



## Tips We All Need In The World Today

People often ask me as a counselor how they can just experience a “normal” life, free of chaos and strife. Well I am not sure I know completely, but psychology and therapy have come a long way from, “let’s talk about your mother” and there are things we’ve learned that can lead to increased happiness and contentment.

Daniel Goleman in his 1995 book, “Emotional Intelligence” (E.Q.) explained a new kind of intelligence. **Emotional intelligence** plays an integral role in defining character and determining both our individual and group destinies. It involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions. In short, to embrace the power of emotions intelligently. It involves abilities that may be categorized into five domains:

1. **Self-awareness:**  
Observing an emotion as it happens; realizing the prior ideas and conceptions that underlie an emotional response; being open to intuitive insights; emotional honesty - a developed sense of integrity and authenticity.
2. **Emotional maturity:**  
Facing up to fears and anxieties, anger, sadness and discontent and expressing that energy constructively, whilst retaining spontaneity.
3. **Self-motivation:**  
Channeling emotional energy in the service of a goal; openness to new ideas; the ability to find breakthrough solutions and to make sound decisions; resilient optimism based on competence; sense of responsibility and personal power to get things done in accordance with what is needed and wanted.
4. **Empathic understanding:**  
Sensitivity to others’ feelings and concerns and willingness to respect their perspective; valuing the differences in how people feel about things; the capacity to trust and be trusted, to forgive and be forgiven.
5. **Quality communication:**  
Managing emotions in others through communication based on empathy and understanding, to build mutual trust; social skills, including constructive handling of disagreements and the ability to create and sustain friendships; leadership effectiveness.

Also Marsha Linehan, PhD, director of the Behavioral Research & Therapy Clinics, a research and treatment facility developed **Dialectical Behavioral**

**Therapy.** Although directed towards patients with Borderline Personality Disorder, some components seem useful to all of us. I have outlined them below.

1. **Core Mindfulness Skills:**  
The goal is to help clients participate in their lives with non-judgmental awareness of each moment and to be conscious of their experiences, behaviors, emotions and thoughts instead of living life on auto-pilot and reacting to every situation.
2. **Interpersonal Skills:**  
The goal is to help clients help clients effectively ask for what they need, say no when appropriate, handle conflicts and maintain relationships while maintaining their self-respect. The job is to learn more adaptive ways of dealing with others and gaining new personal skills.
3. **Emotion Regulation Skills:**  
The goal is to help clients participate in observing, understanding and labeling their emotions and decreasing emotional vulnerability and suffering. This skill includes taking care of oneself physically, building positive experiences and acting opposite to current negative emotions.
4. **Distress Tolerance Skills:**  
These skills are short-term, crisis skills to get through upsetting circumstances without making the situation worse. These include ways to distract, self-soothe through the five senses and ways to improve the moment and to learn principles for accepting reality in a nonjudgmental fashion.

There is clearly a great need for an increased understanding and practice of Emotional Intelligence and DBT concepts in our culture. In the world of business, factors that are really important to succeed in an ethical manner are dependent on EQ: the cooperation of employees, creativity and open-mindedness, understanding of another's point of view, ability to use empathy in negotiations, the quality of leadership and communication.

These factors are equally important in the running of schools, health services, local government and politics. They are an essential part of our personal and spiritual development and perhaps most importantly, they are principles that our children need to be taught.

One way to start is to consider individual therapy to increase effectiveness in your personal relationships that can carry over to making the world a better place to live.

To learn more about these concepts or how the face of mental health counseling is changing with the times, please contact me for an initial consultation to discuss how I may be able to help you be a more effective communicator and manager of your own emotional life.

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