

EQ CONNECTIONS

An Emotional Intelligence Newsletter by E.I. Assessments



“IN TIMES OF STRESS, THE BEST THING WE CAN DO FOR EACH OTHER IS TO LISTEN WITH OUR EARS AND OUR HEARTS AND TO BE ASSURED THAT ARE QUESTIONS ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT AS OUR ANSWERS.”

– Fred Rogers

STRESS TOLERANCE:

Loving Change

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Do you enjoy professional problems that challenge your thinking? Are you comfortable in business or professional environments which are deadline driven or constantly change? Do you look for jobs or are you in a position with high expectations that place personal demands on you? If you answered YES to these questions then you would probably score very high on *Stress Tolerance* on the EQ-i 2.0.

The professionals I have worked with over the years who score high in *Stress Tolerance* will admit to being attracted to, almost needing, a certain level of pressure, demand and expectation in their work. They don't like to just sit around and they feel most

professionally engaged in work when they take on challenges which require them to use their knowledge, experience and skills to solve problems. Their abilities to manage these problems and stresses prepare them for a larger crisis.

WHAT IS THE SKILL OF STRESS TOLERANCE?

I believe *Stress Tolerance* reflects an individual's capability to focus his or her energy, talent and tenacity on a problem in a high-pressure work environment.

WHAT DOES STRESS TOLERANCE LOOK LIKE?

People who score high in *Stress Tolerance* on the EQ-i 2.0:

- know how to stay calm, composed and focused in situations requiring immediate analysis and decision-making
- can effectively organize and re-prioritize issues quickly and efficiently
- have developed constructive physical and mental strategies for managing their stress and re-energizing themselves

STRESS TOLERANCE & THE EMOTIONAL RADAR



While we need a degree of stress in our lives to keep us focused, creative and engaged, there are some people who really know how to push themselves under tough circumstances. These leaders' and professionals' *Stress Tolerance* and *Emotional Self-Awareness* scores are often balanced in their EQ-i report. This balance indicates they are especially conscious of the

pressure they are under and equally aware of the emotional impact on others. Not everyone has this balance since some people create stressful environments without considering the negative effect it has on productivity and morale.

In reviewing the EQ-i scores of **1,356** professionals, it appears that **35%** of this group (**255** women & **220** men) has a good balance between their *Stress Tolerance* and *Emotional Self-Awareness* skills. These are executives and managers who have a high degree of

sensitivity to the emotional influences that will help or hinder team or organizational performance.

When looking at higher levels, **42%** of this group (**286** men & **279** women) scored higher in *Stress Tolerance* than *Emotional Self-Awareness*. This indicates there might be times when some of these people get involved in a work situation or take on new responsibilities since they can manage the stress. However, they may ignore or not realize any emotional consequences.

For the remainder of this group, **23%** of these professionals (**188** women & **128** men) scored higher in *Emotional Self-Awareness* than *Stress Tolerance*. These individuals may have a tendency to be very conscientious or concerned about taking on work or projects that generate too much stress. They are cognizant of the emotional factors that will contribute to success and the triggers that do not.

WORKING WITH CONSTANT STRESS

When I work with clients, it is always through the lens of an EQ-i report since the data informs me about an individual's ability to manage stress based on his or her other emotional intelligence skills. We are all feeling COVID stress. Our current social and business environments are putting us all under constant personal and professional pressure which is often characterized by having limited or no control. People who score high in *Stress Tolerance* can successfully navigate through ambiguity and uncertainty provided they have an opportunity to recharge.

Since brain researchers believe we have between **60,000** and **80,000** thoughts per day, the consequences of that thinking are the continual juggling and reshuffling of how we feel. Given the amount of information we receive hourly, readjusting how we feel based on new information or data can be exhausting. I believe that in stressful situations where we do not feel in control, the two strong, primal emotions we wrestle with are fear and anger.

You might notice your own COVID stress cycle. At times, you may be feeling angry (how did this happen?), fearful (what will happen to me?), surprise (I didn't know that) and eventually hopefulness (we will get through this). You are not alone.

STRESS TOLERANCE & THE EQ-I SKILLS

Given our COVID reality, now is the time to keep your emotional intelligence skills sharpened in order to help your clients, employees or family members cope with unprecedented times. To keep your EQ-i skills sharp, consider the connections between *Stress Tolerance* and other emotional intelligence.

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Since this skill is about creating and pursuing your career goals, chances are the current COVID reality has completely disrupted your business plans. You may be feeling a little lost right now. It is a good time to acknowledge everyone is experiencing major change and to reconnect with your personal and professional networks. You may find yourself more focused on short-term goals which are needed in order to survive. When the time is right, reconnect with other professionals to share your experience and to hear how they are reframing and reshaping their future goals.

EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS

This EQ-i skill is your ability to know how you are feeling, sometimes, moment to moment. New information is going to generate new feelings or conflicting emotions. If you notice that news and COVID updates tend to make you anxious, you may want to manage your amount of exposure. You may actually have more control here than you realize. What is your plan for maintaining your emotional awareness during these times? The professionals I have spoken with have created new ways to maintain their yoga sessions or exercise workouts.

Need help relaxing? As you would imagine, meditation apps, such as Buddify, Calm, Aura and Headspace are currently seeing an increase in downloads and usage. Perhaps it is time to try a free app.

“RELAX. NO ONE ELSE KNOWS WHAT THEY’RE DOING EITHER.”

– Ricky Gervais

SELF-REGARD

Have you been experiencing lots of negative thoughts lately? Are you all of a sudden questioning your skills and capabilities? Do you have plenty of doubts about yourself in the

face of the unknown? Sudden change creates these questions which can cut to the core of our inner confidence. Similar to goal setting, staying connected to others in your profession will help you to appreciate your skills, talents and strengths. Studies show that the more amount of time you spend alone with a negative thought, the worse your thinking will become. Ruminating over negative thoughts while alone creates pessimism, cynicism and hopelessness, which are not helpful for goal-setting.

EMPATHY

Do your clients or employees find themselves crying or having uncommon emotional reactions to the COVID news and updates? Part of *Empathy* is feeling how other people feel which means we are all absorbing high degrees of social sadness. This is a very difficult time for professionals with high levels of *Empathy* especially if they do not have equally high levels of *Assertiveness*.

To watch how our medical professionals respond to the COVID crisis is to see *Empathy* in action. *Emotional Self-Awareness*, *Assertiveness* and *Reality Testing* are emotional intelligence skills these professionals use to balance their high level of *Empathy*. Without these other EQ-i skills, they would have a difficult time managing stress, maintaining their energy and staying focused.



If you know you have high *Empathy*, please be sure you create a strong network of people to connect with throughout the coming weeks. These people need to be very willing to listen to YOU. People with high *Empathy* are reliable, caring and can be emotional sponges for absorbing the pains and fears of others. This newsletter is being written at the beginning of April 2020, and the expected deaths globally from the COVID virus is staggering.

ASSERTIVENESS

Is there anything that you need from work or from other people which would help you transition during this time? Is there anything you need from your manager, co-workers or

family members that you have not asked for? Is there something you have asked for but have not yet received? During times of stress, you may resist or hold back making requests from others for a variety of reasons. Try not to assume that your needs are not important and end up denying yourself more than you are already experiencing. When an opportunity arises, ask others for help.

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION



When you experience a strong emotion, like anger, do you assume that other people feel the same way you feel? How do you know others care as much as you? Looking at EQ-i data from groups of professionals, I have learned to appreciate that a large percentage of individuals have a high level of *Emotional Self-Awareness* yet a lower level of *Emotional Expression*. These are the people who I describe as poker players since they may acknowledge having strong personal feelings but they do not readily reveal them to others. Instead, poker players will often share their true feelings only with a

small close-knit group of people. If that works for you, then be aware of its strength since these people make you feel safe to communicate how you truly feel.

In situations where you do not have access to people you trust, another outlet for your emotions is to write a journal about your daily thoughts and experiences. Journaling can be very useful for people with high *Empathy* since it gives them a reliable depository for their feelings, beliefs and ideas.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

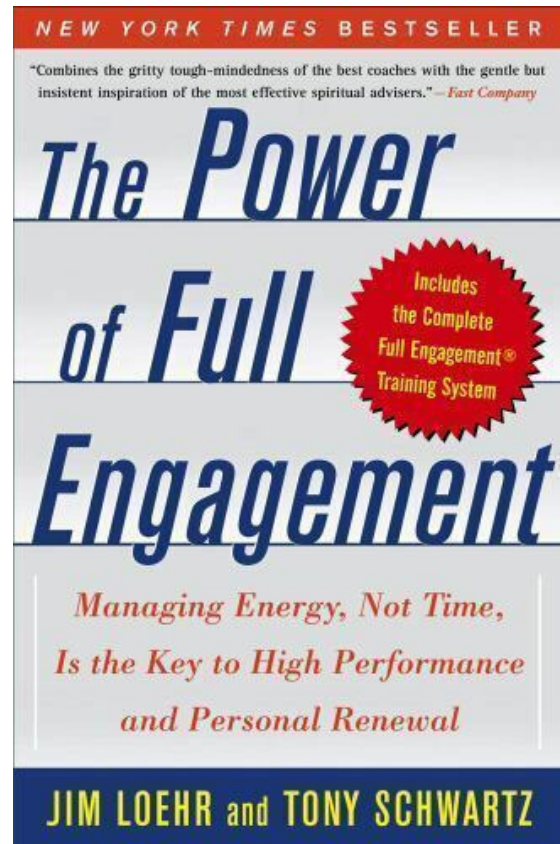
What are you doing to stay connected to other people in your personal and professional networks? If you have clients or if you are a business leader, you need to be using video conferencing. In the last few weeks, I have had video calls with clients on Zoom, WebEx, FaceTime, Hangouts, Skype, FaceTime and BlueJeans. I believe these kinds of video and virtual communication tools will forever change the way we learn and do business. On a

personal note, who are the people that energize you and make you smile? These are the people you need to video call on a regular basis.

DEVELOPING STRESS TOLERANCE: MANAGING YOUR ENERGY

We are coping with times requiring us to reflect on our relationships, our skills and our futures in ways we never could have imagined. While looking at ways to control what we can and to manage new problems, I believe in maintaining and increasing the four energies described in the book, *The Power of Full Engagement: Managing Energy, Not Time, Is the Key to High Performance and Personal Renewal*. Written based on research with the world's greatest athletes, authors Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz provide insights and ideas for reaching peak performance.

They believe in energy management. The first energy is physical, which includes proper eating, sleeping and exercising in order to support the second which is emotional energy.



Emotional energy is an individual's ability to manage stress and stay focused. If that is strong, then the third energy, your mental energy, will be able to make and execute the best decisions. When your physical, emotional and mental energies are aligned, then they will strengthen your fourth energy which is spiritual. Spiritual energy is not about religion. Rather, spiritual energy is defined as your ability to help other people. Basically, you need to take care of yourself in order to take care of others.

LAST NOTE

In 1973, at the beginning of my senior year at Archbishop Molloy High School in Jamaica, NY, I had an opportunity to spend a weekend training with Dr. Wayne Dyer. Dr. Dyer was there to teach our group of senior students about peer counseling, and relationship and facilitation

skills. It was quite an incredible experience. Dr. Dyer went on to become an internationally renowned author and speaker in the field of self-development, while writing 21 NYT bestsellers.

His influence helped set me on a path to complete my psychology and counseling degrees which eventually led me to focus on emotional intelligence as an executive coach. These times might make you reflect on your past in order to look for inspiration for the future.

Stay well. Stay safe. Help others.

“YOU CAN’T ALWAYS CONTROL WHAT GOES ON OUTSIDE, BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS CONTROL WHAT GOES ON INSIDE.”

– Wayne Dyer



NEXT ISSUE:

Issue # 16 Optimism: *Practicing Positivity*