This book can help you develop your intellectual and emotional skills. It is practical, sound, and clear. Use it—and become happier, more effective human beings.”
—Stephen Gilligan, Ph.D.

■ WHAT do my emotions mean?
■ HOW do I manage my emotions?
■ HOW can I deal with conflicts in an emotionally intelligent way?
■ WHAT motivates people and how can I take that into account?
■ HOW can I handle situations in the best possible way?
■ HOW do I get what I want AND satisfy others?

Have you ever sought the answers to those key life questions? This book will help you find the solutions. *7 Steps to Emotional Intelligence* reveals the structure beneath Emotional Intelligence (EI), utilizing its unique framework to combine EI and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)—the study of excellence which examines how behavior is neurologically formulated. Integrating the insights of EI and NLP, *7 Steps to Emotional Intelligence* promotes a greater understanding of the way emotions work—and how they can be worked upon.

This book is driven by one important message: “Don’t just think about it, do it!” A model-based guide packed with powerful exercises and self-assessment techniques, it allows you to design your own EQ improvement system, and to partake in an intensive EQ excellence course that utilizes the self-programming practices of NLP.

A thoroughly structured, functionally-formatted guide to improving your EQ, *7 Steps to Emotional Intelligence* serves as a textbook of EI theory, a manual of NLP techniques, and a workbook that systematically leads you through the process of dynamic EQ improvement. Use it and discover how to live more happily and productively.

**PATRICK E. MERLEVEDE, M.SC.** is an organizational consultant and trainer specializing in Emotional Intelligence, Human Resources and Knowledge Management. He runs the internet company jobEQ.com, which applies the principles of this book in areas such as assessment, recruiting and coaching.

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Patrick E. Merlevede and Denis Bridoux are co-authors of *Mastering Mentoring and Coaching with Emotional Intelligence: Increase Your JobEQ* isbn: 190442082 UK £18.99 USA $24.95
7 Steps to Emotional Intelligence

Patrick E. Merlevede, M.Sc., Denis Bridoux & Rudy Vandamme

Crown House Publishing Limited
www.crownhouse.co.uk
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A walk through this book—
How to use this manual

We begin this book by defining Emotional Intelligence and explaining the underlying philosophy of the field of neurolinguistics, on which the rest of this book is based. We summarize this philosophy in a series of presuppositions, or operating assumptions, which we consider in relation to Emotional Intelligence.

Each lesson is a step closer to achieving a higher level of Emotional Intelligence (EQ). In fact, measuring the EQ of participants, before and after several series of classes run by one of our training organizations (Patrick Merlevede’s Acknowledge) in the first half of 2000, showed a measurable average increase of Emotional Intelligence of participants in 10 to 15%.

In the following seven lessons you will encounter elements linked both to Classic Intelligence (IQ) as well as to Emotional Intelligence. We’ll cover how to define a problem, how to find a solution as well as how to implement this solution. In fact, we will consider how closely EQ and IQ are knitted together. For instance, a child who is tested for its IQ will score better if the test is taken in a context that stimulates a resourceful emotional state. Also, having a high EQ doesn’t seem to matter unless your IQ is above 90.

The following table gives you an overview of the structure of this book and the skills we will help you to develop.

---

1 Measured on the participants of two series of classes organized by Patrick E. Merlevede, M.Sc., between February and July 2000. The students took the same test before and after the series of classes (24 course hours in total). This test scores people on 14 different scales related to their Emotional Intelligence. Most people who had scores indicating that they were emotionally vulnerable, or had to exercise caution on any one of these 14 indicators, increased their level of competence to proficient or optimal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Title</th>
<th>Abilities and Topics Covered</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Introduction: | ● Definition of Emotional Intelligence and its relationship to “classic” intelligence  
                       ● Presuppositions help to develop one’s Emotional Intelligence |
| Emotions 101: Understanding the Power of Emotions | ● Managing one’s emotional energy  
                                                           ● Importance of taking emotions into account |
| 1: Managing Your Emotions | ● Recognizing and regulating your emotions, so that your emotions help you to achieve results  
                                          ● Associating with and dissociating from emotions  
                                          ● Using emotional states as resources to reach your goals  
                                          ● Using emotional states for a more complete creativity |
| 2: Levels in Experience and Communication | ● Knowing your mission and values in life and how to align what you do with these  
                                                           ● Understanding the meaning of emotions  
                                                           ● The power of emotionally driven beliefs |
| 3: Planning for Success | ● Having a precise outcome and knowing how to obtain it  
                                             ● Overcoming obstacles in the way of your goals  
                                             ● Making expectations and reality match |
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Abilities and Topics Covered</th>
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| 4: Learn How You Perceive the World and Be in Charge of What Makes You Tick | - Being able to differentiate between emotions  
- Knowing how to regulate your states  
- Realizing how you and your conversation partners structure their experiences  
- Reducing misunderstandings and communication problems to the difference in communication which caused them |
| 5: Emotional Intelligence in Company                      | - Examining an experience from different perceptual positions  
- Developing a higher degree of flexibility to handle conflicts  
- Bringing emotion into communication and de-mining conflicts |
| 6: Asking the Right Questions                             | - Moving from unspecific communication to a precise understanding  
- Asking questions to better understand your own and others’ experiences  
- Knowing the difference between fact and opinions  
- Identifying limitations and getting to a breakthrough |
| 7: Successfully Interact with Yourself and Others          | - Observation skills as a key element for more Emotional Intelligence  
- Knowing the synchronization categories as tools for calibration and rapport  
- Pacing and leading |
| Conclusions: Making Connections, Gaining in Emotional Wisdom | - Developing new emotional abilities  
- Using examples as a source for more Emotional Intelligence |
Each subject will be treated in a similar fashion, beginning by presenting the goals we have in mind for you and why the topic is relevant. Then we explain our model and round it off by giving an example or an application. At the end of the topic you’ll find a series of exercises to help you master the skill presented.

We designed our chapters as independent units, so that you can read them separately in whatever order you like. For instance, you could go straight to the third lesson and begin by making a well-formatted plan for what you want to get from this book. Of course, this book can also be treated in a linear fashion, as you would probably do with any other book. From the feedback given to us by a few hundred readers of preliminary versions of this book, we’d like to recommend you study one chapter a week, so that you have time to do the exercises and find ways to integrate the model in your own life.

Have fun!

Patrick, Denis and Rudy
Lesson 1: Managing Your Emotions

“One must have a reason to be happy.
Once a reason is found, however, one becomes happy automatically.”
Victor E. Frankl

Goals

- Recognize and control emotional impulses, so that you can stop your emotions from managing you.
- Learn to manage your emotions.
- Relive experiences and be able to dissociate from them so that they don’t affect you and you can learn from them.
- Re-access the emotions you like and have more of them more of the time.
- Choose your emotional state: e.g. confident, resolved, easy-going.
- Motivate yourself.

Neurolinguistic Assumptions

In this chapter we apply the following assumptions:

- Your mind and your body are inseparable and operate as one single system. What affects one affects the other and vice versa.
- An emotion is something you do, a specific product of human functioning. They can be charted and organized.
- There is a context for which anything you do may be appropriate.
- You have within you all the resources to achieve what you want. You just don’t know how to access these resources as much as you’d like, yet. If somebody can do something, so can you!

Why this Lesson?

At this stage, the biggest challenge you encounter may be to control your emotions. By learning to do this you will be able to manage them and restructure them in the way you desire.

- Emotions can be used as a goal on their own (e.g. being relaxed, having fun, power). Ideally you should be able to remain in a resourceful state in an ongoing fashion, as it will
act as a filter\textsuperscript{1} which will color your everyday experiences in the best possible manner. For example, an established religion like Christianity promotes the adoption of a total and unconditional love for one’s fellow human beings. Likewise, Buddhism encourages the adoption of dispassionate compassion.

- You can also use emotion as a \textit{resource} for reaching a goal, i.e. use it as a means to an end. For example, although anger is often perceived as negative, provided it is in the right proportion, focused on the right person, in the right place and at the right time, it may be an appropriate emotion to have. By learning to separate an emotion from the context where it emerges spontaneously and to consciously apply it in other, perhaps more appropriate contexts, you can develop your emotional competence.

\textbf{Introduction: A Plea for Self-management}

Sometimes we think our environment is responsible for our mood. For example, some people are troubled when it rains, and blame it for affecting their temper. Others have an early morning mood when they “get out of the wrong side of the bed.” Others are troubled by the shortness of winter days … And yet others need alcohol, pills or drugs to feel OK.

It is now well established that loud music, with a rhythm of 130 beats per minute or more, works as a stimulant or provokes aggression in traffic, by directly affecting the fluids in our inner ear, in our organ of balance, the vestibular system. Soft, classical music on the other hand, with a rhythm of 60 beats per minute, has been shown to stimulate the memory.\textsuperscript{2} Many religious rituals across the world use the effect that music has on emotions. Think

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1} L. Michael Hall, the neurolinguistic scholar, calls such a filter a “canopy of consciousness.”}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{2} This is discussed in the book \textit{Superlearning 2000} by Sheila Ostrander, Lynn Schroeder, and Nancy Ostrander, New York, Delacorte Press, 1994.}
Lesson 4:
Learn How You Perceive the World and Be in Charge of What Makes You Tick

“Experience is not what happens to you; It is what you do with what happens to you.”
Aldous Huxley

Goals
In this chapter you will achieve the following four goals:

- Differentiating between the content of an experience and its structural representation.
- Enriching and modifying the structural representation of an experience, using all sensory channels and their underlying qualities.
- Finding patterns in your emotional abilities, including the sequencing of sensory information and the filters in your thoughts.
- Knowing how to enrich your emotional competencies.

Neurolinguistic Assumptions
In this chapter we will apply the following four assumptions:

- We continuously process information through our five or more senses.
- We operate from our internal maps, rather than from the external reality.
- If somebody can do something, anybody can.
- Changing the process by which we experience reality is more valuable than changing the content of our experience of reality.

Why this lesson?
- Emotions lead to competencies. They drive behavior, lead us to filter information and structure our experience. Insight into these processes is required for Emotional Intelligence.
There are patterns underneath emotions. The more you understand these patterns, the more flexibility you can develop for yourself and the more easily you can understand others. This way, Emotional Intelligence becomes a fascinating road to wisdom.

By fully exploring the possibilities of your senses you will create a richer experience of living for yourself and find out how to enrich the experience of others.

Introduction

What’s your emotional state while you’re reading this book? Are you curious or fascinated? Are you surprised or astonished? To answer such questions, you need to be able to distinguish between these emotions. What’s the difference between being curious and being fascinated? Between surprise and astonishment? In our introduction to this book we explained that emotions have a bodily and a cognitive component. You may not be aware of the meaning you assign to a strong emotion, even if such a meaning is present. Meaning operates as bodily presuppositions.¹ Being embedded in experience, emotions, like our behavior, thinking and context, have an internal structure. We call all such internal building blocks of our emotions “emotional operators.” The model of representation channels and the Meta-Programs which we are going to introduce you to below form tools to map out the patterns of our emotional functioning.

Before we do that, let’s go back to clarifying what we mean by the internal structure of emotions. Do you know the difference between fear and anxiety? Do you know the similarity between frustration and disillusionment? What’s the connection between power and anger? To describe these connections you need a minimum of vocabulary. After all, being afraid may not be as precise as being anxious. Being frustrated is more active than being disappointed. Power is as proactive as anger, but has less direction.

¹ Wyatt Woodsmall has been pointing out this difference between linguistic and bodily presuppositions.
In her book *The Emotional Hostage*, Leslie Cameron-Bandler describes how such emotions are related, but have a different structure. On the one hand, anticipation is directed towards the future and has an active component. On the other hand, hope is also directed to the future, but it is more a passive waiting. Or take the difference between frustration and disappointment. While disappointment is passive, taking stock of the past without really hoping to change anything in the future, frustration is active, leaving an exit possibility, serving as a driver for action.

How is all this linked to Emotional Intelligence, you may ask? Well, our experience has taught us that people with high Emotional Intelligence have such a degree of emotional awareness that they are able to recognize and discriminate between the building blocks of their emotions. In our terminology: emotionally intelligent people do not think in terms of emotions, but in terms of emotional patterns, or the building blocks which form the emotions.

Representation systems or channels are a model which will increase your knowledge of your own emotional building blocks.

**Representation Systems: How Do People Construct Their Internal World?**

We receive input through our senses on a continuing basis. Until we mention it, you may not have been directly conscious of the typeface we’re using, or the weight of the book in your hands, or the quality of the light on the page, or the smell of the paper and glue, etc. And yet, all such items of information come in all the time, through our eyes, ears, skin, nose, mouth, etc., but we’re only aware of a minute fraction or selection of them at any one time. We all process them in a number of different ways depending on our personality, as they go through a series of filters which ultimately delete, generalize and distort our experience of reality in order to manage in everyday life, otherwise we’d be overwhelmed. From

---

2 That emotions have a structure is one of the basic premises of Leslie Cameron-Bandler and Michael Lebeau in their book *The Emotional Hostage* (Real People Press, 1986). This book was far ahead of its time, and gave a theory of emotions about 10 years before Goleman made the term “Emotional Intelligence” famous.
Lesson 6: Asking the Right Questions

“The limitations of my language are the boundaries of my world.”
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Goals
In this chapter we aim to enable you to accomplish three objectives:
• To develop awareness of how a person changes their experience by talking about it.
• To learn to question in such a way that the other person begins to explore their own map.
• To learn to examine yourself so that you realize what you really feel and think.

Neurolinguistic Assumptions
Three assumptions in particular apply in this chapter:
• The map is not the territory. Experience is subjective.
• The meaning of communication lies in the effect it elicits.
• People do not directly react to the world, but to their map of the world.

Why this lesson?
Why would you read this chapter?
• By asking the right questions you can help a person to describe their experience in a more precise and detailed manner.
• In addition, you can apply this tool to your own mapping of the world, and rectify the distortions and filters you have applied to this mapping. This will enable you to get in touch with your real emotions, instead of those you may be expected to feel.
• Who knows better than you in what areas you need to increase your Emotional Intelligence? Sayings such as
“Know Thyself” and “Wisdom Begins With Self-Knowledge” may sound pat to begin with, yet one should learn to appreciate their importance. We will enable you to interpret such sayings as meaning “Know your Own Map of the World.” After all, as we explained earlier, all emotions are connected with cognitive contents.

- Appropriately questioning a statement someone makes will help you to keep track of their thinking and bring you closer to real understanding. It can also be a very effective way of defusing conflict.

  e.g.: Somebody says: “It’s always the same thing with you, you don’t respect me.” Instead of defending yourself, replying: “That’s not true!” you could ask: “How do you know that I don’t respect you?” or “What makes you think that I don’t respect you?”

- From the language a person uses, you can deduce what values they uphold and track the thought patterns their reasoning follows.

A Counter-example: What NOT to Do

“Do you sleep like you used to? Don’t you have more headaches? Don’t you show more nervousness or more disinterest? Did some kind of allergic reaction, such as mucous inflammations, breathing problems or skin diseases, cause you trouble lately? More stomach or intestinal problems? More heart complaints? Losing hair? Other pains, such as cramps, etc.?”

If one is to believe a letter from a local doctor that was published in a newspaper in July 1998, your mobile phone could be the cause of all these troubles. Once you have made it through this lesson, you’ll understand how this way of questioning tends to make you sick. In fact, the language used by this doctor is rather hypnotic: in order to “understand” the questions quoted above you need to imagine already having each of the described diseases, just to make sure that you haven’t got any of them ... If you ask such questions to someone who is easily influenced, the likelihood of getting a “yes” answer to one of these questions is much higher. If all doctors were to use this diagnostic style, half of the population would be on sick leave.
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