2014). Let’s look at the different skills to describe all areas of Emotional Intelligence.

There are four areas of skills that collectively describe the different areas of emotional intelligence. More specifically, emotional intelligence involves the abilities to:
• Accurately perceive emotions in oneself and others
• Use emotions to facilitate thinking
• Understand emotional meanings
• Manage emotion

Perceiving emotion is the most basic area has to do with nonverbal reception and expression of emotion. Psychologists have pointed out that emotional expression evolved in animal species as a form of crucial social communication. Facial expressions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are universally recognizable in human beings. So, the capacity to accurately perceive emotions in the face or voice of others provides a crucial starting point for more advanced understanding of emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1997).

Using emotions to facilitate thought is the capacity of the emotion to enter into and guide the cognitive system and promote thinking. Emotions can prioritize thinking, so something we respond to emotionally, is something that grabs our attention (Salovey & Mayer, 1997). Therefore, having a good system of emotional input should help direct thinking toward matters that are truly important.

Understanding emotions is the ability to identify and convey information. Happiness usually indicates a desire to join with other people; anger indicates a desire to attack or harm others; fear indicates a desire to escape. Each emotion will convey its own pattern of possible messages, and actions associated with those messages (Salovey & Mayer, 1997). A message of anger, for example, may mean that the individual feels treated unfairly. Understanding emotional messages and the actions associated with them is one important aspect of this area of skill.

Once a person can identify such messages and potential actions, the capacity to reason with and about those emotional messages and actions becomes important as well. To fully
understand emotions involves the comprehension of the meaning of emotions, along with the capacity to reason about those meanings. It is essential to this group of emotionally intelligent skills.

Emotions can often be managed. A person needs to understand that emotions convey information. A person may want to remain open to emotional signals so long as they are not too painful and block out those that are overwhelming. In between, within the person's emotional comfort zone, it becomes possible to regulate and manage one’s own and others’ emotions so as to promote one’s own and others’ personal and social gains (Salovey & Mayer, 1997). Today, the means and methods for emotional self-regulation have become so prominent in psychology research. One example of self-regulation would be to pay attention to negative thoughts that occur before or after strong emotions. Changing thoughts is easier than changing feelings, and to have a deep understanding of triggers that affect our emotions will give us the tools we need to manage self-regulation.

**History of Emotional Intelligence**

Around 2,000 years ago Plato wrote, “All learning has an emotional base.” Since then, scientists, educators, and philosophers have worked to prove or disprove the importance of feelings. Unfortunately, for a large part of those two millennia, common thought was, “Emotions are in the way. They keep us from making good decisions, and they keep us from focusing.” In the last three decades a growing body of research is proving just the opposite (Freedman, 2017).

Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer coined the term Emotional Intelligence in 1990 describing it as “a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action.” They also initiated a research program offering the first formulation
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: IMPLICATIONS

of the concept of emotional intelligence and a demonstration of how it might be measured in a 1990 journal article (Brackett & Salovey, 2006).

Daniel Goleman became aware of Salovey and Mayer’s work, and this eventually led to his book, Emotional Intelligence. Goleman argued that it was not cognitive intelligence that guaranteed academic success, but emotional intelligence. Goleman, like Salovey and Mayer, used the phrase “emotional intelligence” to bring together a wide range of scientific findings, drawing together what had been separate strands of research (Goleman, 1998).

The RULER Approach

The Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence conducts research on the power of emotions and has created the RULER approach which teaches emotional intelligence to children and adults. RULER is a school-wide approach that focuses first on developing adults personally and professionally, so they can be role models and knowledgeable implementers of the skill-based instruction for students. RULER was developed in 2005 by Marc Brackett, David Caruso, and Robin Stern of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. The Center’s early research helped refine and measure the concept of emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to recognize, understand, utilize and regulate emotions effectively in everyday life. RULER is an acronym that stands for Recognizing, Understanding Labeling, Expressing and Regulating emotions. Built upon decades of research demonstrating the impact of emotions on important life outcomes, the RULER Program develops emotional intelligence skills in children and the adults who are involved in their education at school, at home and in their communities. (Provini, 2014). This program is used in over 1,000 schools in the US and abroad, across grades K-8.

As a strategy, children are taught to focus on the underlying theme of an emotion rather than getting lost in trying to define it. When an emotion grips you, explains Stern, understanding
its thematic contours can help “name it to tame it” (Rubenstein, 2017). Even though anger is experienced differently by different people, she explains, “The theme underlying anger is the same. It’s injustice or unfairness. The theme that underlies disappointment is an unmet expectation. Pinning down the theme can “help a person be seen and understood and met where she is,” says Stern. RULER has three phases that it uses to integrate into a schoolwide program. Phase 1 is the Anchors of Emotional Intelligence. This is where teachers, staff, students and families gain a solid understanding of EI. The tools in this phase are used to enhance individual’s ability to understand and regulate their own emotions and to consider and empathize with how others are feeling. This phase works to create the kind of healthy emotional climate essential to personal growth (Brackett & Kremenitzer, 2011). This phase is the foundation of RULER and is taught before leading into Phases 2 and 3.

Phase 2 is The Feeling Words Curriculum. This is the phase where teachers are enabled to integrate RULER into a wide range of subject areas, ensuring that emotional intelligence is woven into the content of every class and throughout each student’s school day. The Feeling Words Curriculum that teachers learn to use is tailored to specific grade levels and aligned with the Common Core (Brackett & Kremenitzer, 2011). Phase 2 is the area where teachers can mix and match different areas of RULER depending on different age levels they are teaching, and student/classroom needs.

Phase 3 of the RULER program is ongoing and works to create a self-perpetuation program by training teachers and other staff to become RULER trainers who then teach the rest of the school what they’ve learned (Brackett & Kremenitzer, 2011). Phase 3 is where the training is put into action throughout each classroom, and a change in school climate can be created.
There are four evidence-based tools designed to enhance the emotional intelligence of school leaders, teachers and staff, and students and their families. These primary tools are the Charter, Mood Meter, Meta-Moment, and Blueprint (Nathanson, Rivers, Flynn, & Bracket, 2016). Each one is based on scientific research and helps children and adults develop their emotional intelligence skills.

The Charter tool is a collaborative document that helps schools establish supportive and productive learning environments. It is created by members of the community, outlining how they aspire to treat each other. Together, the community describes how they want to feel at school, the behaviors that foster those feelings, and guidelines for preventing and managing unwanted feelings and conflict. The Charter tool helps establish common goals and holds each other accountable for creating the positive climate they envision (Nathanson et al., 2016). An example of the Charter tool would be a school holding monthly community meetings where members are able to share thoughts and ways to improve community and school climate.

The Mood Meter tool is used to help students and educators become more mindful of how their emotions change throughout the day and how their emotions in turn affect their actions (Nathanson et al., 2016). This tool helps develop self-awareness they need to inform their choices. Students and educators will learn to expand their emotional vocabulary and learn to recognize the full scope of their emotional lives and address all feelings more effectively (Nathanson et al., 2016). One example of Mood Meter in a pre-school classroom would be to have a chart with different emotions, and students can label how they are feeling. This teaches students to recognize and label their own emotions.

The Meta-Moment tool helps students and educators handle strong emotions so that they make better decisions for themselves and their community (Nathanson et al., 2016). With good
practice and over time this tool helps students and educators replace ineffective responses with productive and empowering responses to challenging situations. They make better choices, build healthier relationships, and experience greater well-being (Nathanson et al., 2016). The idea is that instead of reacting impulsively, you use your breath to calm down, which allows your brain to think clearly about your options. The Meta-Moment tool can help students press the pause button between a challenging feeling and a first impulse.

The Blueprint tool is how everyone in a school treats each other and its effect on classroom performance and school climate (Nathanson et al., 2016). The Blueprint tool helps students and educators manage conflict effectively. Using this tool, students and educators develop empathy by considering each other’s feeling and working collaboratively to identify healthy solutions to conflicts. The Blueprint helps repair relationships and build stronger ones, creating safer and more productive schools where students can learn and thrive (Nathanson et al., 2016).

According to one randomized controlled trial, it was found that fifth and sixth grade RULER classrooms had better emotional climates than control classrooms did. Specifically, they had higher connectedness between teachers and students, and more support for student autonomy and leadership, and a greater focus on students’ motivations and interests. The study also found that better emotional climates, went hand in hand with better academic achievement because students were more engaged in the classroom (Provini, 2014). Let’s now look at another approach being taught in K-6 classrooms here in the United States.

The TOOLBOX Project

The TOOLBOX is another program used to teach emotional intelligence, though is only used in K-6 classrooms. This program helps to support students in understanding and managing
their own emotional, social, and academic success. The foundation of TOOLBOX is 12 human capacities that reside in every individual. Through its simple and positive metaphor of Tools, TOOLBOX is meant to bring forward a set of skills and practices that help students access their own inner resilience at any time, in any context (Collins, 2016). Here are the 12 human capacities that TOOLBOX uses to teach emotional intelligence:

- Breathing Tool teaches students to calm themselves, check-in with their bodies, and reflect to discover what is best for them and others. “I can take a breath. It takes only 3-5 seconds to calm myself.”
- Quiet/Safe Place Tool helps students find respite and safety when they need to withdraw and find their natural rhythm. “There is always my quiet/safe place. It is there for me.”
- Listening Tool reminds students to listen with all of their senses, including their hearts. “When I listen as well as hear, I can really understand.”
- Empathy Tool encourages students to let go of their own perspectives long enough to acknowledge other people’s thoughts and feelings. “When I walk in someone else’s shoes, it opens my heart.”
- Personal Space Tool teaches students how to appreciate their own and other people’s boundaries. “I have a right to my space, and others have a right to theirs.”
- Using Our Own Words Tool helps students understand that the words they choose make a difference to the relationships they create. “I ask for what I want and need. I am a problem-solver.”
- Garbage Can Tool allows students to discard the unkind words and actions of others and focus on what has the most meaning to them. “I choose to let the little things go.”
• Taking Time Tool gives students permission to choose time wisely, in ways that help them self-reflect and understand others. “I use my time wisely.”

• Please and Thank You Tool instills those magic words that show respect to others and invites people into deeper connections. “I treat others with respect, appreciation, and gratitude.”

• Apology and Forgiveness Tool reminds students that mistakes are a vehicle for learning and how important it is to let go of blame and resentment. “I admit my mistakes. I accept that others make mistakes, too.”

• Patience Tool helps students understand that they are strong enough to wait—a valuable skill that helps students manage their emotions. “I am strong enough to wait.”

• Courage Tool teaches students to stand up for what is right, even when others aren’t watching. “I have the courage to do the right thing.”

With practice, these tools become valuable personal skills: self-awareness, self-management, and relationship-building which, in turn, foster responsible decision-making (Collins, 2016).

The mission of TOOLBOX curriculum is to build students resilience, self-mastery and empathy for others. TOOLBOX curriculum practices and methods give students, educators, and parents the skills to access those innate abilities through a strength-based common language, leading to cohesive, collaborative, non-violent, and caring communities (Price-Mitchell, 2009). In teaching children to care for others, there is no substitute for experience; talking is simply not enough. Certain EQ skills, particularly those that involve child’s relationship with others, can only effectively be taught to the emotional brain. (Shapiro, 1997).

Recent Stanford research findings show that giving teachers an opportunity to use their “Empathy Tool” improved student-teacher relationships and helped reduce discipline outcomes.
In addition, students whose teacher completed an empathetic mindset exercise were half as likely to get suspended over the school year, from 9.6 percent to 4.8 percent (Parker, 2016). The Stanford research suggests that when a teacher takes an empathetic approach, students will feel more respected and, in turn, will be more motivated to behave well in the classroom.

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL)**

Six seconds is the Emotional Intelligence (EQ) network that has created tools to help schools, leaders, families, and businesses become more competent in Social Emotional Learning (Freedman, 2010). Assessments and resources have been created and proven to be successful in their work. For the purpose of this paper, we will take a look at what Six Seconds is doing in education and how social and emotional learning is being taught.

According to The Emotional Intelligence Network (2017a) social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. SEL is the educational offspring of Emotional Intelligence (The Emotional Intelligence Network, 2017b).

Six Seconds is a research and practice organization that supports educators who wish to make SEL part of their school environment. Some of the ways that Six Seconds helps schools to integrate this program into their schools is by helping to conduct, support, and share research on effective implementation of SEL (The Emotional Intelligence Network, 2017a). The six seconds program provides schools with an evidence-based framework for preventing problems and promoting students’ well-being and success. The SEL framework is an integrated approach
involving every student, the entire staff, the family, and the community (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2017).

Effective SEL addresses the fundamental conditions for learning and fosters student’s capacity to earn. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2018) stated that best practice includes classroom teachers modeling evidence-based explicit social emotional skills instruction in a safe, caring, supportive, participatory learning environment. SEL is fundamental to children’s healthy development and enables schools to educate students to be good problem solvers and caring, responsible, engaged citizens. According to CASEL (2018) a major review of SEL research provides strong evidence based that building social and emotional skills improves student’s attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance.

The Six Seconds model turns emotional intelligence theory into practice for personal and professional gain. The basic model of EQ in action begins with three important pursuits: to become more aware (noticing what you do), to become more intentional (doing what you mean), and to become more purposeful (doing it for a reason). Under the three pursuits are eight specific learnable competencies. They are measured through the Six Seconds Emotional Intelligence Assessment or SEI (Freedman, 2010). Here are the eight competencies:

- Enhancing Emotional Literacy: Accurately identifying and interpreting both simple and compound feelings.
- Recognizing Patterns: Acknowledging frequently recurring reactions and behaviors.
- Applying Consequential Thinking: Evaluating the costs and benefits of your choices.
- Navigating Emotions: Assessing, harnessing, and transforming emotions as a strategic resource.
• Engaging Intrinsic Motivation: Gaining energy from personal values & commitments vs. being driven by external forces.

• Exercising Optimism: Taking a proactive perspective of hope and possibility.

• Increasing Empathy: Recognizing and appropriately responding to others’ emotions.

• Pursing Noble Goals: Connecting your daily choices with your overarching sense of purpose (Freedman, 2010).

By understanding these three pursuits and the eight competencies it will help people make decisions and craft effective solutions to life puzzles that we face each day. By being more emotionally intelligent, smarter with feelings, we will more accurately recognize emotions in ourselves and others (Freedman, 2010).

Some of the tools that six seconds uses to train staff to use in school and classrooms are SEI assessments, dashboard, and brain talent profiles. The six seconds emotional intelligence assessments are tests that measure EQ and equip people with a framework for putting emotional intelligence into action (Stillman, 2015). The suite includes one-page brain profiles, and adult and youth assessments that measure each participants EQ. Brain profiles are snapshots of your brains styles and talents to effectively use emotional plus cognitive data. Brain profiles help provide insight into one’s current style. Dashboard is a group report that is derived from student assessments. Dashboard gives teachers the opportunity to review a classroom or small groups EQ score, and each student’s top six brain styles (Stillman, 2015). These tools present an opportunity to review a classroom or a small group combined EQ score.

Scientific studies of high-quality SEL programs have revealed the positive impact these curriculums can have on school success. Data from more than 270,000 students was collected for a study of school-based SEL programs. In this study, SEL students showed an 11% gain in
academic improvement (Greenberg, 2017). In addition, SEL program students were more likely to attend school, were less likely to have conduct problems, and received better grades (Greenberg, 2017).

**Positive Behavioral and Interventions Support**

Positive Behavioral and Interventions Support (PBIS) is a framework for delivering both the whole-school social culture and additional tiers of behavior support intensity needed to improve educational and social outcomes for all students (Dunlap, Carr, Horner, Zarcone, & Schwartz, 2008). Schools that apply PBIS establish clear schoolwide expectations for behavior which are taught, modeled and reinforced by all staff. PBIS was originally developed as a way to work with students and other individuals with developmental disorders in various settings. It was an alternative to punishment-based interventions. Over time PBIS was expanded to address the larger community as a schoolwide approach, recognizing that individuals with disabilities do better when the whole environment supports positive behavior (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2017).

Many of these interventions look at the problem and use rewards or consequences to train the child. The difference with teaching emotional intelligence is that it does not have a reward or consequence system set up. The goal with emotional intelligence is to teach students to advance their own EQ strengths and recognize their own emotions and those around them.

**ASCA National Standards**

The American School Counselor Association (2012) describes the framework of a comprehensive school counseling program of consisting of four components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability (p. xiii). Within the foundation, school counselors will develop mission and vision statements that align with that of the school. School counselors can
use these emotional intelligence assessments to build a foundation of skill building groups to enhance each student’s competencies of EI learning. The management component will allow school counselors to evaluate the strengths of the program. School counselors will hand out EI assessments every school year to record each student’s progress throughout the year. The delivery component will consist of counselors creating specific learning goals for each component of EI learning; emotional awareness, emotional management, internal relationship management, and external relationship management. Finally, the accountability component of the ASCA model helps us to demonstrate the effectiveness of the counseling program in measurable terms. Each year counselors will be able to look at these EI assessments that students have taken, and after students have taken some small group work on enhancing their weaker EI skills, counselors will be able to measure where improvement has been made for each student individually.

**Interventions for School Counselors**

Today, to implement many of these programs it takes time from staff, money from the district, and an administration that is on board with implementing programs like RULER, TOOLBOX or SEL programs. In addition, many of these are interventions for students that are already noted as having a challenge with learning and behavior.

School Counselors could set up activities for each domain of EI and work with students to improve their EI skills. In addition, counselors could work with staff and teach them how to improve their classroom cohesion by understanding their own EI, teaching styles, and understanding that of every one of their students.

Most importantly, it would be the job of the counselor to create this cohesion by teaching these EI skills to students and bridging the knowledge they gain from counselor activities with
students and sharing their findings and assessments of each to student with teachers and staff. For Counselors, figuring out the best ways to assess emotional intelligence at various ages is so important, because learning to assess children and adults across the lifespan will allow us to study changes in children’s emotional intelligence skills (Segal & Jaffe, 2008). Emotion can override our thoughts and profoundly influence our behavior. Developing emotional intelligence skills help us recognize, contain, and effectively communicate our emotions, as well as recognize the emotions of other people. These abilities have been proven to surpass high cognitive intelligence (IQ) in predicting success in all types of relationships, at home, work, and in all other areas of our lives. (Segal & Jaffe, 2008).

The goal of having an Emotional Intelligence Assessment is to have a measurable tool that can be used to track student’s progress to know their EQ strengths and challenges to help them become more successful personally, socially, and academically. This also will help demonstrate a school counselor’s effectiveness being able to track individual student progress. This goal will be achieved by assessing students using an EI assessment. This will be on a 40-point scale with 4 different domains; emotional awareness, emotions management, social emotional awareness, and relationship management. Each domain will have a total score of 40 (0-24 score is area for enrichment: requires attention and development, 25-34 score is effective functioning: consider strengthening this skill and 35-40 enhanced skill: can be used as a leverage to develop weaker skills). Appendix A, (San Diego City MESA Program) is just one example of an EI assessment tool. Please note, Appendix A, the Quick EI test has not been validated or had its psychometric properties assessed. This is an awareness tool around the 4 EQ domains constructed by Daniel Goleman.
Based on assessment results students would be placed into small groups to help develop their weaker skills. (Emotional awareness; emotional management; social emotional awareness; and relationship management). One example would be to create a small group for students who scored low on the Emotional Management part of the assessment. Using the Meta-Moment tool, counselors would work with students on skill building and teaching students how to better handle strong emotions, so they can make better decisions and become more competent in Emotional Management. At the end of term, students will retake the same assessment to see improvement. These results can then be used to share with teachers and staff to help them understand a student’s learning and progress and measure student improvement and success.

Adlerian Perspective

Adler believed that we all have one basic desire and goal: to belong and to feel significant. The focus of Adlerian counseling with adolescents is to heighten and increase awareness around issues of self-respect, self-esteem, and belongingness (Milliren & Clemmer, 2006). This involves feeling appreciated or loved, the development of positive self-worth, and an encouraging atmosphere. Emotional intelligence learning approaches go hand in hand with Adlerian philosophies on many levels. From encouragement, to social interest, to lifestyles, we begin to see these Adlerian concepts in almost every aspect of emotional intelligence.

Encouragement

According to Adler, when we feel encouraged, we feel capable and appreciated and will generally act in a connected and cooperative way. When we are discouraged, we may act in unhealthy ways by competing, withdrawing, or giving up (Corey, 2013). It is finding ways of expressing and accepting encouragement and respect that helps us feel fulfilled and optimistic.
School counselors are an important part of education for students and can provide valuable assistance to help students succeed. One important way to help students to feel encouraged is to acknowledge their perspective and empathize. By doing this, we are helping students to reflect on their experiences and develop empathy by experiencing it from others. Teaching students these emotional intelligence skills will help them feel encouraged and teach them how to express themselves in productive, healthy ways.

Adlerian theory and practice have proven especially productive as applied to the growth and development of children. Adlerians believe that “a misbehaving child is a discouraged child” and that helping children to feel valued, significant, and competent is often the most effective strategy in coping with difficult child behaviors (Milliren & Clemmer, 2006). Emotional Intelligence self-assessments can be helpful when working with students and helping us to understand a discouraged student. For example, if a student scores low on the social emotional awareness part of the assessment, they may be feeling insignificant and not valued because of their social interactions with friends. This assessment can help counselors work with a student to build up these skills, so the student can feel more valued and significant.

**Social Interest**

Social interest is the action line of one’s community feeling, and it involves being as concerned about others as one is about oneself. This concept involves the capacity to cooperate and contribute (Milliren & Clemmer, 2006). Social interest requires that we have enough contact with the present to make a move toward a meaningful future. The socialization process associated with social interest begins in childhood and involves helping children to find a place in society and acquire a sense of belonging, as well as the ability to make a contribution (Corey, 2013).
Adler equated social interest with a sense of identification and empathy with others: “to see with the eyes of another to hear with the ears of another, to feel with the heart of another” (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1979, p. 42). From an Adlerian perspective, as social interest develops, feelings of inferiority and alienation diminish. People express social interest through shared activity and mutual respect (Milliren & Clemmer, 2006).

In Adler’s book *Understanding Human Nature* he writes, “We cannot judge a human being except by using the concept of social feeling as a standard. Every individual within the body of human society must subscribe to the oneness of that society. We have to realize our duty to our fellow human beings. The degree to which social feeling has developed is any individual is the only universally valid criterion of human values” (Adler, 1998, p. 139).

While Adler included analysis of early childhood, he emphasized and focused on positive social interaction as part of his treatment. He believed that humans have an unconscious sense of social unity that must be nurtured to survive (Oberst & Stewart, 2003). His is a values-oriented psychology and he used the social feeling of connectedness as an index and goal of mental health. The opposite, a lack of social concern, was Adler’s definition of mental illness (Oberst & Stewart, 2003). He taught that the quality of empathy needs to be supported by parents and the culture at large. In this sense, Adler was a pioneer in the field of prevention through the use of character development and education in the family, school, and community. Teaching emotional intelligent skills at an early age will give student’s the tools they need to build character and become contributing members of society. Emotional Intelligence assessments are a powerful tool to help build character development and give students the knowledge they need to feel socially connected.
As our Emotional Intelligence improves, our empathic perceptions become more accurate and reliable. We learn to trust our feelings and perceptions, and to be more open about them. This transformation is achieved through formulating continual perceptions, gathering feedback, and correcting our misinterpretations (Steiner, 1997).

Life Styles

According to Adler, as a child grows up they perceive the world around them and experiences the social context of his family and comes to certain conclusions about them. The Adlerian lifestyle refers to the collection of convictions that a person has developed and uses to navigate life. These convictions give a person a sense of identity (Milliren & Clemmer 2006).

Adler believed that all human behavior is purposeful and goal-directed. Human beings strive toward goals they perceive as necessary to find their place in the world (Lewis & Watts, 2004). According to Adler, “personal lifestyles-or characteristic ways of perceiving self, others, and the world largely determine how people strive toward life goals” (Lewis & Watts, 2004, p. 247).

Adler observed that each human being is confronted with three unavoidable tasks in life. These include the social task of living amongst others, the love task of meeting the challenge of sexual cooperation, and the work task of contributing something meaningful to the world (Griffith & Powers, 1987). For children and young adults, education falls under the work task as school is the place between family and life in society. If an individual is not successfully meeting one of these three tasks, he or she may experience problems in the other areas as well.

Adler was devoted to the successful development of children, as he understood how an individual’s lifestyle is formed in the earliest years of life. He emphasized that school is a community and that classrooms are a way to bring students together to help each other and solve
problems. Additionally, Adler believed that an educator’s most important task is to see that no child is discouraged at school and that a child who enters school already discouraged regains self-confidence through his school and teacher (Griffith & Powers, 1987). The school environment is an important part of a child’s upbringing. Teaching emotional intelligence to students can help ensure students are being encouraged to succeed and ensure positive ways of perceiving themselves and those around them.

There isn’t anything about emotions that you can think of where you won’t find individual differences. Even though we have the same emotions, we experience them differently; we have different attitudes about them; we have different awareness of them. Even within a culture or family we don’t all feel the emotions in the same way, people feel them more or less intensely.” We are all the same and we are all different. We need to understand both our similarities and our differences (Ekman, 2007, p. 48)

Emotional intelligence is something within us that helps us to sense how we feel and enables up to truly connect with others and form a bond. It gives us the ability to be present and listen to someone when they most need it. Emotional intelligence is that sense of internal balance within us that enables us to make good decisions, communicate successfully, and maintain effective leadership. It is a valuable tool to help us make good decisions when working toward our life goals.

**Multicultural Perspective**

Every culture is characterized and distinguished from other cultures by deep-rooted and widely acknowledged ideas about how one needs to feel, think, and act as a functioning member of the culture (Bornstein & Lansford, 2010). Anticipating cultural differences should not stereotype groups of people but should instead set a cultural context to communicate and interact
more effectively between cultures. Our ability to understand culturally based experiences of students of diverse backgrounds is crucial in working with these students and helping them to succeed.

Working as a school counselor, it is important to learn how to identify stigma and general assumptions that are associated with different cultures and being aware of how counseling traditions and one’s own views may be based on culturally biased concepts. It is crucial as counselors that we understand our own emotional intelligence and how it relates to our self-perceived competence in counseling students from diverse cultural backgrounds. As counselors, it is our responsibility to look at each student and family individually and not assume them to assimilate to a western culture that does not align with their beliefs. Teaching Emotional intelligence is such a powerful, universal tool that can be taught to any human being, and learning our student’s EQ strengths, after having a good foundation of our students that do come from a diverse cultural background will help us better understand our student’s inner quality world and help to meet their needs.

**Implications for School Counselors**

Emotional Intelligence is a process for enhancing student’s personal, social, and academic success. As school counselors, we are expected to be leaders, collaborators, advocates, and system change agents. Emotional Intelligence learning can provide a specific vision and structure to assist school counselors in becoming effective change agents.

Enhancing student personal/social development is at the very heart of school counseling. School counselors know that effective education must extend beyond teaching academic skills to teaching emotional competencies, including promoting safe and healthy behaviors. A social and
emotionally intelligent student is less likely to develop aggressiveness, depressions, and violent behaviors (Poulou, 2005).

Although school counselors know the value of emotional development for students, they must articulate that importance to critical stakeholders. If school counselors want to promote emotional programming, they must build a convincing case for the impact of emotional competence on student achievement and career development.

Here are some specific ways and tools for why and how school counselors can provide a specific vision to becoming better change agents. Providing Emotional Intelligence learning can

- Be a way to show that we matter as counselors. Having students take EQ assessments can provide a measurable tool to see each student’s challenges, strengths and need for improvement.

- Be a tool for teachers to be attuned to the fact that this is helping students to achieve. By having EQ assessments counselors can share results with teachers and show individual students need for development and where they excel. This could give some insight for teachers in helping them understand different student behaviors in the classroom.

- Be a way to show parents and caregivers that we are helping their children develop important life skills. When we use EQ assessments, we are able to have a clear idea of individual student needs and challenges. Based on results, counselors could give parents and caregivers some different tools to help their children develop EQ skills. For example, if a student scores low on emotional management, counselors could give parents and caregivers the taking time tool from TOOLBOX project. This tool
would help build resilience and strengthen the student’s emotional management skills.

- Be a tool to help us as counselors to see student’s progress in social/emotional learning. Emotional intelligence is a key factor in helping children to learn effectively and making their classrooms a calm and optimistic place for learning. Each year, students would take an Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment (please refer to pages 33-34 for an example). Counselors would tally each student score and place students in groups based on their early assessments to improve some of their weaker skills. For example, students that score low on relationship management would be put into a type of friendship group to help strengthen these skills. At the end of every term for students that have been in small groups, counselors would refer to the EQ assessments and have students retake it. Based on these results, counselors will be able to measure every student’s progress and share results to teachers and staff to have a better understanding of student’s emotional intelligence.

- Give students the opportunity to work together and help each other. For example, students that place low on emotional management could be placed in a group with students who place high in this category. Counselors would then create small groups and have students high in emotional management help the students who placed low develop these skills. This would be a great way to help students develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.

- Help teachers and staff understand their own EQ strengths. Counselors could have teachers take the EQ assessment and help them understand their own strengths and challenges. Imagine the impact on emotional, social, career, and academic skills, if
school counselors, teachers, parents, administrators, and students were developing their emotional learning; if they were using assessment data and reports to become more self-aware, to make more intentional choices, and to consider empathy and purpose in their actions toward each other and as change makers in the world.

Students are motivated by finding goals to give life meaning and working as a school counselor it is our job to find the uniqueness in each student we work with and help them to find meaning in certain groups where each student may have a diverse set of needs.

Conclusions

People have different experiences based on their background. Those experiences are what give us, sometimes, a separate set of lenses and a different view of reality. We must find some ways of bridging that divide to help people understand the experiences of other people.

To adequately prepare children for the future we need to teach a broader range of skills and competencies than is currently addressed in schools. Schools are moving toward a preventative approach to promote student social and emotional development. Researchers seem to agree that the best approach is comprehensive in order to develop a broad range of social and emotional skills that can be generalized to many settings and to integrate programs into the curriculum, not as an instructional unit but as a caring learning context that is a comprehensive multi-year program (Salovey & Mayer, 2004).

In a time of budget cuts, intense societal pressures on youth, and national testing standards, the strain on educational funds to fulfill the diverse needs of our children is becoming increasingly apparent. This calls for innovative approaches to addressing the personal, social, and academic needs of developing students. Because of its wide-ranging impact, the
understanding of emotional intelligence may be the key investment that secures a positive future for our children.
References


## The Quick Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment

**Emotional Awareness** – **Total:**

- **0** Never
- **1** Rarely
- **2** Sometimes
- **3** Often
- **4** Always

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My feelings are clear to me at any given moment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotions play an important part in my life</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My moods impact the people around me</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy to put words to my feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My moods are easily affected by external events</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily sense when I’m going to be angry</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I readily tell others my true feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy to describe my feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even when I’m upset, I’m aware of what’s happening to me</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to stand apart from my thoughts and feelings and examine them</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Emotional Management** – **Total:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I accept responsibility for my reactions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy to make goals and stick with them</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am an emotionally balanced person</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a very patient person</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can accept critical comments from others without becoming angry</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I maintain my composure, even during stressful times</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If an issue does not affect me directly, I don’t let it bother me</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can restrain myself when I feel anger towards someone</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I control urges to overindulge in things that could damage my well being</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I direct my energy into creative work or hobbies</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Emotional Awareness** – **Total:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I consider the impact of my decisions on other people</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can tell easily if the people around me are becoming annoyed</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sense it when a person’s mood changes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to be supportive when giving bad news to others</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am generally able to understand the way other people feel</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends can tell me intimate things about themselves</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It genuinely bothers me to see other people suffer</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I usually know when to speak and when to be silent</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care what happens to other people</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand when people’s plans change</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Relationship Management – Total:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am able to show affection</td>
<td>My relationships are safe places for me</td>
<td>I find it easy to share my deep feelings with others</td>
<td>I am good at motivating others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am a fairly cheerful person</td>
<td>It is easy for me to make friends</td>
<td>People tell me I am sociable and fun</td>
<td>I like helping people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others can depend on me</td>
<td>I am able to talk someone down if they are very upset</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### My EQ strengths!

Mark your EQ total scores to assess your strengths and areas for improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Awareness</td>
<td>0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Management</td>
<td>0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Emotional Awareness</td>
<td>0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Management</td>
<td>0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measure your effectiveness in each domain using the following key:

- **0 – 24** Area for Enrichment: Requires attention and development
- **25 – 34** Effective Functioning: Consider strengthening
- **35 – 40** Enhanced Skills: Use as leverage to develop weaker areas

### Using your EQ strength

For your strongest EQ domain, give an example of how you demonstrate your strength in your daily life or work:

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### Effects of your EQ strength

For your weakest EQ domain, give an example of how this affects you AND others in your daily life or work:

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### Improving your EQ strength

For your weakest EQ domain, what steps can you take to strengthen yourself in this area? How will this benefit you in your daily life or work?

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Note: Retrieved from San Diego City College MESA Program from a model by Paul Mohapel (paul.mohapel@shaw.ca) Reprinted with permission.