

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence, or EI is the ability to understand your own emotions and those of people around you. The concept of emotional intelligence, developed by Daniel Goleman, means you have a self-awareness that enables you to recognise feelings and helps you manage your emotions.

On a personal level, it involves motivation and being able to focus on a goal rather than demanding instant gratification. A person with a high emotional intelligence is also capable of understanding the feelings of others. Culturally, they are better at handling relationships of every kind.

Just because someone is deemed 'intellectually' intelligent, it does not necessarily follow they are emotionally intelligent. Having a good memory, or good problem solving abilities, does not mean you are capable of dealing with emotions or motivating yourself.

Highly intelligent people may lack the social skills that are associated with high emotional intelligence. Savants, who show incredible intellectual abilities in narrow fields, are an extreme example of this: a mathematical genius may be unable to relate to people socially.

However, high intellectual intelligence, combined with low emotional intelligence, is relatively rare and a person can be both intellectually and emotionally intelligent.

Does socialising make you clever?

Both emotional and intellectual problems are more easily resolved when in a good mood, which to some extent depends on emotional intelligence. Self-motivated students tend to do better in school exams.

The ability to interact well with others and having a good group of friends, means students are more likely to remain in education, whereas those with emotional difficulties tend to drop out.



On the negative side, low emotional intelligence can affect intellectual capabilities. Depression interferes with memory and concentration. Psychological tests show feelings of rejection can dramatically reduce IQ by about 25%. Rejection increased feelings of aggressiveness and reduced self-control.

It is this quality of self-control, rather than being impulsive, which is regarded as necessary to perform well in IQ tests. So a low emotional intelligence may limit intellectual performance.