

Twenty First Century Skills for Achieving Education, Life, Work Success

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Abstract Living and working successfully in the 21st Century require skill sets and competencies of transformative emotional intelligence. More and more evidence and research zero in on the need to learn and gain the positive contributions of the emotional mind to support and balance traditional learning. The purpose of this article is to provide a research based learning model of emotional intelligence. The five key learning skills dimensions include (a) Interpersonal and Communication, (b) Personal Leadership, (c) Self-Management, (d) Intrapersonal Development, and (e) Recognizing and Reducing Potential Problem Areas are presented. Original research by the authors, more than sixty doctoral dissertations, colleague research, and institutional studies have guided the development of an education and learning model of transformative emotional intelligence to meet work, career, and life skills needed to experience more health and effectiveness in a complex world.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, 21st century skills, college success*

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1. Education and Learning Model of Emotional Intelligence

Since 1977, the authors have created positive assessments of personal and emotional skills and conducted long term research emphasizing a positive, clear, unwavering belief in the capability of learners to achieve success in their education, career, and life. With this overarching belief, we committed to a lifelong path of exploring, identifying, understanding, learning, and applying (modeling) the key skill sets and factors most related to achievement and health. In our transformative model of emotional intelligence (EI), achievement and health are considered together, not one or the other. Through research and extensive experience, a central theme has emerged – the learned ability of emotional intelligence.

From the very beginning of our research into the role and value of emotional and personal skills, we focused on five research-derived beliefs:

1. Personal and emotional skills are best understood and learned when organized in an education model of skills and competencies [42,45].
2. Transformative EI is the single most important variable and factor in achievement, career development, leadership [16,61], and career/life satisfaction (Hammett, 2007).
3. Schools and colleges do not provide a practical, coherent, systematic learning model to develop affective or EI skills, create healthy choices, and apply wise behaviors in life and work.

4. Developing EI requires an active, caring, person-centered, relationship focused process emphasizing intelligent self-direction and self-directed learning.
5. EI consists of skills and competencies that can be easily and purposefully infused, embedded, taught, and learned in any classroom and learning format.

After four decades of research and work, we have come to know the missing ingredient and neglected curriculum in education is transformative EI. A learning and practical skills based model of EI is a necessary foundation to build personal responsibility and success in education, work, and life. Without a viable foundation built around skills, behaviors, strategies, and ability to change and grow in positive ways, most of us tend to react (not reflect) when faced with emotional and life events. Consequently, we do not learn emotional intelligence in many educational settings or learn how to use reflective and constructive thinking as guides to healthy and wise behaviors embodied by transformative emotional intelligence.

2. What is Transformative Emotional Intelligence?

In our model and simply stated – transformative EI is the learned and developed ability to think constructively and act wisely. In a more complete learning context, it is a confluence of developed skills and abilities to facilitate success in four key areas of life, including (a) accurately knowing and valuing self and behaving responsibly as a person, (b) establishing and maintaining a variety of healthy, effective relationships, (c) working well and

productively with others, and (d) dealing effectively with the demands, pressures, and stress of daily life.

Cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills can be learned, developed, and attuned to become the best person we can be. The key is to learn and consistently apply transformative EI skills, behaviors, attitudes, and strategies in all contexts of life.

Effective, productive, and wise behaviors require that we harmonize and attune our thoughts and emotions and communicate respect and understanding in our interactions with others. Accurate empathy is an essential intra and interpersonal skill and a requisite skill for teaching, learning, coaching, and leadership excellence (healthy being). From research and advances in neuroscience, we know the human brain learns best in an environment high in challenge accompanied by trust, respect, encouragement, empathy, and caring [20]. These principles of how the human brain learns best are also pillars of transformative EI.

3. What is the Conceptual Model of Transformative Emotional Intelligence?

The Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP) provides the structure and organization of an education and learning model of emotional intelligence and is presented in [Figure 1](#). Four skill dimensions provide a framework for learning key skills and competencies within a curriculum of transformative EI.

The Personal Excellence Map (PEM) extends and enhances the basic ESAP model by using five key systems and principles (PEM dimensions) with integrated skills within a framework of personal excellence. [Figure 2](#) illustrates the five systems and principles of personal excellence.

It is difficult to behave intelligently unless our thoughts, emotions, beliefs, and values are balanced and work together. Intelligent self-direction involves choosing and guiding daily skills and behaviors (ESAP model) so they are self-valued and affirming of self and others.

Self-direction has been identified as one of the most important employability (career success) skills in the work

environment of the 21st century. Intelligent self-direction is evident in our definition of EI. Emotionally intelligent behavior, therefore, is intentional, positive, goal directed, and self-valued. Intelligent self-direction is the behavioral reflection and central hallmark of transformative EI.

Intelligent self-direction also is difficult to achieve without a learning process (PEM model) to develop self into the best person one can be. The guidance system and personal vision principle provide direction to personal and leadership growth. The power system and commitment principle provide the energy and motivation to achieve personal goals of excellence. The belief system and purpose principle provide an internal anchor to achieve self-valued benchmarks and goals. The support system and relationships principle provide interpersonal and team strengths to survive the difficult challenges of life and work. Finally, the balance system and change principle provide a personal buffer from the negative effects of daily pressure and stress with a personal model of positive change.

In essence, ESAP model provides the curricular, learning, training structure to learn the key skill sets and competencies of emotional intelligence. With a foundation built upon emotional intelligence, the PEM model provides the learning and training structure to fully develop the key systems, principles, and integrated skills of personal excellence. When coupled together, the ESAP and PEM provide a learning framework for achieving the personal, life, and work skills needed in the 21st century.

4. What Are the Key Concepts and Unique Features of Transformative Emotional Intelligence?

Person-Centered Learning - A clear focus on growth, development, and learning of each student and individual. In our framework of person-centered learning, each person identifies strengths and areas to develop with a balance of affective and cognitive skills. The learner is clearly the center of learning.

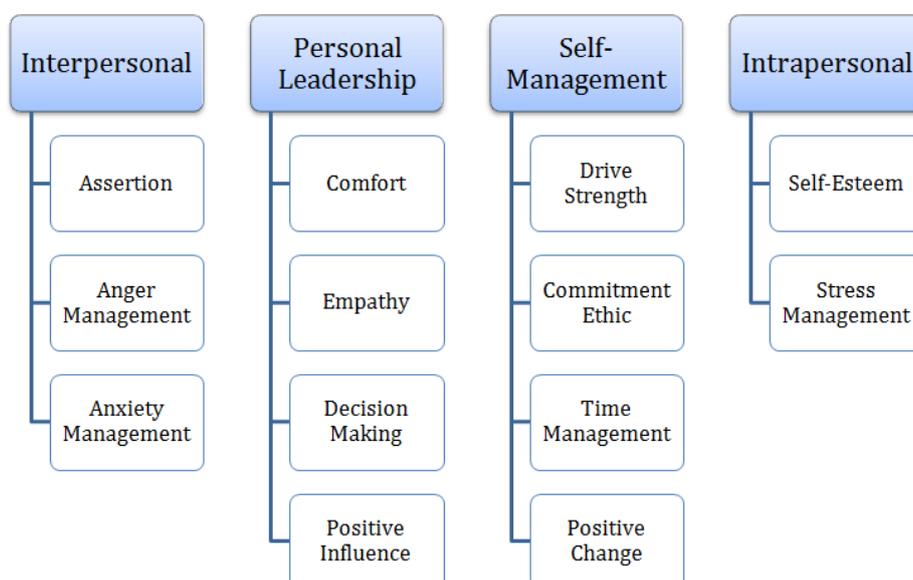


Figure 1. The ESAP model with four dimensions and thirteen skills

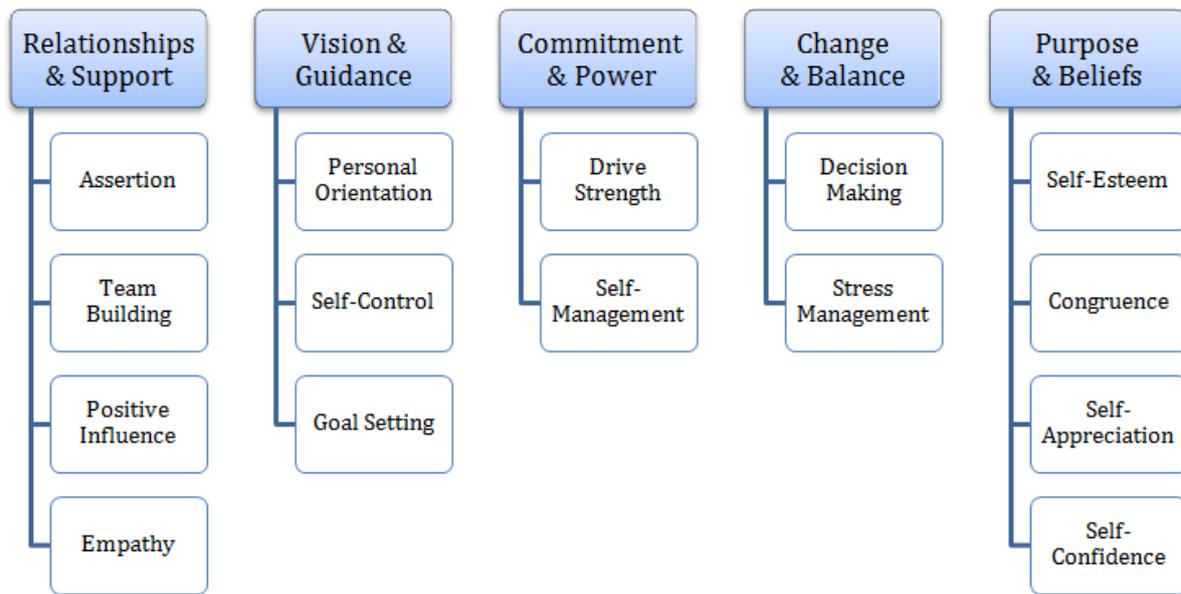


Figure 2. The PEM model with five systems and principles, and fifteen skills

Creating Healthy Learning Environments - A purposeful plan to create healthy and challenging learning environments with personal and emotional skills of transformative EI. The key factor is a learning climate that models the best of transformative EI.

Necessary Conditions for Emotional Learning - To improve and maximize emotional learning, most people have personal needs that must be addressed. Foremost is a genuine respect for the capacity of each person to achieve excellence. Also, the overlooked conditions of demystifying emotional behavior and the process of personal change by learning new ways to think, feel, act.

Positive Assessment - A research derived self-assessment and reflective learning process are necessary first steps to develop current and accurate self-awareness. Positive assessment is used to develop personally meaningful goals and action plans to guide desired learning.

ESAP - Emotional Skills Assessment Process - In education, the ESAP provides an assessment of EI skill sets and skills and forms the foundation to teach and learn transformative EI. Key ESAP dimensions are Interpersonal – Intrapersonal – Leadership – Self Management.

PEM - Personal Excellence Map - The PEM provides a positive assessment of five systems, principles, and integrated skills important for pursuing personal excellence in teaching, learning, academic coaching, and leadership. The personal excellence model provides an intentional process to facilitate dialogue, planning, and growth to become and be the best person possible.

Emotional Learning System - ELS - The Emotional Learning System is a structured, sequential, interrelated step-by-step learning process to learn and develop emotional intelligence skill sets and skills. The ELS ensures a person-centered learning approach through the five essential steps of Explore, Identify, Understand, Develop, and Apply (most effective when modeled by an instructor's own behavior).

Positive Personal Change - For young and adult learners, transitions and change can be a challenging and disrupting force in their lives and careers. With the reactive nature of the emotional system, it is critically

important for people to understand on a personal level how to make positive changes in career and life.

Personal Standards of Excellence - Much has been written and discussed about the need to develop personal responsibility, character, healthy personality, and personal wellness. We believe that individuals benefit when they have the opportunity to learn new skills and learn how to set meaningful personal goals based on their own standards of excellence.

Applied Research to Improve Practice - When one thinks of research, quantitative methods and scientific processes of investigation immediately come to mind, and rightly so. Research needs rigor and high standards to be accurate, valid, and reliable. We have created and developed positive assessments, the emotional learning system, and strategies that are practical and easily applied by educators and learners.

5. What Are the Hallmarks, Principles, and Learning Connections of Transformative Emotional Intelligence for Professional Practice in Education, Business, and Emotional-mental-personal Health?

In transformative EI, research-derived hallmarks and grounding principles provide teaching and learning connections for beginning through capstone learning. These connections can be incorporated into individual and team learning plans, and they guide strategies to enhance meaningful, person-centered growth, and ongoing development.

Learning emotional intelligence is new learning for most young people and many adults. As individuals discover the positive contributions of the emotional mind, they are more engaged in personally meaningful learning and can more easily focus on healthy and successful outcomes. Students begin to connect the dots with new

learning that helps them to see that EI learning is intricately involved in healthy and successful achievement. As outlined below, we have developed 12 hallmarks of transformative EI to help ground our pursuit of healthily being in the world.

Hallmark 1. EI is an integrated set of learned skills and skill sets to think reflectively and constructively to act wisely and make more constructive decisions. When a person learns to think reflectively and constructively, it is hard to think destructively.

Hallmark 2. EI learning is an important influencing variable in achievement, success, and being well. Learners discover that pathways to positive change and leadership begin with exploring their own strengths and areas to develop. Self-awareness is a necessary first step.

Hallmark 3. The experiential system is the lead system for meaningful change, personal growth, and effective learning. Adaptability and transition learning are more easily learned within a framework of EI skill sets, skills, behaviors, and strategies.

Hallmark 4. Emotional (affective) learning is different from traditional cognitive learning. The ESAP and integrated learning steps were created to develop the affective dimension of life by blending EI learning and constructive thinking to guide behavior.

Hallmark 5. Breaking the habit of negative emotional reactivity is a requisite life skill that students can relate to from their own experience. Learners are empowered when they discover they can change reactivity to reflective and constructive thinking.

Hallmark 6. EI learning enables and activates emotional influence to enhance academic and career learning. Positive emotional learning (developing a healthy mind) leads to happier, healthier, and more successful outcomes. EI learning builds a solid platform for building academic, career, and life excellence.

Hallmark 7. Students learn (often for the first time) that authentic, honest self-assessment is a necessary first step to personal responsibility and intelligent self-direction in school and life. In our model EI learning and self-directing learning are similar in strategy and scope.

Hallmark 8. Reflective and constructive thinking processes engender intentional, wise choices, decisions, and good behaviors. The education and learning model of emotional intelligence can be effectively included and embedded into key courses at the beginning of the college experience. Because of the emotional system's need for positive repetition to develop healthily, emotional intelligence lessons should be included throughout the curriculum.

Hallmark 9. Intelligent self-management is the behavioral reflection of higher order thinking. Academic and personal success are enhanced with a two mind learning process . . . cognitive + affective learning.

Hallmark 10. Interdependence and team learning are needed for academic and career development. Healthy, effective relationships are essential for superior performance and leadership. Team building, mentoring, and coaching processes are key to building and maintaining healthy and effective personal and work relationships.

Hallmark 11. Excellence is self-defined and self-directed. Self-direction has been identified as the most important

employability (career success) skill in the 21st Century. EI behavior is intentional, positive, goal-directed, and self-valued.

Hallmark 12. EI learning is a key skill set for improving student engagement, student effort, achievement, course completion, retention, and success in education. The overarching goal of person-centered learning and achieving personal excellence is learning to develop, apply, and model transformative EI in academic, personal, career, and life endeavors.

6. What Are 21 key 21st Century Skills Needed for Healthy Living and Working?

Within the theory and learning model of transformative EI, there are key skill sets essential to effective, productive, meaningful work. When learned and applied, we can experience and observe the skills and behaviors on an everyday basis.

Our research and experience suggest that emotionally intelligent (high achieving and healthy) students and adults behave in 21 observable and skillful ways when interacting with self and others in personal and work situations. The 21 key skill sets of transformative emotional intelligence for healthy living and working in the 21st century are:

1. Communicate clearly, honestly and directly (Assertion)
2. Ability to quickly establish and maintain healthy and effective relationships (Interpersonal Comfort – Social Awareness)
3. Accurately sense and communicate an understanding of the thoughts, emotions, and beliefs of others (Empathy)
4. Make quick, creative, and effective decisions (Decision Making)
5. Positively impact and empower others (Leadership)
6. Consistently (daily) set and achieve meaningful personal goals (Drive Strength)
7. Effectively manage self to meet accepted responsibilities and commitments on time (Time Management)
8. Complete personal responsibilities and commitments despite difficulties, hardships, and distractions (Commitment Ethic)
9. Identify, manage, and express anger constructively and in a manner not harmful to self and others (Anger Management)
10. Effectively manage anxiety, threat, and fear (Anxiety Management)
11. Regulate and manage the demands and stressors of day to day living and working (Stress Management)
12. Actively identify potential areas for increased positive growth (skill development) and work to change self-defeating and problematic behaviors (Positive Personal Change)
13. Develop strengths, act wisely and accept responsibility for thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Self Esteem - active rather than reactive)
14. Seek challenge and personally meaningful learning (Intelligent Self-Direction)

15. Actualize potential (engaged and committed) to personal and professional growth by learning, developing, and using key EI skills and behaviors
16. Develop personal vision and mission to chart paths of intelligent self direction (Guidance and Vision)
17. Effectively use a personal system of empowerment to harness the energy, motivation, and power needed to achieve standards of personal excellence (Power and Commitment)
18. Discover, identify, and maintain personal congruence through an intentional use of self-valued beliefs and central purpose in life (Belief and Purpose)
19. Build support systems with healthy, productive personal relationships and work teams (Support and Relationships)
20. Actively seek to achieve work and life balance with a positive model of personal change (Balance and Change)
21. Intentionally learn to access and gain positive contributions of emotional intelligence and the emotional system

Academic leaders, teachers, counselors, coaches, and mentors can help students liberate and actualize their potential by providing a learning environment and relationship that is: (a) protective and safe, (b) permission giving and affirming, and (c) empowering (high in expectations and challenge). Developing EI skills is the process that guides and actualizes learning potential.

Emotionally intelligent behavior involves learning, developing, and applying (modeling through behavior) skills that have potential to achieve – (a) a constructive thinking process and coherent mind, (b) healthy and effective intra and interpersonal relationships, and (c) neural integration (contentment and peace of mind). Learning and developing EI require a learning environment that encourages and nurtures positive growth, change, and skill development

7. What Does Research with Transformative Emotional Intelligence Suggest?

A brief overview of key research findings with transformative emotional intelligence indicates and highlights the value of EI skills in achieving important goals in education and business. The following is a brief summary of research related to transformative emotional intelligence (Nelson & Low model, 1977-present).

8. Academic Achievement and Performance In Education

Grades and personal/emotional skills were positively correlated with achievement and school performance among secondary students in an early doctoral dissertation [50]. Performance and Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) were positively and significantly related with EI skills in Math and English indicating EI skills could be predictive of school performance [59]. Castro [3]

discovered important findings of an EI skills-based construct of personal responsibility to resilient behaviors in seventh and eighth grade students. In a series of research-derived articles, Low and Nelson [30,31] provided compelling evidence and connections for school leaders to help adolescents achieve more success in education, develop transformative learning to enhance leadership, and build bridges from school to college to career.

A well-designed and comprehensive study found significant and positive relationships with an EI transformative learning intervention, student grades, positive behaviors, and reducing behavior problems and disciplinary action with “at-risk” secondary students [58]. Rice [55] found positive and significant relationships in achievement and leadership for personal/emotional skills with students in JROTC programs. A strong argument for infusing personal excellence and emotional intelligence in teaching gifted children was presented and described in a research-derived book chapter (Nelson, 2008).

In an education age where we are still trying to achieve equality in education while maintaining high standards, a central implication of these studies and articles is that a curriculum enriched with the principles and hallmarks of transformative EI is needed in schools and colleges. These curricula would result in a more balanced, relevant curriculum, and be important to all students.

9. College Success, Academic Performance, Retention, Career Development

Doctoral studies, institutional research, and colleague research with transformative EI skills and skill sets have found positive and significant factors and relationships to success in college. In an early study, Link [27] found factors of success for community college students included personal and emotional skills, especially interpersonal and self-management of career/life skills. Low [29] presented the case for emotional intelligence in mainstream education to the university community in the annual faculty lecture at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

In a study with first year students, the EI skills of Assertion, Time Management, Commitment Ethic, Drive Strength, and Stress Management were found to be significantly related to academic performance in the first semester of college [65]. A study of the freshman year in college by Williams [67] confirmed the value of self-management skills – Time Management, Drive Strength, and Commitment Ethic – to be of particular importance to academic achievement and retention of students in a Hispanic serving institution. In a like manner and follow-up study, an EI intervention was found to be significant to college success with freshman students [51].

A interpretive and intervention research manual Nelson, Low, and Vela [48] described the development of the ESAP and studies showing validity and suitability of emotional intelligence skills in academic, clinical, and business settings. In a related research manual, Nelson, Low, Martinez, and Stottlemeyer [47] described and documented the development, validation, and applications

of the Personal Responsibility Map. Nelson and Low [43] contributed a chapter presenting research evidence and illustrating the importance of EI-centric interventions to college success in a book documenting exemplary programs of student support and success.

Doctoral research with students in a south Texas community college setting included a study by Martinez [35] that documented the importance of a college success course infusing EI content and skills for instructors and learners. In similar manner, Fernandez [13] examined the attitudinal, behavioral, and EI skill characteristics of college student-parents and discovered the connection of emotional intelligence to college and life success. Nelson, Low, and Ellis [44] described and illustrated the value of positive assessment and integrated personal change process with transformative emotional intelligence.

Additional studies have validated a transformative EI assessment with first-year students at a Hispanic serving institution [34] and a Spanish version of an EI assessment with college students in Mexico [62]. In a large-scale project, a transformative EI assessment was standardized and found important to mentoring and career development with South African students of higher education [11]. Low and Hammett [16] cited institutional research with the Javelina EI Program by Boyle in 2004 and found positive and significant results for the value of EI intervention in student achievement and retention. They also described an EI curriculum based on research and documented successful studies and practices with transformative emotional intelligence in three major college programs.

These studies have confirmed the value and supported the use of transformative emotional assessment for instructional and student support services with college students in the U.S. and internationally. Educators now have a sound research-based rationale for decisions to incorporate EI content, knowledge, and learning into the formal curriculum to balance the quality of education for career and life.

10. Learning Environment, Strategic Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

In 2005, Galveston College incorporated emotional intelligence into its curriculum in a comprehensive approach to improve student success. In its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) “Keys to Student Success”, the Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP) and *Emotional Intelligence: Achieving Academic and Career Excellence* book [42] were adopted as central features. Galveston College hosted the 2006 Third Annual Institute for Emotional Intelligence – Catch the Wave – to highlight their innovative instructional program. Numerous presentations were made to disseminate and share experiences of student success with emotional intelligence. Gammill [14] described and chronicled the GC plan, experiences, success, and impact.

South Texas College (STC) embraced an EI curriculum in its College Success program beginning in 2006. The ESAP was researched and applied in courses and faculty development opportunities. STC hosted the 2008 Fifth

Annual Institute for Emotional Intelligence – Personal Excellence: Building Quality From Within – to highlight their commitment to building a culture of student success. Miller [38] outlined the experience from faculty and student perspectives in an article as well as presenting numerous programs at state and national conferences with Jorge Botello and College Success colleagues.

In 2010, McLennan Community College (MCC) began to study the feasibility of using transformative emotional intelligence in programs with students. With faculty, staff, student, and community involvement, MCC developed their 2012 Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) “Learning Environment Adaptability Project” to enhance the learning environment and improve student effort (engagement) and course completion (retention). MCC hosted the 2014 Eleventh Annual Institute for Emotional Intelligence – Building Cultures of Organizational and Student Success – to share their strategic plan for improving college success and the college experience with transformative emotional intelligence.

Hills, Cano, and Illich [18] described and documented the planning and implementation process and reported on the results of the first year of implementation. In 2015, MCC hosted the Twelfth Annual Institute for Emotional Intelligence – Pursuing Excellence in Education and Beyond – to highlight and chronicle their continuing efforts to develop exemplary programs for students, faculty, and community.

11. Teaching and Learning Effectiveness with Transformative Emotional Intelligence

With the substantive and growing research evidence linking EI skills and competencies to academic achievement and success in college, it is clear that transformative emotional intelligence is important to students. In a like manner, there are growing indications that emotional intelligence is key to teaching effectiveness. Engaging self and other with transformative EI provides teachers with additional classroom management tools and strategies to create healthy learning environments and connect with students for more effective learning.

Our books for learners provided a structured curriculum and platform to teach and learn transformative emotional intelligence organized around ESAP skills and EI lessons (Nelson and Low, 2003, 2011). We have taught first-year students, graduate students in counselor education and adult education as well as doctoral students in educational leadership using EI assessments, books, and integrated resources. Our person-centered learning models place a balanced responsibility for learning on students and teachers.

In a series of scholarly presentations and articles on teacher preparation and teacher development, Justice [21,22] provided snapshots of students pursuing traditional and non-traditional certification programs and teacher preparation and professional practice with emotional intelligence. Justice and Espinoza [24,25] presented programs on pre-service and student teachers as well as veteran teachers applying and describing emotional

intelligence influences and skill profiles. In an article presenting research and future directions of teacher preparation with emotional intelligence, Justice, Espinoza, Veitch, and Lin [25] identified the importance of transformative EI in education and promising areas of research and professional practice for teaching. Recently, DeWitt [10] completed a project based research capstone that advocated for an appreciative inquiry process for school administrators to embed ESAP skills to make professional development more relevant for teachers, and teachers more effective for schools and their students.

A sponsored research project in Texas suggested the important connections of emotional intelligence skills to classroom management and teacher retention [15]. In a research study with teachers in Taiwan, Hwang [19] found significant relationships among EI skills and teaching effectiveness. Chao [5] identified the important role of emotional intelligence in learning second language with EFL students in Taiwan. In a related study, Farnia [12] found significant relationships among EI skills TOEFL scores, and language proficiency with students in language development programs in Iran.

In an interesting and innovative study of emotional intelligence with undergraduate and graduate students in a Hispanic serving institution, the teacher characteristics of Respect, Caring, and Encouragement were cited as behavioral indicators of teaching excellence [17]. Harville noted the important role of EI and teaching effectiveness and concluded that transformative EI could be useful in teacher preparation programs. EI skills, especially Empathy, Anger Management, and Time Management, were indicators of achievement and course completion with developmental math students [26]. A study of pre-service teachers found significant connections among EI skills and resilience factors, as well as performance of teachers in training [63]. These studies make important connections on teaching and learning effectiveness and provide a person-centered perspective on the potential value of transformative EI for students and teachers.

12. Healthy Relationships, Potential Problematic Behaviors, and EI Skills

An early study with incarcerated adolescents revealed the importance of personal and emotional skills to interventions aimed at education, adjustment, and change [64]. Branaman [2] found important connections of personal and emotional skills to problematic indicators of quantity and frequency of alcohol use, problem drinking, and personal life skills. Branaman's study indicated that lower personal and emotional skills were indicators of problematic behaviors in adolescents. Inversely, higher levels of personal and emotional skills were associated with fewer problem behaviors related to alcohol use and abuse.

Validation studies with the Personal Skills Map were reported in a research manual and suggested strong and positive relationships among personal and emotional skills to achievement, healthy emotional functioning, and emotional development [41].

Well designed studies of distressed and non-distressed marriages [40], emotional and social skills in marital

systems ([66], and validation of relationship skills to effective relationships, constructive thinking, and dyadic couple adjustment [7,8] connected personal, emotional, relationship skills to healthy and effective relationships. Cox and Nelson [6] confirmed the positive and significant correlations of emotional skills and constructive thinking patterns with an adult sample. Resiliency and relationship skills were found to be important in working with military personnel and families in adjustments back into the community after stressful wartime service [49].

In studies related to nursing education, Millan [37] examined emotional intelligence skills and differences among nursing students in a community college in South Texas. Cox, S. J., [9] studied the relationship among emotional intelligence skills, personality, social maturity, and performance. These two nursing education studies point to the importance of including emotional intelligence in the training of health professionals.

The above studies with relationship, personal, emotional skills have important implications for professional practice and organizations desiring to improve healthy and productive families, work teams, and personal wellness outcomes. In a keynote address, Linskey [28] made unique, relevant, and insightful associations among key emotional skills, emotional maturity, and self-actualizing characteristics.

13. Leadership and Leading with Transformative Emotional Intelligence

Recent studies and programs have identified the importance of transformative emotional intelligence to developing leadership skills and behaviors. There is growing evidence to support the need for individuals and organizations to explore, identify, understand, learn, and apply (model) transformative EI on an everyday basis in self and leadership development programs.

In a well-designed cross-cultural study of academic leaders in Taiwan and U.S., emotional intelligence skills and leadership effectiveness were significantly and positively correlated [60]. Building on doctoral research, Tang, Yin, and Nelson [61] further described the connection of leadership practices with EI and leadership effectiveness. Reyes-Dominquez [53] completed an interesting and comprehensive study with students, faculty, and college stakeholders on the relationship of emotional intelligence, leadership, and organization excellence. In a subsequent article, Reyes-Dominguez [54] described and documented the importance of transformative emotional intelligence with student voices and from the perspective of adult learners in a college environment.

A comprehensive study with Air Force officers in a leadership development course yielded significant and positive relationships of EI skills and leadership behavior scores [16]. An excellent qualitative doctoral study of federal government leaders receiving a Presidential Award for excellence traced and documented how leaders develop emotional intelligence [56]. Rude also identified important implications and recommendations for learning emotional intelligence in education and organizational settings.

A study with university students majoring in business explored and identified students' development of emotional intelligence for leadership growth (Villarreal, 2010). Subsequently, Ramos-Villarreal and Holland [52] reported on the need for university business students to learn and develop emotional intelligence skills important to leadership. Chancler [4] explored and identified effective managerial practices and transformative EI skills for professional practice with school administrators. A study with students in a management concepts course yielded positive and significant findings on developing leadership with EI skills to better prepare students to meet competitive standards of career employment [33].

Mejia [36] conducted a comparative study of personal skills with faculty, department chairs, and administrators at a college in South Texas. The study revealed important connections to the unique roles of faculty, academic chairs, and administrators in meeting the vision, mission, and core values of the college. A comprehensive case study of a large global engineering company with internal coaches and employees using emotional intelligence to help employees and organization to grow was documented in a book on fuelling success [57].

Nelson, Low, Hammett, and Sen [46] developed and published a research based professional coaching curriculum and program with transformative emotional intelligence for graduate credit at University of Houston-Victoria. Executive, business, academic, and life coaching provided a focus for the program using positive EI assessments, experiential learning processes, a practical theory and model of personal change, and EI skills essential for teaching, learning, coaching, and leadership excellence.

14. Adaptability Learning for Positive Change in a Changing World

There has been a lot written about emotional intelligence and change. However, how to develop emotional intelligence and learning how to change in positive ways remain a mystery to many and perhaps most young learners and adults. Four decades of focused research, study, and experience in education and organizations have taught us the enormous value of transformative emotional intelligence and the almost absolute need to understand the nuances of emotional life. Healthy living and successful employment in the 21st century depend in large part on learning and applying key emotional skills.

Learning about transformative emotional intelligence is key to healthy and productive achievement. Perhaps, as teachers, curriculum specialists, health professionals, HR directors, training and development specialists, and especially parents learn more about the skills and behaviors of transformative EI, meaningful change will occur. Think about new and diverse learning outcomes, EI curricula in all disciplines, interventions to help students succeed in education and life, and ideas to incorporate transformative emotional intelligence.

We have learned that transformative EI is learning to develop:

- personal responsibility in how we think and behave
- constructive thinking as a guide to personal decision making
- intelligent self-management and self-direction with personal standards of excellence
- healthy and effective interpersonal relationships and work skills
- a healthy and congruent mind and relationship with self
- personal goals and learning to achieve academic and career excellence
- key skills and skill sets to value and work well with diversity
- self-defined and self-directed learning for personal excellence
- a practical philosophy and ethical framework to guide self and interactions with others
- resiliency, skilled processes for goal attainment, managing stress
- a better model for learning from experience than just experience
- a practical model of lifelong learning
- emotional skills to gain the positive contributions of the emotional mind and reduce problematic behaviors of anger, fear, and sadness
- leadership skills to bring out the best in self and others
- a practical theory and model for positive personal change
- vision and direction for becoming our best self
- genuine emotional intelligence for a more hopeful life
- the value and necessity of honest and objective self assessment
- strategies for dealing with daily pressures of life and interpersonal dynamics
- an approach to achieve work and life balance.

15. A Concluding Statement

We call for intentional and purposeful inclusion of transformative emotional intelligence in schools, community colleges, and universities. Students of all ages need to learn how to learn, how to make personal change understandable, and how to adapt new learning within a myriad of personal, family, community, and work relationships. EI skills and transformative learning are positive and practical approaches to enhance achievement, career, and life success today and in the future.

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