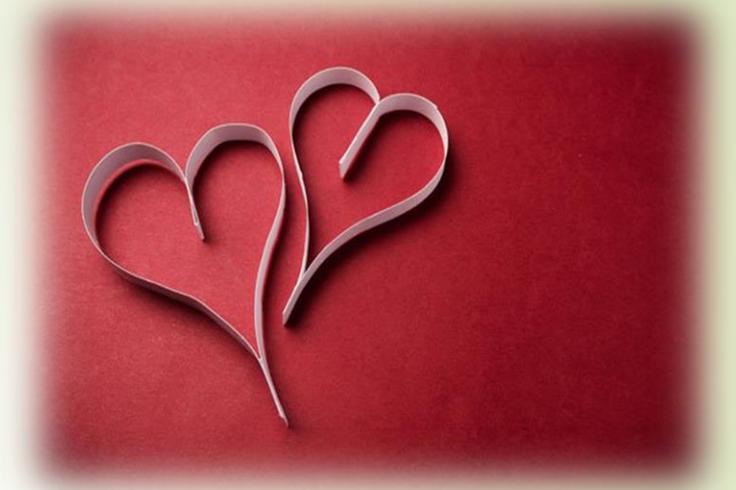


Drama Free Marriage:

EQ Techniques for an Emotionally Intelligent Marriage



1

ACFRP Workshop Andrews University – July 21, 2017

Grant Leitma, Ph.D. , *Washington Adventist University*

A'Lisa Andradé, LGPC, M.A. *Washington Adventist University*

“It includes two partners who are committed to both **self** and **other-awareness**. And each of those partners also have a **capacity** and **inclination** to **manage** their own emotional state and their **impact** on the other.”

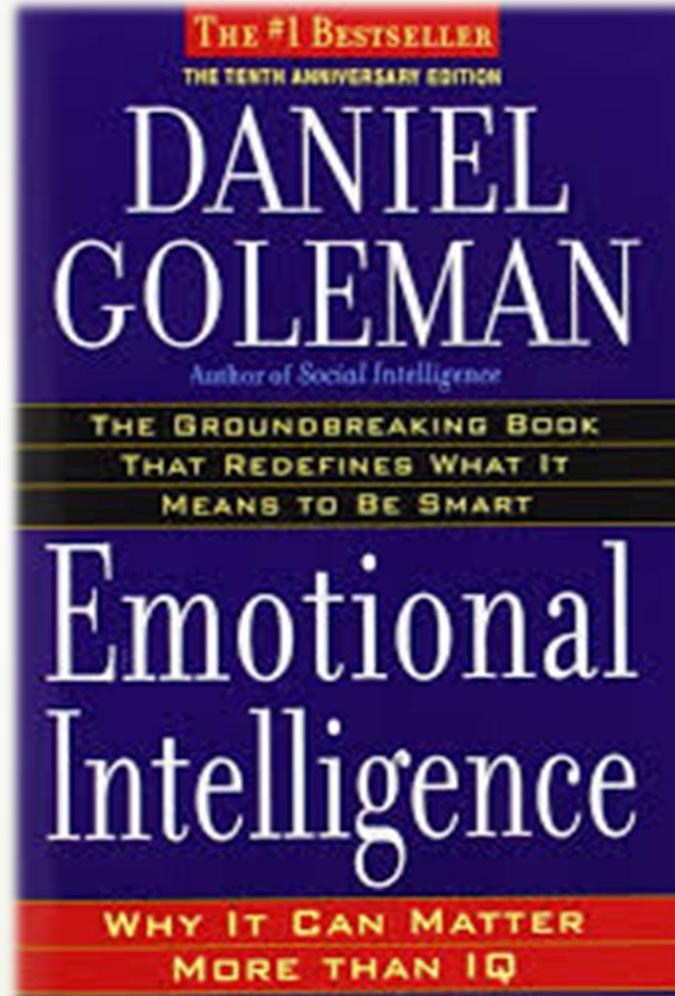
Dr. John Gottman

GOOD NEWS?
EQ IS TEACHABLE!



Peter Salovey & John Mayer

- ▶ Daniel Goleman, *author*



► **Seminars/Training Programs**

- *Workplace/Corporate*
- *Schools*
- *Marriage and Family*
- *Apps and workbooks*



- ▶ **Yale Center For Emotional Intelligence**
 - ▶ *Mark Brackett*
 - ▶ *Taught around the world*

OUR WORK IS
ABOUT PRESERVING
WHAT IT IS TO BE
HUMAN – experiencing
emotions, being present,
interacting socially.”

– MARC BRACKETT, *Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence*



➤ What IS EQ?

➤ Difference between EQ and IQ

➤ **IQ:** Stable throughout the life span

➤ **EQ:** Can be taught and developed through training and practice



EQ IS TEACHABLE!

► Soul-Wellness

- **Will:** *“Love is a state of the will...Commitment is a decision...Motivation to achieve.” C. S. Lewis*
- **Body:** *Healthy practices involving nutrition, movement and healing touch*
- **Mind:** *Intimacy & Passion, Using the language of emotions, reading emotion, awareness of others, self regulation, self control, label emotion, manage*

INTRODUCTION & ORIENTATION

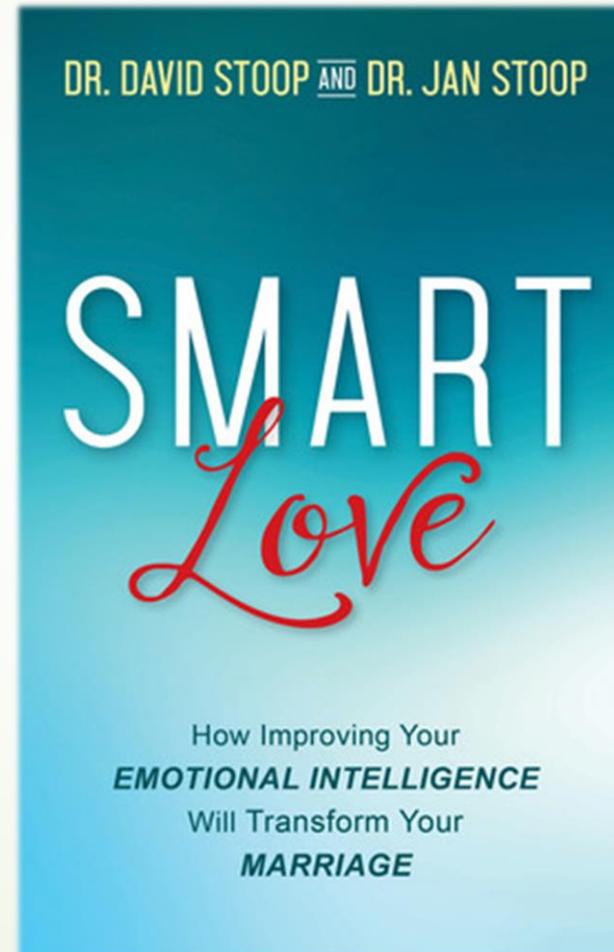
Integration of all three brings Soul-Wellness



OVERVIEW

- 
- 1. Techniques
 - 2. Assessment
 - 3. Expected Results
 - 4. Implications

SMART Love *By David and Jan Stoop*



➔ **SELF-AWARENESS:** A sense of knowing yourself

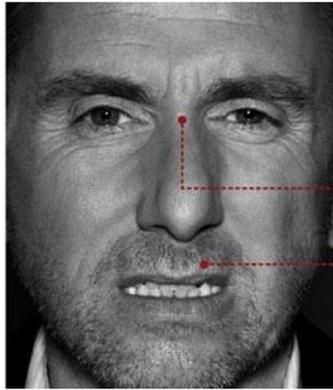


➔ **MANAGING** your emotions: Emotional brain to prefrontal brain



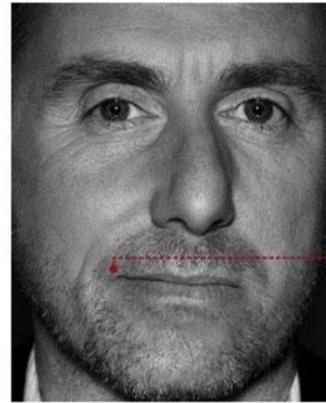


➡ **A**CCOUNTABILITY to yourself: Responsibility to others



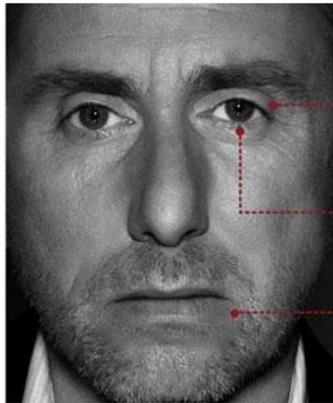
disgust

- ① nose wrinkling
- ② upper lip raised



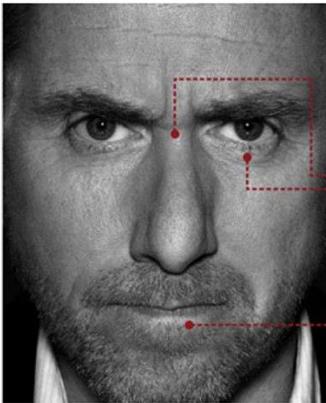
contempt

- ① lip corner tightened and raised on only one side of face



sadness

- ① drooping upper eyelids
- ② losing focus in eyes
- ③ slight pulling down of lip corners



anger

- ① eyebrows down and together
- ② eyes glare
- ③ narrowing of the lips

➤ **READING** the other person's emotions: Ability to be empathic; behavior "turn towards" or "turns away"

➔ **T**OGETHER in the land of emotions: *Literal* style verses *Inferential* style of communication; marriage mission statement



Neuroscience of Emotions

“What Neuroscience Teaches Us About EQ” Barking up the Wrong Tree, 2017

➤ GRATITUDE:

- focus on the positive
- releases dopamine and serotonin
- frontal lobe improvement

➤ LABELING FEELINGS:

- Name an emotion they were feeling reduced that feeling in MRI studies.
- Simply looking at an emotional photo aroused that emotion, but expressing that emotion verbally reduced that brain region's activity

▶ **MAKE A DECISION:**

- ▶ Reduces worry and anxiety, calms the limbic system, feelings of control reduce stress.
- ▶ Reduces cingulate gyrus activity.
- ▶ Making good choices activates prefrontal cortex

▶ **TOUCH:**

- ▶ Knowing when to reach out
- ▶ Being socially excluded is interpreted as pain by the brain impacting perceived happiness in relationships
- ▶ Release of oxytocin increases through touching and hugging limiting activity in the amygdala (*fight, flight, freeze response*)
- ▶ Massage releases serotonin decreasing the stress hormone cortisol

RULER from Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

- **R**ecognize emotions in self and others
- **U**nderstand the causes and consequences of emotions
- **L**abel emotions accurately
- **E**xpress emotions appropriately
- **R**egulate emotions effectively

- ▶ **HIGH & LOW EQ Marriages: A Checklist**
adapted from Ronald E. Riggio, Ph.D.
- ▶ **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TEST FOR COUPLES**
adapted from Pete Scazzero's (2014) book: "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to be Spiritually Mature while Remaining Emotionally Immature"
- ▶ **SMART LOVE INVENTORY**
by David and Jan Stoop from the book "SMART Love" (2017), p. 38, Action Plan, p.189

High v. Low EQ Marriages

➤ Low EQ Couples

- 1. Unable to control Emotions
- 2. Clueless about personal feelings
- 3. Can't maintain friendships and get into arguments constantly
- 4. Always has a "poker face."
- 5. Is emotionally inappropriate
- 6. Can't cope with sadness
- 7. Is emotionally tone deaf.
- 8. Can't really be sympathetic and blame their spouse
- 9. Has no volume control when engaging their spouse
- 10. Trivializes emotions in general

HIGH & LOW EQ Marriages: A Checklist

➤ High EQ Couples:

- 1. Pay attention to how they are feeling.
- 2. Understand how the spouse feels.
- 3. They regulate their emotions.
- 4. Motivated to achieve and manage their behaviors.
- 5. Communicate when things are tough
- 6. Willing and able to discuss feelings with each other.
- 7. Able to Identify why they feel the way they do.
- 8. Couple desires to build a sense of purpose in their lives together
- 9. Capacity and inclination to manage their own emotions and their impact on their spouse.
- 10. Committed to self and other-awareness.

Emotional Intelligence Test For Couples

▶ Answer **Yes** or **No**

▶ Signs of Low EQ Couples

- ▶ A. Can't distinguish between fact and feeling
- ▶ B. Emotionally Needy and highly reactive to others
- ▶ C. Spending lots of time winning the approval of others
- ▶ D. Little energy for goal-directed activities
- ▶ E. Can't say "I think" or "I believe" without apologizing first
- ▶ F. Emotionally enmeshed or overinvolved with family
- ▶ G. Depended on marriage or intimate relationships for self
- ▶ H. Can't transition well when life changes or during a crisis
- ▶ I. Can't see where you end and others begin (tend to have codependent relationships)

➤ Signs of Growing Emotional Intelligence

- A. Some ability to distinguish between fact and feeling in your relationship
- B. Most of self is a "false self" in front of your partner, but you're aware of it
- C. Good functioning when anxiety is low, but unhealthy during stress or high anxiety
- D. Quick to imitate others and change yourself so you're accepted in your relationships
- E. Aware of and even talk about your principles and beliefs, but don't always follow them
- F. Self-esteem is tied to what others say about you.
- G. Often make poor decisions due to your inability to think clearly when stressed
- H. Can't handle your emotions when a relationship breaks up or a conflict arises in your relationship (emotionally intelligent couples can discuss their relationship calmly and honestly)
- I. Seek power, knowledge, and love from others

➤ Signs of Healthy EQ Couples

- A. Aware of how your thoughts make you feel—and able to choose positive, healthy thoughts
- B. Reasonable level of self-identity or true self as part of a couple (emotionally intelligent couples are distinct, connected)
- C. Can follow life goals that you determine from within, not as determined by your partner or family
- D. Healthy concept of who you are (your true self)
- E. Can state your beliefs calmly, without putting others down
- F. Your relationship or marriage is a partnership, and you function as an emotionally intelligent couple most of the time
- G. Can Allow your kids to progress through the developmental phases into independent, autonomous adults
- H. Relate and communicate with others— including your partners—without insisting they see the world the way you do.

➤ Signs of Extremely Healthy or High EQ in Relationships

- A. Secure in who you are, your self-esteem isn't affected by criticism or praise
- B. Have left your family of origin, and are independent emotionally, financially, physically, socially, and professionally
- C. Sure of your beliefs, but not closed in your thinking
- D. Can hear and evaluate the beliefs of your partner, and be open to changing your beliefs in light of new evidence
- E. Can respect others without wanting to change them
- F. Can listen to others' opinions and thoughts without reacting
- G. Can communicate without antagonizing or offending others
- H. Able to take responsibility for your destiny and life
- I. Aware of interdependence with others, but not dependent on them
- J. Able to be peaceful and calm during stress, sad, and unhappy circumstances
- K. Free to enjoy life and play

SMART Love Inventory

- ▀ Usually – 3 points
- ▀ Sometimes – 2 points
- ▀ Seldom – 1 point

1. I am aware of my emotions.
2. I can express my feelings appropriately.
3. I am able to observe myself when I am emotional
4. I can soothe myself when anxious.
5. I am accepting of my moods, both good and bad.
6. I do not worry.
7. I am attuned to my values.
8. I am able to keep quiet when I know talking won't help.

How I See
Myself

How I See
My Spouse

SMART Love Inventory

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 9. I know what pushes my buttons. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. I am comfortable with change. | _____ | _____ |
| 11. I can acknowledge my shortcomings. | _____ | _____ |
| 12. I am generally an optimist. | _____ | _____ |
| 13. I have a sense of humor about myself. | _____ | _____ |
| 14. Down moods don't last very long for me. | _____ | _____ |
| 15. I am generally a confident person. | _____ | _____ |
| 16. I am able to control my anger. | _____ | _____ |
| 17. I do not get overwhelmed by my emotions. | _____ | _____ |
| 18. I do not say things when I'm upset that I later regret. | _____ | _____ |
| 19. I am aware of a wide range of feelings. | _____ | _____ |
| 20. I am not controlled by my emotions. | _____ | _____ |

SMART Love Inventory

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 21. I have at least one friend who knows when I'm hurting. | _____ | _____ |
| 22. I can talk to others about what I am feeling. | _____ | _____ |
| 23. I can empathize with my friends' emotional issues. | _____ | _____ |
| 24. It is easy for me to share my fears with my friends. | _____ | _____ |
| 25. I believe 'family secrets' can be shared with trusted friends. | _____ | _____ |
| 26. I have friends who share with me their emotional ups and downs. | _____ | _____ |
| 27. I am open to my spouse's comments about me. | _____ | _____ |
| 28. My spouse and I are comfortable talking directly with each other. | _____ | _____ |
| 29. I can feel what my spouse feels. | _____ | _____ |
| 30. My spouse and I know how to show each other we care. | _____ | _____ |
| 31. I can hear what's behind the words my spouse says. | _____ | _____ |
| 32. My spouse and I share a vision for our marriage. | _____ | _____ |

SMART Love Inventory

33. I can stay calm in the midst of turmoil. _____
34. My spouse and I are both good negotiators. _____
35. I am a great listener with my spouse. _____
36. I can balance my needs with my spouse's needs. _____
37. Even when I don't agree, my spouse knows I understand. _____
38. As a couple, we are a team. _____
39. We have close friends as a couple. _____
40. I understand how my childhood experiences have affected me. _____

Scoring Procedure

Self-Awareness score is based on the odd-numbered statements 1-19.

My Score: _____

My Spouse's Score: _____

Managing Your Emotions score is based on even-numbered statements 2-20.

My Score: _____

My Spouse's Score: _____

Accountability score is based on statements 21-26.

My Score: _____

My Spouse's Score: _____

Reading the Other Person's Emotions score is based on the odd-numbered statements 27-39. My Score: _____

My Spouse's Score: _____

Together in the Land of Emotions score is based on the even-numbered statements 28-40. My Score: _____

My Spouse's Score: _____

My Total Score: _____

My Spouse's Total Score: _____

Action Plan for Couples

Notice

The Expression	When Does it Happen?	What are the Triggers?
Furious	Late in the day	Kept waiting
Enraged	Accumulated time	Catch a lie
Irate		
Seething	periodically	Lack of decisiveness
Upset		
Frustrated	Sabbath morning	Made to be late
Annoyed		
Irritated	Early morning	Refusal to answer a question

Action Plan for Couples

Narrate

Action Plan for Couples

Negotiate

SOUL-WELLNESS & Emotionally Intelligent Marriage

➤ WILL

- Intentions
- Desires
- Choices
- Motivation

*“Love is a state of the will...
Commitment is a decision...
Motivation to achieve.” C. S. Lewis*

➤ MIND

- Feelings
- Thoughts
- Memories
- Intelligence
- Imagination
- Worship
- Intimacy & Passion, Using the language of emotions, reading emotion, awareness of others, self regulation, self control, label emotion, manage

➤ BODY

- Reading body language & facial expressions
- Proper care of the body
- Healthy lifestyle
- Touching & hugging effects

Soul-Wellness produces...

- **Deliberate** search for *mutual* soul-wellness within the relationship
- **Integration** of the Will, Mind, and Body
- Each spouse with a **secure identity**
- Genuine **humility**
- **Authenticity**
- **Reliability**
- **Trustworthiness**
- **Enjoyment** of life and the beauty of the natural world

Heavenly Experienced Love

“Let us not love in word,” the apostle writes, “but in **deed and in truth**.”

The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this **love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life** unto life and enables God to bless his work.

Heavenly Experienced Love

EXPECTED RESULTS

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. **This love is not an impulse**, but a divine principle, a permanent power.

The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. **Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found**. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” In the heart renewed by divine grace, **love is the ruling principle of action**. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections.

This **love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life** and sheds a refining influence on all around.

Heavenly Experienced Love

John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the **exercise of the spirit of love**. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would **control** every other **motive** and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God...

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.” 1 John 4:18

And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, ... we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.”

E. G. White, *Acts of the Apostles* 551.2

Biblical Support

- ▶ ⁹Two are better than one,
because they have a good reward for their labor:
¹⁰If *either* of them falls down,
one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.
- ¹¹Also, if *two* lie down *together*, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?

Ecclesiastes.4:9-11

- 1. A **Drama Free** Marriage is an **Emotionally Intelligent** Marriage! (Gottman, 2000)
- 2. They support each other's **hopes** and **aspirations** and build a sense of **purpose** into their lives together! (Gottman, 2000)
- 3. Teach clients to **Build their Emotional Vocabulary** (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009)
- 4. EQ is a tool for **achieving Soul-Wellness**. Integrated soul, emotionally healthy, authentic, reliable, and trustworthy. **Two can become one!**
- 5. Soul-Wellness: **Harmonious** functioning of: **The Will, The Mind, The Body**
- 6. Deepening love for each other supports the goal of **Soul-Wellness**.

➤ ***Further Research Implications***

- 1. Is it possible to develop an integrated model for emotionally intelligent marriage and soul-wellness?
- 2. Would training on EQ make a difference with individuals with personality disorders?
- 3. What is the reliability and validity of assessment measures listed?
- 4. How does spirituality impact EQ in marriages?