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Emotional Quotient

- a Youth Worker's Perspective



Erasmus+

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- Nezavisna udruga mladih, Croatia (hosting organization)
- International Foundation for Y-PEER Development, Bulgaria
- Muhu Noortekeskus, Estonia
- New Wellness Education, Italy
- YOUTH HORIZONS M.K.O, Greece
- ASOCIACIJA AKTYVISTAI, Lithuania
- PRISMS, Malta
- FRATERNITAS, Poland
- GEYC, Romania

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Dear youth workers, teachers, volunteers, and decision-makers in the youth work field,

With this publication, our goal was to present our understanding of Emotional Quotient which we had a chance to explore during the training course for youth workers in Zagreb.

The emotional quotient (otherwise known as emotional intelligence) has many definitions and models which illustrates how complex the concept is.

Imagine a world in which you could not understand when a friend was feeling sad or when a co-worker was angry. A large part of emotional intelligence is being able to think about and empathize with how other people are feeling. This often involves considering how you would respond if you were in the same situation. Emotional intelligence is essential for good interpersonal communication. Some experts believe that this ability is more important in determining life success than IQ alone.

During the EQ training course, we were exploring emotional quotient (EQ) on multiple levels – firstly, we were mapping critical situations in our personal lives and daily work in the youth work field which require high emotional stability, understanding of ourselves, other people and self-regulation skills.

Secondly, we were introduced to a few theoretical models of EQ so we could get a framework for our further work. We continued to use Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves model, authors of Emotional Intelligence 2.0. They define emotional intelligence as “the ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships.”

With non-formal, experiential methods, we were developing our EQ, as well as an understanding of 4 aspects of EQ according to these authors: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and social management.

In this publication, you will find a theoretical explanation of this model, our examples, and methods that we hope you can use to improve your EQ to be more satisfied and successful, as well as help young people to understand and regulate their own emotions, thoughts, and behaviors.

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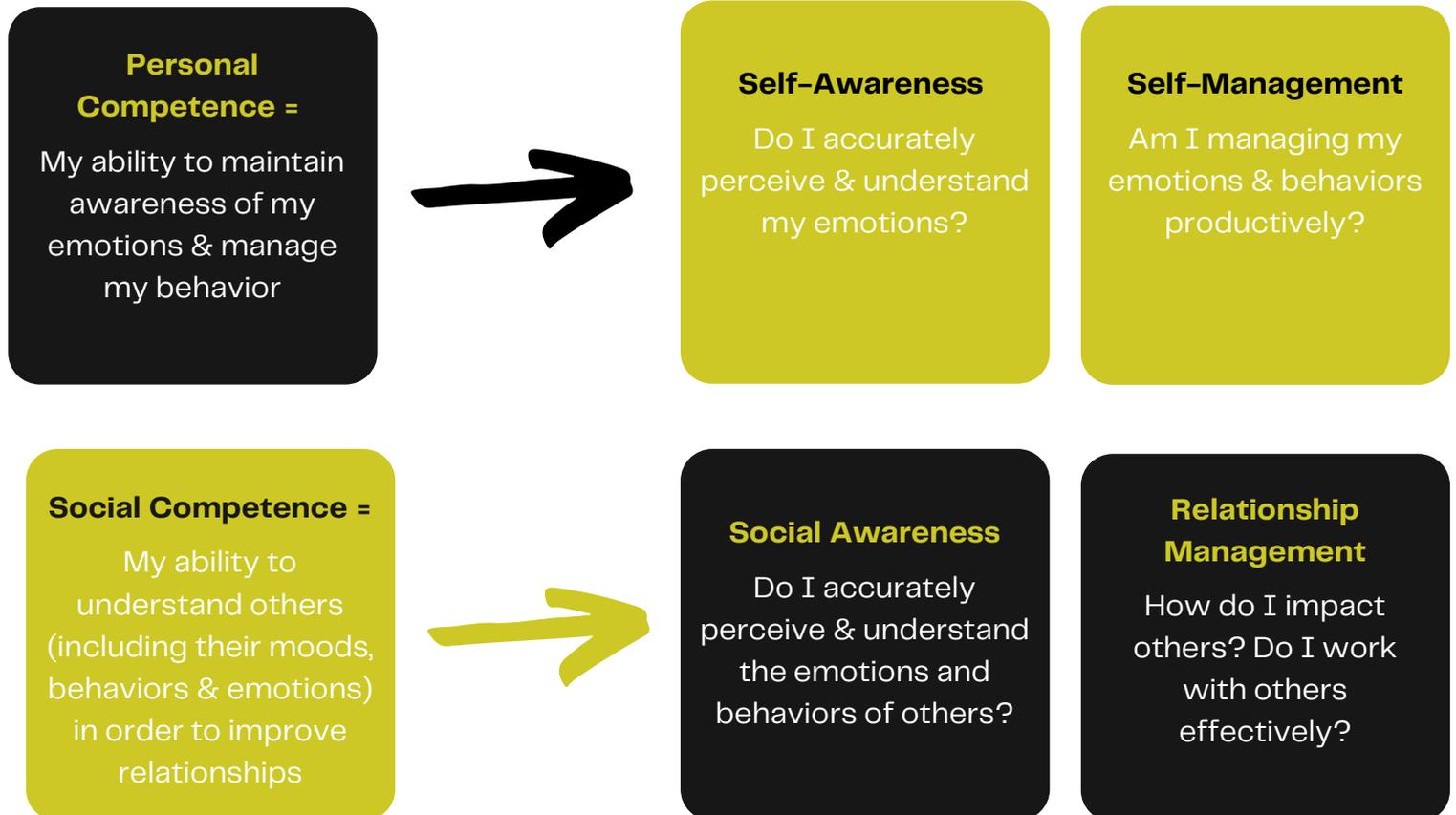


INTRODUCTION TO EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT

EQ was introduced by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer in their research paper in 1990. They provided the first scientific measure of emotional intelligence and defined it as "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 actions." Their model includes 2 domains (inter and intrapersonal) on 4 levels: Perceiving, Using, Understanding, and Managing Emotions.

With his book *Emotional Intelligence – Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (1995) Daniel Goleman contributed to the wide popularization of the concept. Goleman's model is a mixed model which includes five areas: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Motivating Oneself, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management.

Most popular models distinguish internal (self-, intra-) and external (social, inter-) domains. Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves model introduce 4 key aspects paired up under two key competencies (personal and social): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship (social) management.



They define emotional intelligence as an “ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships.”

There are many benefits of developed EQ and its importance for people’s general well-being, fulfilling relationships, satisfaction, success, mental and physical health is getting more and more scientific support.



EQ AND YOUTH WORK

For young people to accomplish change in a youth work setting, they need to have a safe space with trustworthy professionals.

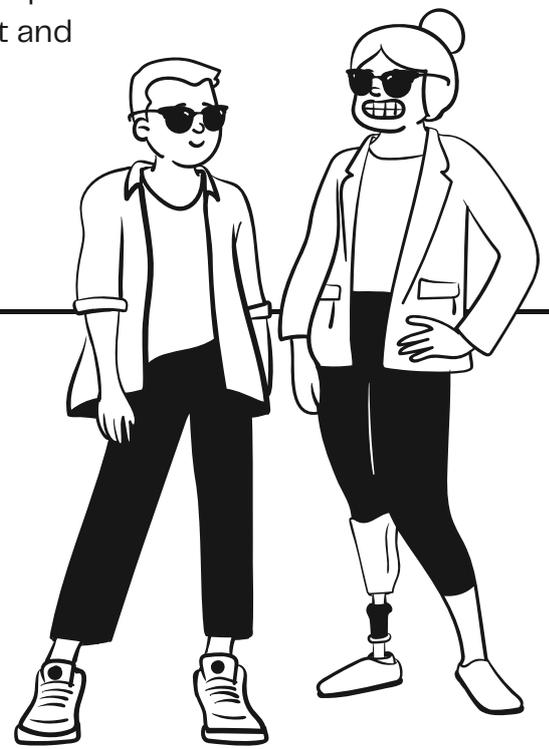
To ensure that youngsters freely gain new skills, knowledge and attitudes, youth workers need to be able to perceive and understand what are youngster's needs and how to address them. Some of the important skills include "reading between the lines" including verbal and non-verbal signs and attuning to youngsters' emotional states, understanding the connection between their emotions, behaviors and thoughts, recognizing the right tools and means needed for each young person to express themselves.

Relationship management in youth work includes managing young people (individually and in the group), colleagues, volunteers, parents, the local community and decision-makers. Reflecting, paraphrasing, assertiveness and dialogue skills are some of the important qualities that youth workers need to manage their relationships as well as help others to manage theirs.

But most of all, youth workers need to have a high level of self-awareness so they first understand themselves, their strengths, personality, needs, recognize and connect their thoughts, behavior and emotions to self-regulate and contain all the stress and challenging situations at work. They need to be aware of the different social roles they take on and how they communicate and adapt to different situations.

Youth workers are at risk of burnout because they face difficult situations, youngsters with tragic life stories and because of the overall stress of multitasking. To build psychological resilience, they should take care of themselves and fill their batteries to be successful in helping others. Self-care is one of the most important aspects of self-management which youth workers can also introduce to the youngsters to help them improve their regulation.

In the following chapters, we will introduce you to 4 main aspects of EQ: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and social (relationship) management.



SELF-AWARENESS

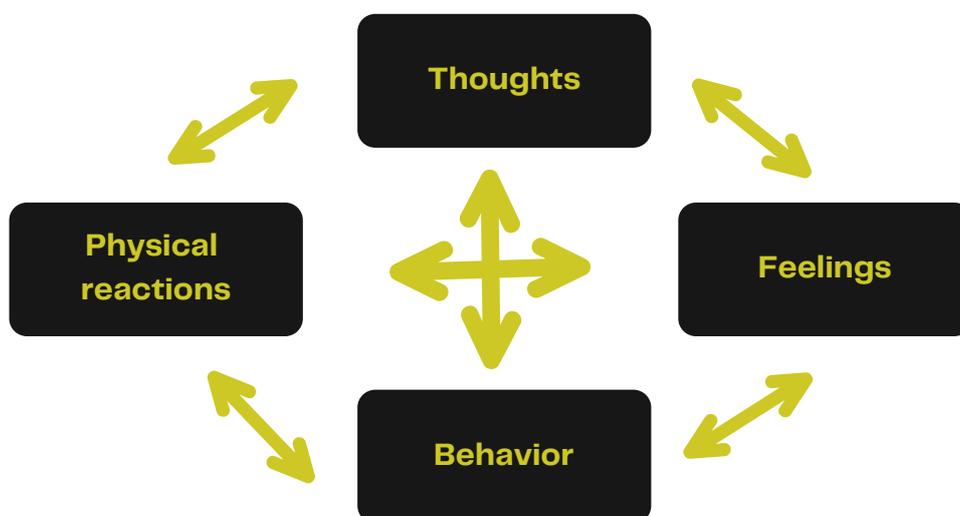
According to Bradberry and Greaves, “Self-awareness is your ability to accurately perceive your own emotions in the moment and understand your tendencies across situations. It includes staying on top of your typical reactions to specific events, challenges, and people.” While all four of the core EQ skills are interdependent, self-awareness is the most important because, without it, it’s difficult to develop the rest of them.

During this training course, we all agreed that self-awareness is something that we can learn, develop and train through constant efforts. It is a conscious process in which you can always learn something new.

Self-awareness is like a book we always keep writing. It is both connected to our daily life and youth work.

Methods to improve your self-awareness:

- Practicing mindfulness, e.g. meditation. It helps to bring us here and now, to explore how we feel at the present moment, what are the thoughts in our mind, and how does our body feel – what are the physical sensations in our body. Feelings, thoughts, behavior and physical reactions are all interconnected. If there is a change in one, the rest will change as well. Bringing attention to, becoming aware of, and accepting the pleasant and unpleasant sensations, feelings and thoughts, changes the quality of our experience and helps us to respond and behave consciously, instead of reacting automatically.



- Exposing yourself to different experiences and environments helps us to get acquainted with the manifestations of our characteristics that we weren't aware of, as well as expanding our perspectives and learning about the beauty of diversity.
- Allowing yourself to be vulnerable and showing it to others helps to realize that we are all human beings, struggling in our way. It makes us able to connect with others in our struggle, realizing that we are not alone and that we are enough and acceptable just the way we are.
- Asking questions to yourself (reflection) and others (e.g. coworkers, clients, etc.) – giving and receiving feedback.
 - An example of reflection can be to ask ourselves daily: how do I feel today, what do I need?
 - An example of the process of giving and receiving feedback can be the so-called co-vision: a feedback circle. We can gather with our colleagues and discuss how everybody felt in a certain situation. It involves creating a safe space and having one person moderating the circle.
- Be authentic, be clear with your core values and beliefs, and keep them up-to-date. Some values can change over time, so make sure that you review and clarify them from time to time with yourself. Being aware of your values can be crucial in making difficult decisions – ask yourself: if I make this choice, would it bring me closer to living my life according to my values? People whose life drew them away from their core values could feel disconnected, feel like they are low on energy, without a sense of meaning and purpose.
- Be aware of your "dark side", your "shadow" – what your weaknesses or flaws are, and have them in mind. The things about ourselves we are not aware of could have the biggest control over us. Be open towards exploring all of your characteristics – the positive and the negative ones, because there are two sides to each coin. When we befriend our "shadow", the things that we are not proud of or we want to hide, we shed light over them, they can become our ally and strength.



- Sometimes you can try to visualize or write down things about yourself:
 - You can try to think about yourself in different situations and imagine what kind of animal would represent your characteristics in those situations (for example when you are in a working flow, or when you are in an intense conversation) and why would you choose this animal to represent you? Would you like to develop characteristics of some other animal?
 - Think about yourself as a book and imagine your cover and title – what would they be like? What would be the name of your biography?
- Think about how you present yourself in different social situations? What kind of social "masks" do you put on? What is your "persona" when you connect with your role as a youth worker? To help you explore this, you can try to create a physical mask using paper, colors and different materials, and then try to interpret the shapes, colors, textures, symbols that you have used. Is there something new that you see when you look at your mask afterward?

One youth leader shared:

“During my first youth exchange I didn't feel confident about the workshops I was leading because it was my first experience, but the FEEDBACK given by the group let me realize how valuable I am and it improved my self-awareness.”



SOCIAL AWARENESS

As defined by Bradberry and Greave, “Social awareness is your ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is going on with them.”

This often means perceiving what other people are thinking and feeling and picking up information that others communicate verbally and nonverbally.

In youth work, we often run into situations that test our social awareness. Some examples as shared by youth and youth workers:

“For me, it is hard not to change people or help them if I assume they need it. Maybe they are happy with their choices...”

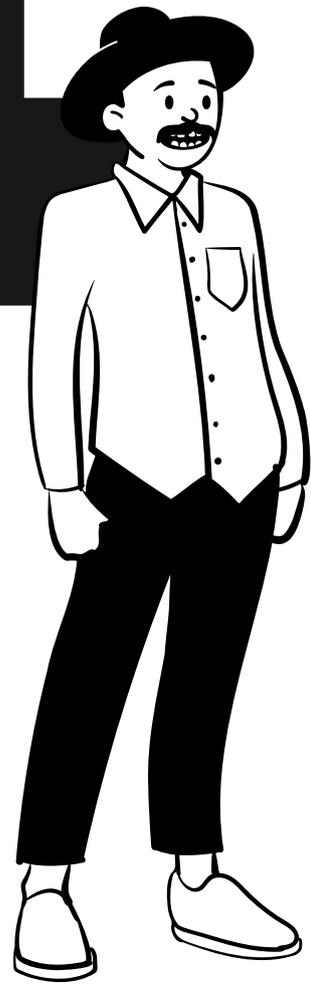
“I think that in the past I always wanted to help and advice but now I learned that sometimes people just want a shoulder to cry on or to be listened to. It is more than enough for them...”

“I have some difficulties with understanding others during conversations when I feel that the other person is not listening to what I say and she/he is closed to other points of view.”

“There is a difficulty when dealing with extreme behaviors because they can cover things which you cannot be easily aware of and require more attention and sensitivity.”

“Cultural background can affect the way people see things, interpret them or express themselves...”

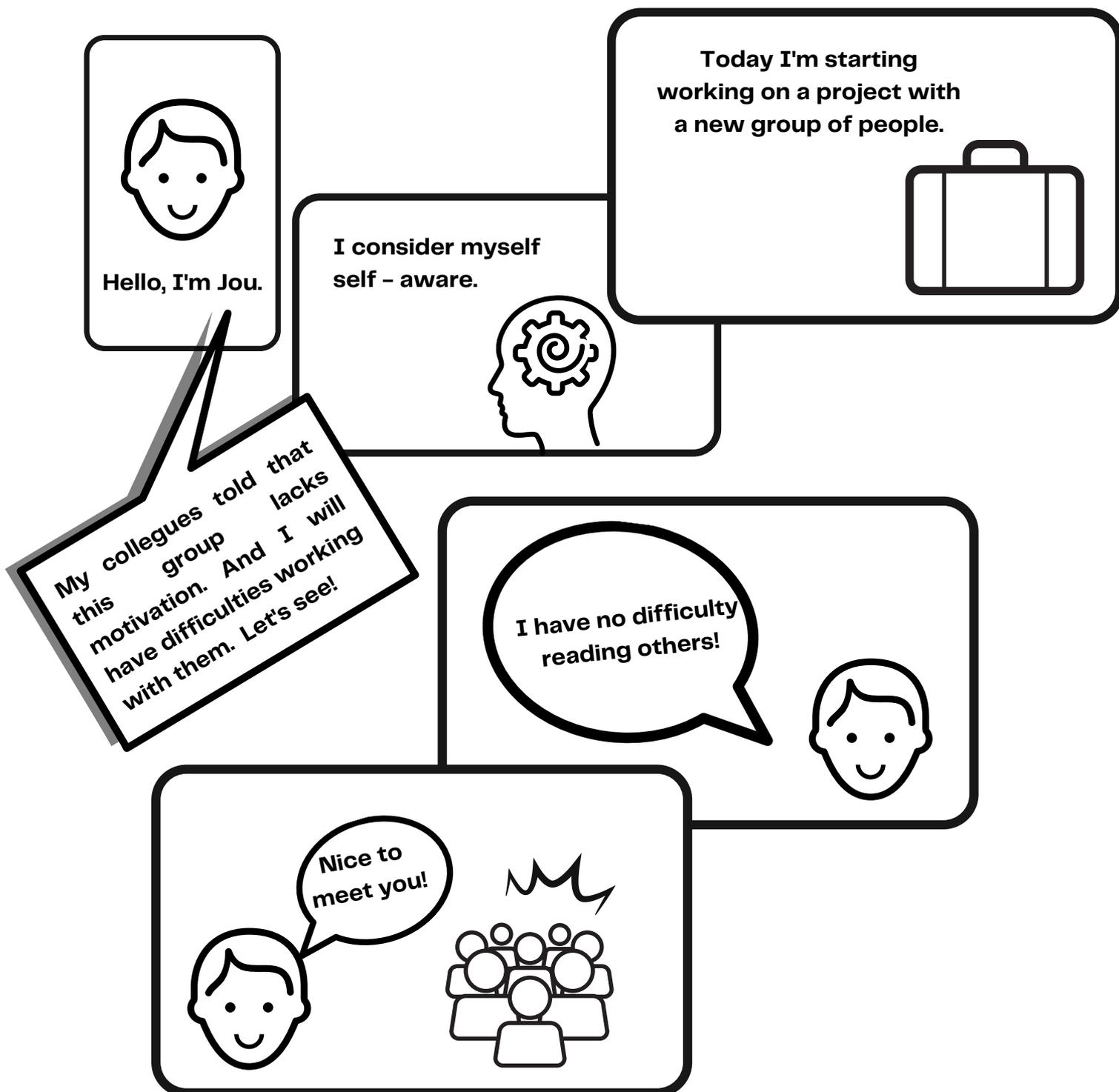
“Sometimes we see only the things that are shown to us, easily to be perceived, but sometimes we can’t “read” people because they don’t want us to.”



AN EXAMPLE OF JOU

Let's make it simple with an example!

I was working in a youth center on a new project where I didn't know the participants, it was my first time working with them. Some other youth workers warned me that it won't be easy to work with them and that I won't enjoy it very much, but I didn't want to get influenced by their thoughts and was still really excited.



The first meeting went very well, people seemed excited to work in a team. I believed they agreed with and connected to the goal and vision I created for the project, which was to win the youth start up competition by getting the best numerical result. But it turned out differently than I thought.

After our first meeting, people started to engage less and less, not to care anymore, to not do anything that was related to the tasks we had to complete. They didn't want to come to meetings and were not participating.

In the end, everything turned out not as I expected and it brought me to the decision to drop everything and give up because I felt that I was not going to win and that I lost control of the entire project.

The situation triggers the following reaction in JOU:

Thoughts:

- The people are not the right fit for the team
- I don't want to put the energy anymore
- People have their interests and are not motivated to contribute to teamwork
- They don't care
- They don't like me



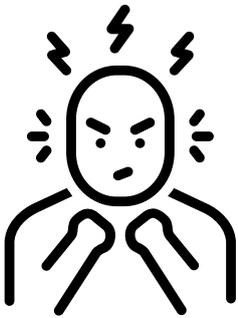
Feelings:



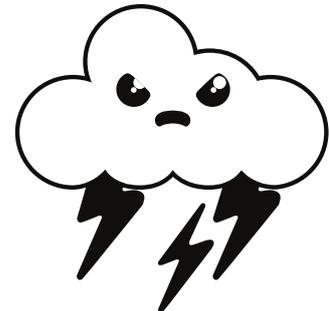
lack of motivation



disappointment



anger



stress



frustration



Behavior:

- working even more to compensate for others and to avoid failure
- working mostly alone, not investing in the team anymore, because I felt there was no point in trying
- dropping everything, when I realized that the outcome was not satisfying and felt that we couldn't win the competition

Was JIU socially aware in this situation or maybe they were not as good at reading others as they thought?

A socially aware person is a person who observes the facts in a given situation without jumping to conclusions about others. These facts can relate to the events or people's behaviors but exclude any value judgment.

For example:

Fact:	Value judgment:
We are not achieving the results we set	You do not care about the results
You did not come to the meeting	You do not want to come to the meeting
You are laughing when I speak	You do not take me seriously

Instead of judging a situation or behavior, JOU should check how well they know the other person: their backgrounds (cultural, social, personal), their needs and values to make an informed evaluation of the situation and respond (not react) to it constructively. JOU should ask themselves:

- How well do I know this person on a deeper, personal level? Do I bring any stereotypes or project preconceived opinions on them? Could this person be hiding under a certain mask as a way to protect themselves?
- What are my needs that are not met in this situation and do I know what the needs of the other person are?
- Do I listen to others or do I just want to be heard? In other words, do we communicate in a monolog or a dialogue?
- Do I need to be right or am I open to being proven wrong?
- Am I observing facts and working with others to understand them or am I jumping to conclusions based on appearance? What if what I see is only a fragment of the situation?

A possible alternative response pathway that is based on social awareness

Thoughts:

- People could have other priorities or problems that limit their time for this project
- The situation could change with time
- I might not know them enough to understand what is happening
- Search ways to improve

Emotions:

- Hope
- Motivation
- Openness
- Sensitive
- Optimistic



Behaviors:

Open dialogue with the team over the challenges faced:

- Active listening: not interrupting the speaker, using paraphrasing and reflection to deepen understanding
- Asking the participants what they think is not going well
- Asking them for suggestions to improve the work
- Asking them how they want and could contribute

Do not take it personally! :)

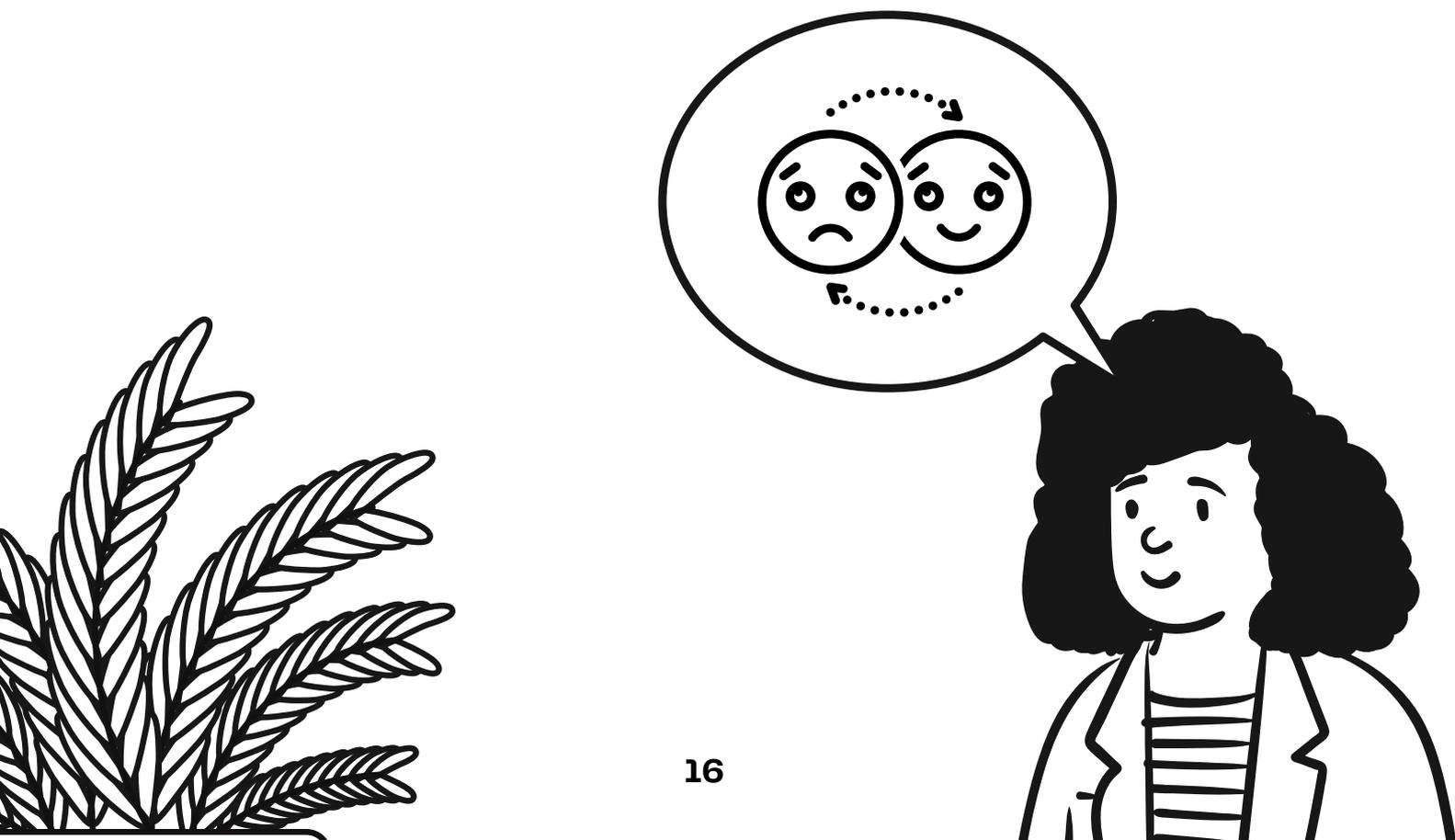
Remain open to adjusting the set vision and planned results to align better with participants.

If you are not sure what you are “picking up” from other people, you can always check and ask before you make a conclusion and judge. If you notice a dissonance between verbal and nonverbal information, usually the nonverbal one is more accurate and honest because it is harder to control and censor our nonverbal reactions. But even then – it is better to check with the other person what is going on before jumping to any conclusions.

If you want to improve your perception of other people’s emotional cues, you can try and exercise with your team:

- You have a speaker, a facial observer, a voice detector and a body language observer. The speaker should talk for 5 minutes sharing a story related to their own experience that made them feel sad, joyful, surprised, angry, frustrated, etc., but without explicitly mentioning the emotions and feelings. The 3 observers should focus on their respective tasks and analyze how the body language, voice and face of the speaker change throughout the process and what these changes indicate. At the end of the story, the observers share what they have noticed and say what kind of emotions they think the person had during the experience and check with the speaker if they picked it up correctly. Through this process, the speaker also gets feedback on his/her body language and thus becomes more self-aware.

To sum up – social awareness is about a dialogue to better understand yourself and others. This relates not only to opinions and points of view but to the needs and feelings.



SELF-MANAGEMENT

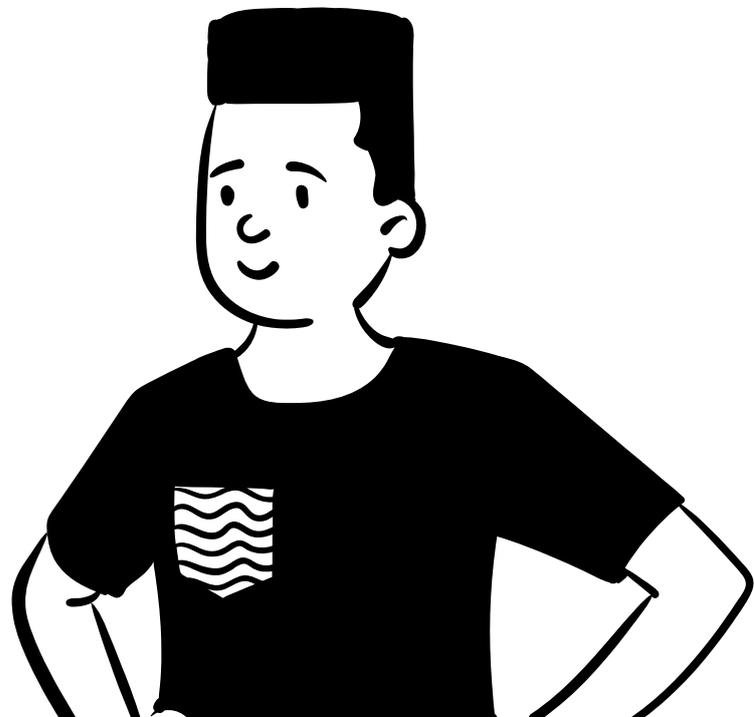
Bradberry and Greaves describe self-management as “your ability to use your awareness of your emotions to stay flexible and direct your behavior positively.”

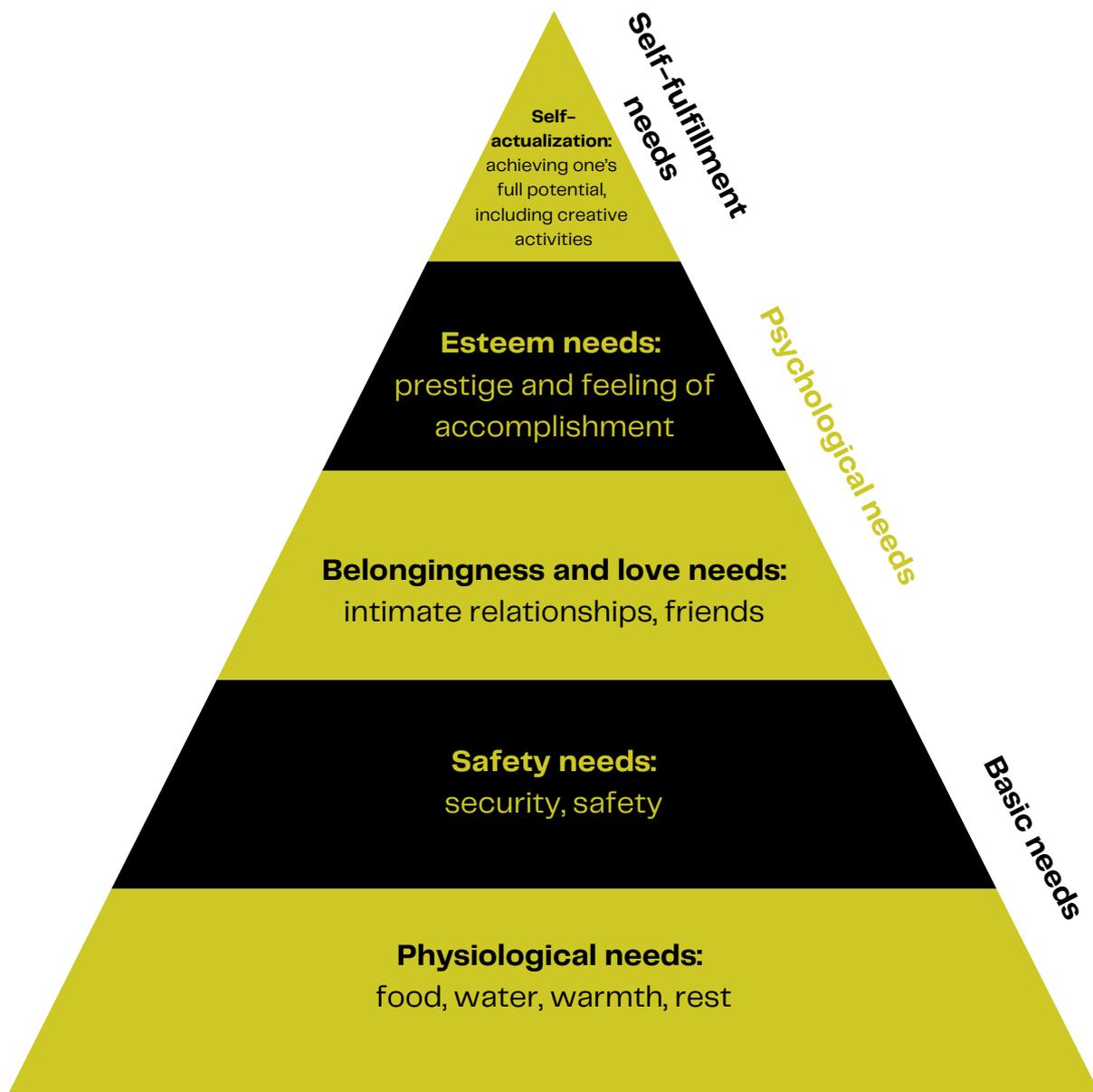
Effective self-management requires that you understand and manage your tendencies and consistently apply your skills in a variety of situational and interpersonal challenges.

Methods to improve your self-management

Now here is a closer look at the skills related to self-management:

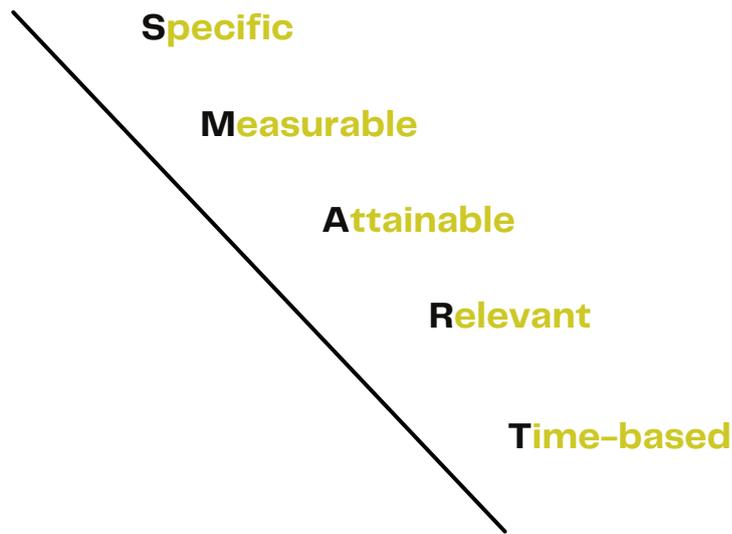
- A famous saying goes “There are things you can change and things you can not change. You have to be wise to make the difference between them”. In other words, a skill related to self-management is to spot things that you have the power to change.
- In addition, it is a skill to be thankful for the things you have. In particular, it is vital to appreciate and become aware of your everyday life.
- Self-control and self-awareness, meaning that once you have gained consciousness over what you have to do, you can take a step further and act.
- Be aware of the needs hierarchy – sometimes we are just too busy that we get sleep deprived or we do not get a chance to eat and then we get frustrated when we do not achieve our full potential. To fulfill the needs that are higher on the hierarchy, firstly all the ones below need to be filled.





- Make a self-care plan and stick to it wisely. Reflect upon the areas that are important for you: emotional, physical, social, professional, spiritual... and think of the activities that you can do on your daily, weekly and monthly basis to keep you balanced.
- Ask for help – most of us have more resources in our communities (at work, in our families, neighborhoods...) than we are aware of. Asking for help and helping others create strong and long-term bonds.

- When you create plans and set goals:
 - An important step is to identify which are the most important goals and prioritize them.
 - Get organized with the things you want to be done.
 - Take baby steps, little by little into performing those tasks; make SMART goals
 - Manage your time well and do not let yourself be distracted. (Time Management)
 - Focus and continue on the goals (Goal Achieving)



Those skills are necessary for any young person, youth worker, social worker and consultants, etc., because if not used, they can lead to stressed and overwhelming situations such as: multiple deadlines, family issues, job-related issues, health issues, environmental related issues, etc. and some unpleasant consequences such as irritation, remorse, guilt, shame...

To avoid these consequences, some possible solutions could be taken into consideration such as:

- Emotional: hobbies, day off, laughing, long bath, a walk
- Physical: regular check-ups, enough sleep, regular meals, exercise, hygiene...
- Social: staying in touch, romance, asking for help, fun group activities, interesting conversations...
- Professional: seeking help, taking breaks, setting boundaries, asking for feedback, good life-work balance...
- Spiritual: meditation, praying, volunteering, nature, reflection, being thankful...

Sometimes it is hard to keep staying balanced and many difficulties can emerge. Self-care prevents you from getting overwhelmed or burnout, but sometimes we find ourselves in a situation where it is too late for prevention.

If you notice that you or people from your surroundings tend to use alcohol, pills or drugs to numb your unpleasant feelings, or that your/their personal and professional functioning is decreasing, or if it is hard for you/them to process a past trauma – **it is okay to ask for professional help** – a psychologist, psychotherapist or a psychiatrist. Ask your doctor or do some online research and see what professionals are available.

Do not give up if you do not click with the first one – sometimes it takes time to find a perfect fit.

A message to pass on: be kind and gentle to yourself – everyone is struggling in their way and you are not alone.

Whatever you are going through, it will pass sooner or later. With a little help and support – probably sooner.

“You are your own master.”
– Buddha

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.”
– Mahatma Gandhi



RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Bradberry and Greaves say that “Relationship management is your ability to use your awareness of your own emotions and those of others to manage interactions successfully. This ensures communication and effective handling of conflict. Relationship management is also the bond you build with others over time.”

Examples of situations from YW context where relationship management skills were needed:

- Two years ago, the President and the Vice President of my organization had a big argument because the Vice President would not fulfill his responsibilities, such as creating a Training Plan, and as a result, he decided to quit.
- During a training event, a friend of mine had to create and facilitate a workshop with another person and he never did anything they both agreed and decided to do. My friend decided to work on her part because it was also hard to communicate with him. As a result, the workshop was not well organized and done. The workshop was online and they were from different countries, they could only communicate online and it was the first time they had to work together.
- Once my international volunteer had a problem with paying too much for milk from a local farmer. When she realized the mistake, she was really confused about what to do. As she was not speaking the local language, I spoke with the farmer myself, and since she didn't notice it at the right time also, she paid back all the money.

Consistency and communication are essential to having a coordinated and functional team.

- Compliments and showing affection improves social capacity building.
- Treat others the way you want to be treated!
- Maybe you have an idea of what other people's problems are, but it is only your perspective that may or may not be true. You can help with support, listening and maybe asking questions to broaden their perspective.
- Some youth workers meet youngsters in a counseling setting so they need to have some basic counseling skills: active listening, reflecting, paraphrasing, attuning, mirroring
- In a group setting, there can be conflicts between the youngsters and it is necessary to create a safe and objective space to resolve it. Following some ground rules could be crucial for a successful dialogue:
 - Listen to others, do not interrupt or start additional discussions.
 - Relate what you say to what the others have said and use everyday language.
 - Talk about your own experience.
 - Be present and respect the others and the confidentiality of the discussion.
 - Search and bring together. Boldly deal with emerging conflicts and find issues that have gone unnoticed. Talk to the others directly and ask about their views.
- To assertively keep your borders, use 'I' statements: an assertion about feelings, beliefs, values, etc. of the person speaking, generally expressed as a sentence beginning with the word 'I'.

How to use "I" statement

I feel: Grab attention with a feeling

When: Explain the situation

Because: Why do you care so much?

I need: Tell them what you need from them

Would you mind: Specifically explain what you want them to do

- "Sandwich" each side of the unpleasant news with compliments and positive statements making it easier to digest.

Follow these tips for best results with the "sandwich" method

1. Begin the conversation with a genuine compliment and positive statement about the person in a non-judgmental, calm, and congenial tone of voice.
2. When moving into the meat of the matter, use transition words such as regrettably, unfortunately, or however. Be specific. It is best to state no more than two items to improve. This is not the time to air your laundry list of gripes.
3. Remain calm throughout and speak in a low and even tone of voice. State the facts and do not get emotional.
4. Maintain an open and inviting body language. You do not want to appear closed off, with your arms or hands folded.
5. When an apology is warranted, do not skirt it. Say "I'm sorry" or "I apologize".
6. Suggest specific ways to resolve the matter so the two of you can move forward.
7. End with positive and encouraging statements that will help renew the relationship and allow everyone involved to feel good about the conversation that just took place.
8. Follow up a few days later to see how the person felt about the conversation and confirm all is resolved or if further discussion is needed.

Its application is infinite. Use the Sandwich Technique to:

- Give feedback to employees, supervisors, and co-workers
- Resolve personal situations with family members, relatives, friends, and neighbors
- Express your complaints to vendors, suppliers, store personnel and the general public



"If you are tuned out of your own emotions, you will be poor at reading them in other people." -Daniel Goleman

"Argument is meant to reveal the truth, not to create it."
-Edward de Bono

"The emotional brain responds to an event more quickly than the thinking brain."
-Daniel Goleman.

"When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion."
-Dale Carnegie.

"We need 4 hugs a day for survival. We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance. We need 12 hugs a day for growth."
-Virginia Satir

"Live a life you will remember."
-Avicii

"If you really want something, all you need to do is ask. 98% of the time you will get it!"
-Mariella Zahra, November 2021

"We cannot choose the situation we end up with, what we can choose is our reaction to them."
-Andreea-Bianca Isac from Cluj-Napoca



AFTERWORD

We hope you have enjoyed this short overview of EQ and that you will find it useful. There is a lot of information about EQ already online and we encourage you to learn more with some of the sources listed on the following pages. The content we brought here is a combination of theoretical knowledge and our own relevant experience as youth workers.



We have one more inspiring message:

Invest in the lives of children and youth to empower them to create lasting change in their own lives and communities.

SOURCES

Sources used in this publication:

- <https://careervision.org/harness-power-emotional-intelligence-workplace/>
- <https://www.advancedetiquette.com/business/the-sandwich-technique-to-deliver-bad-news-or-complaints>
- <https://livingwell.org.au/well-being/mental-health/living-by-your-values/>
- <https://www.timeoutdialogue.fi/tools/>
- <https://positivepsychology.com/wp-content/uploads/Self-Care-Checkup.pdf>

To explore more about this topic, we suggest you follow the sources below:

- Books and articles:

Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves: Emotional Intelligence 2.0 Hardcover

Daniel Goleman: Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ

Salovey and Mayer's Emotional Intelligence Theory:

<https://exploringyourmind.com/salovey-mayers-emotional-intelligence-theory/>

Russ Harris: Doing What Matters in Times of Stress: An Illustrated Guide:

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240003927>

- Movies:

Inside out: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2096673/>

Equilibrium: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0238380/?ref=fn_al_tt_1

- Mindfulness:

Headspace guide to meditation (Netflix): https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13617024/ref=fn_al_tt_4

Insight timer (app): <https://insighttimer.com/>

- Releasing tension:

Progressive muscle relaxation: <https://www.therapistaid.com/work-sheets/progressive-muscle-relaxation-script.pdf>

Shaking exercise: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DhwJoylC28

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