

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Understanding, Managing and Expressing Emotions Effectively:

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand our own emotions, manage them effectively, recognise the emotions of others, and respond appropriately in different situations. For young people, emotional intelligence is an essential life skill because adolescence and early adulthood are periods of rapid emotional, social and personal development. Young people face academic pressure, career uncertainty, peer influence, relationship challenges, social media pressures and the need to make important decisions about their future. Emotional intelligence helps them navigate these experiences with greater confidence, balance and maturity.

Emotional intelligence involves five important abilities: **self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills**. Self-awareness helps young people identify what they are feeling and understand why they feel that way. Self-regulation enables them to pause, manage impulses and respond thoughtfully rather than reacting emotionally. Motivation helps them remain focused on their goals despite setbacks. Empathy enables them to understand and respect the feelings and perspectives of others, while social skills help them communicate, cooperate and build healthy relationships.

Relevance for Young People

Developing emotional intelligence can significantly influence how young people handle everyday challenges. A young person who understands their emotions is more likely to communicate concerns rather than suppressing them or expressing them through anger or frustration. EI can also help young people manage conflicts, cope with disappointment, deal with criticism and make responsible choices.

In educational settings, emotional intelligence supports better peer relationships, teamwork, classroom participation and adaptability. In the workplace, it contributes to effective communication, leadership, collaboration and professional relationships. Most importantly, EI encourages young people to develop emotional resilience—the ability to recover from setbacks and continue moving forward.

Emotional intelligence also promotes empathy and respect. In an increasingly connected world, young people interact with people from different backgrounds, cultures and perspectives. Understanding emotions and responding with sensitivity can help create more inclusive, supportive and positive communities.

Key Learning Outcomes:

By the end of an Emotional Intelligence programme, one should be able to:

- Identify and express their emotions appropriately.
- Recognise emotional triggers and understand their impact on behaviour.

- Develop healthier ways of managing anger, stress, frustration and disappointment.
- Pause and think before reacting to challenging situations.
- Demonstrate empathy and understand different perspectives.
- Communicate feelings and needs confidently and respectfully.
- Handle criticism, conflict and rejection more constructively.
- Build healthier interpersonal and peer relationships.
- Demonstrate greater self-confidence and emotional resilience.
- Make more responsible and emotionally balanced decisions.

Ultimately, emotional intelligence empowers young people to understand themselves, connect meaningfully with others, manage challenges constructively and develop the emotional maturity needed for a healthy, confident and successful life.