

# Theories of emotional intelligence (ei)



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Discuss how intelligence and emotion are linked and refer to the differing theories that unite these features in order to assess their relevance for adults.

## Introduction

In 1990, Mayer and Salovey wrote, ' Emotional Intelligence' <sup>[1]</sup> (E I) which gave rise to this concept as a medium of individual assessment that accurately describes the attributions for responses to successes and failures in life. In 1995, Daniel Goleman wrote his popular follow-up to this work, entitled, " Emotional Intelligence, Why it can Matter More than IQ. " <sup>[2]</sup> Here Goleman, expanded upon this concept and provided it with an often criticised <sup>[3]</sup> and lay version of the earlier notions of Mayer and Salovey.

This paper, concentrates largely on the works of Mayer and Salovey and Goleman as a tool to establishing the inherent link between emotion and intelligence. This paper will therefore begin by giving an overview of the origins of the concept of Emotional Intelligence and how these two attributes of the human condition are linked. There will be a description and critique of the meaning, distinctive nature and importance of E I. Following this, there will be exploration of Mayer and Salovey's four areas of E I, which are assessed on the basis of the MSCEIT ability test. These four areas will be compared with the five areas stated by Goleman and each will be critically assessed. Finally there will be a discussion of the practical applicability of E I to the education of adults and its relevance in various genres of the workforce.

### A. The Origins of E I

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## 1. Emotion

Mayer and Salovey stated that the traditional image of emotion is as a vice of human nature that is to be controlled as it was perceived to have the capability of fully possessing the individual to create “ a complete loss of cerebral control, <sup>[4]</sup> ” thus depriving him of his rationality. This was then turned on its head with the new concept of emotion as the motivating force which for the first time gave insight into emotion as an integral function of the human condition. Emotion is therefore a response mechanism whereby the appropriateness of its intensity has been determined through natural selection.

## 2. Intelligence

The same professors then turned their attentions to intelligence, which they acknowledge the definition provided by Wechsler, which describes intelligence as:

*“ the aggregate of global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his environment. <sup>[5]</sup> ”*

## 3. Emotional intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence was therefore created by Mayer and Salovey as a means of identifying types of intelligences that go further to identify the social context of intelligence beyond that of the conventional IQ intelligence. They did this because they noticed that the two concepts are not wholly separable but their work was largely unnoticed at the time of its

publication in 1990. Indeed, it was not until Goleman's publication in 1995 when the E I concept finally gained popular recognition. The reason for this was the appeal of everyday life, and adult referencing to the E I concept, which provided it with a more workable model for the lay person.

## B. The Link between Emotion and Intelligence

### 1. What is E I?

Salovey and Mayer define E I as a subset of social intelligence, namely, the ability to understand, manage and manipulate the responses of others <sup>[6]</sup>. E I is a sub-set of this concept that is defined as the ability for the individual to understand ones own feelings and the feelings of those around them:

*“ the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among the and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. ” [7]*

The ability itself is a measurement of how an individual is able to make decisions based on their own and other's personal, emotional responses throughout life. Goleman noticed profound differences in test groups of children in relation in simple temptation exercises when he referred back to his subjects fourteen years after the initial tests <sup>[8]</sup>. The result was a profound tangent of social maladjustment in those who acted on impulse and profound social adjustment in those who were able of overcome emotional urges. <sup>[9]</sup>

### 2. The Distinctive Nature of E I

Unlike the conventional IQ concept, E I deals with emotion, which is given driver status as a key element to the personal influences that affect our lives. In contrast, the conventional IQ deals specifically with intellectual abilities such as dimensional perception, numerical ability, literacy and problem solving. Unlike emotional intelligence, the vital social dimension is not provided for. This means that IQ, although accurate in the determination of intelligence, provides no indication of success in life and emotional intelligence is a more complete picture <sup>[10]</sup> .

### 3. The Importance of E I

Goleman's writing on the subject of Emotional Intelligence has found its way into the main curricular of schools in deprived areas of the USA. An example is that of the New Haven, Connecticut Public Schools <sup>[11]</sup> with large scale unemployment and poverty. The result is an inherent need to diffuse the types of social problems that depressed areas such as these can create. The ability to understand ones own emotion, those of others around you and make decisions rationally based on these responses is vital to social wealth. This expands throughout all human, emotive concepts such as self esteem and confidence to interact with others, which inherently lead to improved abilities in leadership and teamwork.

### C. The three Areas of E I according to Mayer and Salovey in 1990

In order to fully understand the origins of E I, it is essential to draw upon the original three branch model of firstly, appraisal and expression, secondly, regulation and thirdly, utilization of E I that are present in the 1990 paper <sup>[12]</sup>

. In 1997 <sup>[13]</sup>, these concepts were re-devised to encompass identification, use, understanding and management of emotion but they came after the publication of Goleman's book, " Emotional Intelligence," and contain the same broad concepts of the original 1990 paper. Another reason for scrutiny of the earlier work is that the 1990 text was the primary inspiration for Goleman. Explanation of the 1990 categories below does refer to the four branch model devised in 1997.

### 1. Appraising and Expressing Emotions in the self and others

This is a double pronged notion of firstly identifying emotions in oneself and others and then using them to achieve a specific goal, which are facilitated through verbal and non-verbal communication. To understand others, perception is facilitated through body-language and empathy, all of which are key social skills. Mayer and Salovey state that clear communication of emotion is necessary in order to effectively convey feelings as well as be able to decipher emotive responses. The verbal version of clarity is therefore the use of coherent language as a way of expressing emotion.

The non-verbal version of emotive expression is as far more widely used tool in emotive expression and appraisal as our specie is well adapted in the art of producing many facial expressions. E I is a recognition of the assessment level in ability to both express and empathetically decipher this non-verbal method of emotive communication. Empathy in particular is regarded by Mayer and Salovey as one of the most base and essential tools in any social specie <sup>[14]</sup>.

## 2. Regulating emotion in the self and others

This is the process of understanding emotions in order to, ‘ monitor, evaluate and regulate,’ them <sup>[15]</sup> . Mayer and Salovey also refer to the longer lasting ‘ mood’ as a key facet of the emotional spectrum that also requires regulation. Moods and emotions tend not to be conscious decisions but are states of minds that the individual can learn from in order to ascertain for the future the precise environments and situations that will bring about these moods. This results in conscious efforts to either avoid or seek the behaviour that will trigger the mood. The complexity of this model is added to by further notions of social association so as to avoid jealousy and promote pride and also to more prominently recall positive mood stimulants as opposed to negative ones <sup>[16]</sup> . Further to this is the inherent desire to know full sorrow, which although somewhat baffling, is in its own right an educator as to the potential extent of profound joy <sup>[17]</sup> .

Regulation of emotions in others is an essential tool for the workforce as it is key to the employer’s ability to pick out the best employees. This is determinable from indications such as appearance and grooming in the workplace, attention to work ethic, punctuality and contribution to the working environment <sup>[18]</sup> .

## 3. Utilization

Utilization relates to the management of emotions and in the self. Mayer and Salovey refer to the varied ability in us all to ‘ harness emotions in order to solve problems. ’ <sup>[19]</sup> The mood that we are in will draw attention to different

solutions that are dependent on a requisite mood as inspiration. This has the result that multiple moods create varied solutions that give way to skills in creativity, flexibility of planning and motivation.

#### 5. The Meyer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)

In 1999, Mayer and Salovey's 1997 four branch model of Emotional Intelligence was developed from an earlier test to measure performance tasks that assessed the ability to perceive the intensity of emotion. The test takers are required to answer questions relating to the outcome of increased intensity of emotion and changes in mood and the predominant task is to therefore select the correct course of action in a given situation. This is the E I equivalent to the IQ test and is a clear indication of the technical stance of Mayer and Salovey.

#### D. The five Areas of E I according to Goleman

##### 1. Self Awareness

This is very similar to Mayer's observation of the identification of emotion in oneself. Goleman points to the maxim of Socrates, " know thyself <sup>[20]</sup> " as a major key to the fulfilment of life. ' Metacognition' or ' Self Awareness,' are essential in order for us to be able to recognise our emotions and, more importantly, the thoughts that these generate:

*" being aware of our mood and our thoughts about that mood,"*

Goleman, accurately draws upon the profound spectrum of differences that are inherent among us in our ability to be self aware. He states that, on the



one hand, some of us can be engulfed by our emotive responses and others can be accepting of them but neither of these groups is active in the pursuit of escape from emotional extremity <sup>[21]</sup>. On the other hand, the self aware individual applies rationality to the emotion in order to aid in its diffusion <sup>[22]</sup>.

## 2. Self Regulation

An awareness of the self is a fundamental requirement towards self regulation which will allow us, not only to ‘know ourselves,’ but also regulate or control our emotive responses. The afore mentioned, self aware group, who actively rationalise their emotions are the most sophisticated self regulators. Plato himself made the definition between, ‘passion’s slave’ and *sophrosyne* <sup>[23]</sup> or:

*“care and intelligence in conducting one’s life; a tempered balance and wisdom, [24]”*

The ability to temper such emotions as rage is regarded as the forefront emotions to which escape is sought. <sup>[25]</sup>

## 3. Motivation

Positive thinking is a further sophistication of E I that extrapolates from Mayer and Salovey’s notion on seeking specific moods. Goleman uses the concept of ‘hope,’ whose intensity in the individual will determine the outcome following a failure <sup>[26]</sup>. In simple terms, the defeatist will be utterly demoralised whereas students of a high hope will have the will power to

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motivate themselves to try harder. High commitment to motivation through hope will most certainly yield a positive outcome. In addition, the status of flow, which Goleman describes as the 'zone <sup>[27]</sup>' between boredom through lack of personal stimulus and overwhelming sensations intrinsic to acute difficulty is the exact wavelength that teachers should seek in order to obtain optimum motivation. The problem however is that this is profoundly difficult in large classrooms where the state of 'flow' is different for each student.

#### 4. Empathy

This is one of the most fundamental of emotive skills <sup>[28]</sup>. This represents his designation of the attributes that Mayer and Salovey described in their account of the ability to recognise the emotions of others. Empathy is the awareness to register the pains and the joys of others, which Goleman determines as essential for the development of ability to caring for the feelings of others and solidifies relationships between family, friends and partners. Without empathy, serious deficits of human compassion are noticeable and these can manifest in sociopath behaviour, child abuse and other acts that are inherent in a lack of empathy.

#### 5. Social Skills

The ability to determine the social structure of ones surroundings is a key skill in the development of knowing the emotions of those around us and being able to shape them. Goleman refers to the specific model of an argument between two toddlers and their mother as an illustration of sophisticated handling of emotional perception in others at extremely young

ages <sup>[29]</sup>. This is related to Mayer and Salovey's concept of appraising, expressing and regulating the emotions in others in order to achieve a specific goal. The adult counterpart is what Goleman describes as the 'mastery' of being able to diffuse the extreme emotions of others.

#### E. Critical Assessment of the works

The concept that Goleman adds little to the insights of Mayer and Salovey is to ignore the importance of creating a general work that is accessible to the lay individual. Emotional Intelligence is a scientific study of the interaction of the emotional and rational portions of the brain and any attempt to communicate such study and findings to the general public is surely the ultimate goal of the social science of psychology! Education in this field provides the individual with a greater understanding of how they think and react to life and it is essential that such knowledge become just as integral to the well being of basic fundamentals of life as are the more practical skills of reading and writing.

Further to this, the concept that Goleman is suggesting that we 'be nice' is an overly simplistic summary of his writings. Goleman describes intricate flaws that can occur in the neurological communication between the emotive and rational portions of the brain. He accurately describes the effect that long or short term deficits in either emotional or rational awareness can have on the personality and social, interactive skills of the individual.

Meyer and Salovey argue profusely that there is more to E I than the simple feature of being nice and far from being contradicted by Goleman, he extrapolates upon this point. This is accurately illustrated by Goleman's <https://assignbuster.com/theories-of-emotional-intelligence-ei/>

constant reference throughout the five elements of E I to the subjective decision making that is determined by dominance by the mind of either the emotional or rational brain portions. The result is that an argument to be nice contradicts the internal and external factors related to awareness of emotion in ourselves and others that lead to profound differences in displays of characteristics such as niceness. Goleman argues that a normative balance and sophisticated grasp of the above five skills will lead to the most positive response to a given situation and lead to the greater success in present and future life. These positive responses are not confined to displays of nicety. This is merely a common fiction that results from external perception of constant niceness in individuals who in reality are highly attuned to their E I and reserve negative emotions for extreme situations.

#### F. The Practical Application of E I as it applies to the education of adults

The application of good E I in the work place is of fundamental importance. All five elements of E I contribute to a rounded perception of both the self and others that ensures a sophisticated navigation through the roadmap of social interaction, in which sophisticated levels of E I act to facilitate successful completion of the task in hand. The following are two key examples of how this operates in adult life.

##### 1. Military Sophistication – the Canadian Armed Forces

Livingstone, Nadjiwon-Foster and Smithers prepared a on the use of Emotional Intelligence in the leadership skills of the Canadian Armed Forces [30] . The Forces are an ideal premise from which to analyse E I as they draw upon the two key areas of social interaction that are dependent on E I, <https://assignbuster.com/theories-of-emotional-intelligence-ei/>

namely, leadership and teamwork but that such skills are essential in all adult groups. Livingstone, Nadjiwon-Foster and Smithers draw upon Mayer and Salovey's later four branch model of E I and identified key uses for leadership such as idealized influence of the role model and inspirational motivation that create the role model and encourage teamwork under the proficient and respected leader. Further to this, individualised consideration through attention by the leader to the individual skills and needs of each team member are fundamental to the utilization of the full potential of a company of soldiers. The intellectual stimulation required in the location of 'flow' and transformational leadership as a tool for the creation of job satisfaction are also fundamental to efficient armed forces that thrive on teamwork and leadership.

### 3. Sales

Sales instils a third prong of skill sourced from E I and is highly useful for the adult world. This is the power of persuasion. In no other profession is the skill of establishing fast rapport and engaging in emotional sale through the rapid identification of a buying need more profound and acute than in the sales environment. This is because the hard sale technique, unlike the widespread application of E I for teamwork and leadership, requires the sales person to utilize persuasion in order to harness the emotional impulse. This carries with it a more passionate and more definite decision to make a purchase.

### Conclusion

Analysis of both Mayer and Salovey and Goleman have revealed two outcomes. Firstly there are two versions of the E I concept of which the <https://assignbuster.com/theories-of-emotional-intelligence-ei/>

former is both intellectualised and scientific and the latter, by Goleman, is simplified and popular with greater reference to real scenarios as a tool to illustration. Secondly, it is emphasised that both schools are in harmony and each fulfil the two different yet essential goals for the use and teaching of E I, namely, a technical framework from which to develop further intellectual discourse in the highly relevant application of E I to adult life and secondly, a popular outreach those same adults which facilitates them with the opportunity to soul search their own personal endeavours with Emotional Intelligence.

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Steve Hein, “ E Q For Everybody” (1996) Full text available at [http://eqi.org/eqe96\\_1.htm](http://eqi.org/eqe96_1.htm)

### Video

Daniel Golemen Presents: Emotional Intelligence: A new vision for Educators  
(Video) (National Professional Resources Ltd, 1996)

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### **Footnotes**

[1] Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 9 185-211

[2] (Bloomsbury, 1995)

[3] See Steve Hein’s article at <http://www.eqi.org/hrcom1c.htm>

[4] Salovey, P. & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. Imagination, Cognition, and Personality, 9, at p187



[5] D Wechsler, “ The Measurement and Appraisal of Adult Intelligence,”  
(Williams and Wilkens, Baltimore, 1958)

[6] *ibid* 4 at p 190

[7] N. Cantor and J. F. Kihlstrom, 2Social Intelligence: The Cognitive Basis of  
Personality, in Review of Personality and Social Psychology, 6P (Shaver,  
1985) at pp 15-33

[8] D Goleman, “ Emotional Intelligence, Why it can matter more than IQ”  
(Bloomsbury, 1995) chapter 3

[9] *ibid*

[10] *ibid* chapter 6 at pp 80-83

[11] See “ Daniel Golemen Presents: Emotional Intelligence: A new vision for  
Educators (Video) (National Professional Resources Ltd, 1996)

[12] *ibid* 1

[13] See Salovey, P. , & Sluyter, D. J. (1997). Emotional development and  
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[14] *ibid* 1 at p 192

[15] *ibid 1*

[16] *ibid 1* at p 195

[17] *ibid 1* at p 196

[18] *ibid*

[19] *ibid 1* at p 199

[20] See Goleman chapter 4

[21] *ibid* p 48

[22] *ibid*

[23] See Goleman at p 56

[24] Quoted from the translation of the ancient Greek by Page DuBois. See Goleman at p 56 (ch 5)

[25] Goleman at p 59

[26] Goleman at p 89

[27] Goleman at pp 93-95

[28] Goleman at Chapter 7

[29] Goleman at pp 111-113

[30] Holly Livingstone, Maria Nadjiwon-Foster & Sonya Smithers “ Emotional Intelligence & Military Leadership, Prepared for: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute (March 11, 2002, as represented by the Minister of National Defence)