



IQ & EQ

Maybe you've heard about your IQ. That's your Intelligence Quotient, and it's supposed to measure how smart you are. But have you heard of your EQ? That stands for Emotional Intelligence Quotient, and some people think it's as important to your success as your IQ.

Your EQ is about how your feelings affect your ability to learn and to do what you need to do. Feelings such as fear, worry, and depression might hold us back from doing our best. So if you're smart but also anxious and worried, you might not be able to get your brain to work the right way.

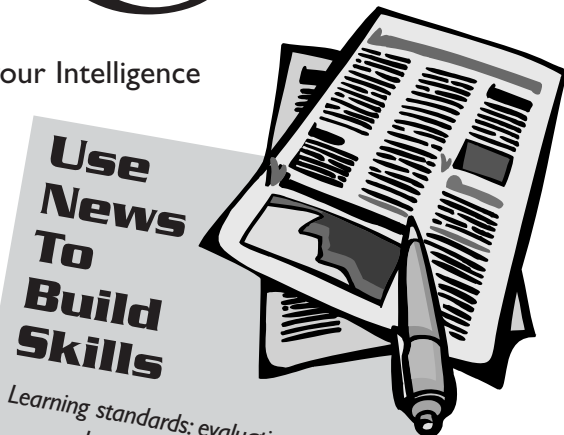
What can you do about this? How can you build your brain's EQ skills?

Start by knowing how you feel. Recognizing when you are happy, sad, worried, anxious, excited, or frightened is the first step to dealing with your mood. And EQ is not just about you. You also need to pay attention to other people's feelings and moods. Why? The people who do best in life, the most successful people, are the ones who know how to get along with others. You might be really smart, but if no one wants to deal with you, who'll ever know just how smart you are? If you can't have good and healthy relationships with other people, you may not be happy, and if you're not happy, you probably won't be able to perform well, whether in school or elsewhere.

So if you know your own moods and can read other people well, what next? You can learn how to use the feelings you have to help you succeed. If you're afraid to try something new, for example, you'll need to find a way to overcome your fear so that it doesn't stop you from moving forward. You might ask yourself to think about the worst possible outcome and how likely that is to happen. Often, when we stop to think about fear, we realize that what we are most afraid of is not likely to happen. It's good to ask yourself, "What if?" For example: "What if I take this test and I don't pass?" Is that really so horrible? If you don't pass, perhaps you can take it again or do extra credit to make up for it. But walking yourself down the "What if" path can help you see that no problem is so huge that you can't find a way to solve it. That's when the ability to help deal with your emotions can help you solve problems.

Another part of EQ is your empathy. Empathy is the ability to recognize and respect the feelings of other people. This is sometimes known as "reading people" or having "people skills." Are you good at that? Do you pay attention to other people's moods and react the right way?

If you have a healthy EQ, that means that you are good at getting along with people, and that makes you really smart. Studies have shown that people who manage their own feelings well and get along with others succeed in school and in life.



Use News To Build Skills

Learning standards: evaluating personality characteristics, comparing

Find someone in the newspaper whom you believe to have a high EQ. Look for someone who appears to get along well with others or who copes well with moods and emotions. Write a comparison between yourself and that person. How are you alike and different? How would you rate your EQ?

