

YCISL Design Thinking with Emotional Intelligence

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INTRODUCTION:

Let's start by giving credit where credit is due. In 2012, Professor Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu on-boarded into the YCISL program as a guest speaker and introduced the concept of emotional intelligence (also referred to as EQ) in a workshop for students from Singapore Polytechnic. It was a great add-on to the SkillScan Assessment Counseling we had started the program with a year earlier. Since that point, EQ has been an essential part of the YCISL message. So much so that, in 2015, we adopted the tagline "Life Lessons in EQ."

THE EQUATION

In 2013, the eternal chemist in my mind created, based on my fascinated understanding & rumination of the concept, an equation to show how EQ fit in the YCISL domain:

$$KI + EI \rightarrow \text{Creative Intelligence}$$

where KI = Knowledge Intelligence and EI = Emotional Intelligence.

In 2014, the reaction product in that equation was tweaked to:

$$KI + EI \rightarrow \text{LeaderI}$$

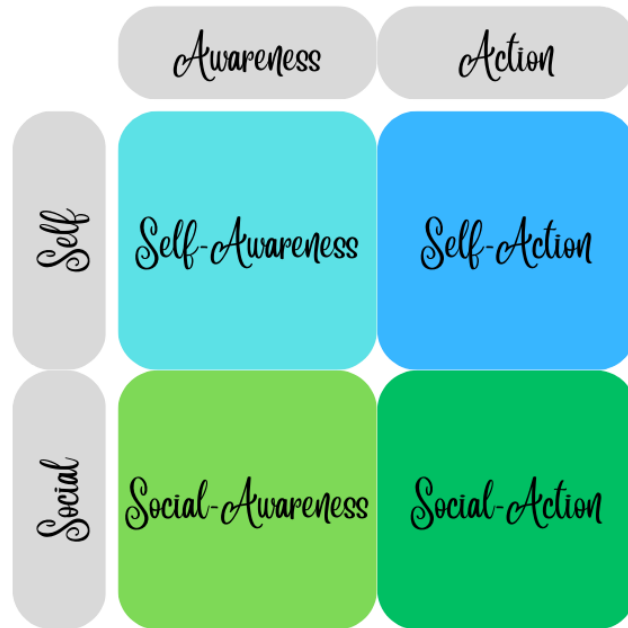
where LeaderI = Leadership Intelligence. Our talking point shifted to an explanation of why leadership was struggling with quality.

Whereas the initial 2013 equation indicated an alternative (catalyzed) reaction pathway to creativity, the latter 2014 equation was more about low leadership yield due to limited EI. The mechanistic premise had become that EI was not a part of formal education and learning, and very few fortunate ones learned it from personal experience. This was observationally consistent with personal stories of quality leaders who recounted life lessons in EQ.

THE FOUR QUADRANTS:

My early interpretation of EQ was based on the four quadrant diagram credited to Daniel Goleman, the author of “Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ” (2005).

The Four EQ Quadrants



The quadrants in the YCISL version of the diagram comprise pair-wise combinations of position (self or social) and states (awareness or action). Self refers to a single person, often yourself, and Social refers to other people connected to the self. The four combinations provide focal points for describing and understanding any situation. Specifying values in these categories helps determine an EQ-based response.

DESIGN THINKING WITH EQ:

When performing design thinking, we can use the four quadrant model to define the scope and specifications. We do this by listing the properties and functions in the appropriate categories.

For example, if I, as an instructor, am preparing for a workshop lecture, I might start by filling in the Social Awareness quadrant with information about the audience as well as the setting. Next, I would use an understanding of my relationship to the audience to enter relevant properties from my persona into the Self Awareness quadrant. With the Awareness part started, I would start brainstorming the types of interactions and activities that would make up the instructional exchange – and list them under Social

Action. The final step in this first draft would be to list tasks that I personally would need to do to prepare for those Social Actions. With the draft content in the four quadrants, the items can be fine tuned or adjusted to refine the design. Notice how this satisfies the people-centric requirement of design thinking?

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE-PLUS

YCISL design thinking with EQ extends into most, if not all, of the activities we do in our programs. This extension involves a myriad of factors that superpowers EQ skills. Let's call this Emotional Intelligence-Plus (EQ+, for short). With the awareness & actions gathered from a four quadrants review, our EQ needs to be packaged with sense and sensibility. The application of EQ requires a sense of purpose and timing along with compatible phraseology and mannerism. Empathy skills help shape this packaging.

The earliest example of EQ+ that I learned about applies to doctor-patient relationships where healthcare is most effectively delivered where trust and confidence built depends as much on EQ as on IQ, training and qualifications. Such relationships are far from generic, and sensitivity enabled by divergent-convergent thinking and creativity can help achieve superior outcomes and experiences.

THE EQ LEARNING CURVE

As mentioned earlier in this white paper, some people are gifted with EQ-building from personal life experiences particularly those that happened in youth while optimism still prevailed and predominated. In the YCISL program, we have the Your Personal Story activity where we have a three-part series of time-segmented activities: (1) a Message to My Past Self, (2) Who am I? In the Present, and (3) A Message to My Future Self. We can train our EQ in each of these activities by applying the four quadrants exercise as well as EQ+.

Using the "A Message to My Future Self" activity as an example, we can select a future hope and dream, and set it up in the four quadrants model including the people involved as well as the actions needed for attainment. We then consider when and how this will happen using EQ+, and produce a vision for ourselves to journey towards. The final step is to use our YCISL creative energy to take the steps along this journey.

THE YCISL-ON-EQ WRAP-UP

It takes conscientious practice and effort to revolutionize our behaviors and mannerisms with EQ. I hope the brief attention that the discussion about EQ in YCISL Design Thinking has generated practical interest in the skill, and that you have been persuaded to elevate EQ in work and play so that creativity, innovation and leadership will rise to greater levels in the future.