

Listen to an extract from a lecture by a Professor at a Business School.

Optional exercise Listen and decide whether these statements are True or False: (Answers below)

1. It's better to say "I'm unhappy" than "this situation is getting on my nerves".
 2. Thoughts and feelings are not the same thing and we express them differently.
 3. If we feel angry because of somebody's behaviour we should say "you are making me angry".
 4. We should always think about how other people might feel.
 5. Our own feelings should be more important than the feelings of others.
 6. It is important to think in a positive way.
 7. We should not concern ourselves with making other people feel better.
 8. If people don't take you seriously, try talking to them and try to make them understand your feelings.
-

Now let's take a look at some ways in which we can increase the levels of our own emotional intelligence so that employers will be fighting over us! [laughter]

The first step is to label our *own* feelings rather than labelling *situations* or *other people*. We should say things like "I feel angry" instead of "this is a ridiculous situation".

Secondly, it is very important to know the difference between a thought and a feeling. In terms of language we express thoughts by saying "I feel like" or "I feel as if" but for *feelings* we say "I feel" and then a feeling word, an adjective - happy, angry, frustrated.

Next - and this is a crucial point - we should take more *responsibility* for our feelings. Instead of saying "you are making me jealous" we ought to say "*I feel jealous*".

After this we need to learn how to *use* our feelings to help us make decisions. Ask yourselves "How will I *feel* if I do this?" or "How will I feel if I *don't*?"

Another important issue here is respect. We have to respect the feelings of others. We should ask ourselves questions like "How will *this person feel* if I do this?"

And of course it isn't enough to just respect the feelings of others. We have to *show* others that we care. We do this through empathy and understanding. And we should *accept* people's feelings. They are as just as valid as our own.

Then we come to *energy*. We need to turn anger into energy and use it to take action - *productive* action that it.

Finally, after getting used to understanding and analysing our emotions, we should practise getting a positive value from them. Ask yourselves "How do I feel - *and what could help me feel better*?" and don't forget those around you "how do *you* feel?" and "what would help *you* feel better?"

To sum up I am going to leave you with two pieces of advice.

Don't criticize, advise, control or lecture others. Just listen with empathy and in a non-judgemental way.

And what about people who invalidate you? Easy - avoid them. And when it isn't possible to avoid them altogether, try to spend less time with them and don't let them get to you.

Follow this advice and I am sure that you will soon increase your EQ level. You will feel happier and more positive and hopefully this will rub off on those around you.

Answers

1T, 2T, 3F, 4T, 5F, 6T, 7F, 8F

www.britishcouncil.org/professionals.htm

© The British Council, 2007