



# Solutions for Life

from **Solutions Counseling & EAP**  
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## What's Your EQ - Part 4

*"Anyone can become angry - that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way - that is not easy." - Aristotle*

Well, we have finally made it: the last installment of our lengthy Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EQ) conversation. Before we can discuss the fourth and final component of this very important topic, we need to review the first three.

As you will recall, Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify and manage your own emotions, along with being able to identify other's emotions, then being able to figure out how to effectively interact with that person. People with higher EQs are better able to read themselves and others, and people with lower EQs just don't seem to "get it." Lower EQ people struggle with why people react to them the way they do, why people "abruptly" end conversations (even though the other person has been giving all kinds of signals they want the encounter to end), and are often surprised by things that happen in relationships because they are just not tuned in and reading the signs.

Three months ago, we discussed the most important part of EQ: Self-Awareness. You cannot influence your interactions with anyone else unless you know yourself. And I mean really know yourself - being able to very specifically identify your emotions, acknowledging your strengths and weaknesses, playing to your strengths, and constantly evaluating and tweaking interactions with others.

After increased self-awareness, we then discussed Self-Management. Learning to handle situations the way you want to is much easier when you know yourself and know the areas you need to work on. We can make healthy choices only when we have cleared out the "noise" of fear/anger/anxiety in our heads.

Last month we addressed Social Awareness. It kind of naturally happens that when you are more aware of yourself, you become more aware of others and why they are acting in certain ways. Developing empathy (the ability to place yourself in another's position) is key to this component.

Today, we are going to cover the last bastion of EQ: Relationship Management. When managing relationships, we are always looking for the best approach with whomever we are dealing. We check ourselves (Self-Awareness), focus on what we want to happen and the healthiest way to get there (Self-Management), get vibes from other people (Social Awareness), then put all that together to make sure the interaction is productive (Relationship Management).

Below are the best ways to achieve effective Relationship Management:

**Be respectful.** To everyone. All the time. No matter what the other person does, you maintain your dignity. That doesn't mean you are a doormat, but it does mean that you act according

to your values at all times. You do this because of your character - it is who you are.

**Know how to handle criticism.** You will be criticized. Take a look at the critique, and be willing to see if there is any merit to it. If so, work on it. If not, move on. As Hillary Clinton said, "Accept negative feedback. Take it seriously, not personally."

**Neutralize toxic people.** These are the people who take more than they give, and when you leave them you feel worse than before you got there. Limit your interactions with these people. When you do have to be around them, remind yourself of their lower EQ and don't join in their chaos.

**Learn communication and conflict resolution skills.** I spend more of my time in therapy teaching these two skills than anything else. Your ability to convey yourself in a way others can receive it, and your ability to effectively deal with conflict, predict life success on a great level. And they are skills - you weren't born with them. They have to be learned. Buy a book, get a life coach or therapist, attend a seminar. Whatever you have to do, learn these two things!!

I hope you have enjoyed our EQ journey. It certainly helped me when I was introduced to the material, and I just know you are going to use the concepts to help you in your daily interactions with others!