

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A DEEPER LOOK

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This lesson serves to give an overview of how emotional intelligence can help us sustain love, nurturance, and awareness in our relationships with others. Through an overview and discussion of the Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence and the Feelings Wheel, participants will gain the ability to recognize, support and affirm their emotions and the emotions of others, as well as connect these tools to their sexual decision making.

KEYWORDS

Emotional
Intelligence
Emotions
Masculinity
Mental Health
Sexual Health
Stress Management

THEME

Identity
& Personal
Development

FORMAT

Workshop

TIME

75 minutes





PREPARATION

The facilitator(s) should use this section to prepare for the lesson.

PREPARATION

WHY THIS LESSON IS IMPORTANT FOR BLACK MEN

There are a range of social barriers that can hinder black gay men from sexual wellbeing and healthy communication in relationships, including racism, homophobia, health and wellness disparities, limited community resources, past trauma, incarceration, and structural violence. Due to these factors, black gay men often navigate stress and anxiety around their sexuality, communities, and relationships. Sexual decision-making, such as sharing information with partners and negotiating safe-sex practices, often occurs in emotionally charged environments. In addition, the culture of online “hook-up” apps, through which many Black gay men and others negotiate sexual encounters, often fosters low expectations for sharing feelings and relationship-building in sexual relationships. The dismissal or minimization of our own and others’ feelings contributes to riskier sexual behaviors and harmful relational interactions. Education on Emotional Intelligence can help folks work with their feelings in constructive ways and lead individuals to be accountable for their sexual behavior, engagement, and intentions. Moreover, opportunities to explore and contend with one’s emotions allows individuals to more effectively evaluate strategies for safe and healthy relationships and seek support and solutions from others when necessary.

GOAL

Participants will increase their capacity to discuss Emotional Intelligence and its conceptual particularities, connecting this information to their sexual decision-making as black gay men.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Define Emotional Intelligence.
- Describe one way that practicing Emotional Intelligence can be useful to Black same-gender loving men.
- Discuss and Evaluate the Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence.

TIME

STEPS 1–6	Opening and Introduction to Emotional Intelligence	30 min.
STEPS 7–8	The Feeling Wheel Discussion	10 min.
STEPS 9–14	Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence Activity	25 min.
STEPS 15–17	Closing Activity	10 min.

FACILITATION PREP

The facilitator(s) should complete the following tasks before the lesson starts:

- ❑ Prepare three sheets of flip chart paper, each with one of the headings listed below:
 - Emotional Intelligence
 - Emotional Intelligence: the ability to recognize, support, affirm one’s own emotions and the emotions of others
 - 5 Domains of Emotional Intelligence:
 - » Emotional Awareness
 - » Relationship Management
 - » Social-Emotional Awareness
 - » Emotional Management
 - » Emotional Harm Reduction

Place the sheets out of sight until the moments during the session when they will be discussed.

MATERIALS

The facilitator(s) should have the following materials for the lesson:

- ❑ Flip chart paper
- ❑ Markers (*one per participant*)
- ❑ Writing utensils (*one per participant*)
- ❑ Tape

HANDOUTS

Each participant should be provided with the following printed materials:

- ❑ H1, “The Feeling Wheel”
- ❑ H2, “Domains of Emotional Intelligence”
- ❑ End-of-Session Evaluation

REQUIRED BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE FOR EDUCATORS

It is not required; however, facilitators are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with **Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence theory**. More info on his ideas can be found online, at ihhp.com. In addition, several other works on emotional intelligence include:

- Serrat, O. (2017). Understanding and developing emotional intelligence. In Knowledge Solutions (pp. 329-339).
- Springer, Singapore. Miao, C., Humphrey, R. H., & Qian, S. (2016). Leader emotional intelligence and subordinate job satisfaction: A meta-analysis of main, mediator, and moderator effects. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 102, 13-24.
- Cavazotte, F., Moreno, V., & Hickmann, M. (2012). Effects of leader intelligence, personality and emotional intelligence on transformational leadership and managerial performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(3), 443-455.
- Sánchez-Álvarez, N., Extremera, N., & Fernández-Berrocal, P. (2016). The relation between emotional intelligence and subjective well-being: A meta-analytic investigation. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 11(3), 276-285.

KEY TERMS

Emotional intelligence: the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others.

Emotional awareness: the ability to recognize one's own emotions and how they affect your thoughts and behaviors.

Relationship management: the ability to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, work well in a team, and manage conflict.

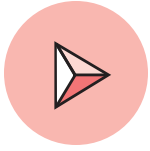
Social-emotional awareness: the ability to observe and understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people, pick up on emotional cues, feel comfortable socially, and recognize the power dynamics in a group or organization.

Emotional management: the ability to control impulsive behaviors, manage emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances.

Emotional harm reduction: the ability to assess and understanding one's own defense mechanisms, privilege and trauma and develop skills to lessen or minimize their negative impact.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because participants may be hesitant to discuss emotions or emotional matter subject matter at first, it may be helpful for facilitators to have examples prepared to help keep conversation moving. Additionally, this lesson may be best facilitated by at least one mental health professional. Create a safety plan in case individuals are triggered or experience stress during the session. If the facilitator is skilled, attempt to incorporate a grounding activity, such as deep breathing, a body scan or collective exhale to manage any anxiety that may arise.



PROCEDURE

The facilitator(s) should follow the steps in this section to facilitate the session, and use the margin for notes and prompts.



Opening and Introduction to Emotional Intelligence

STEP 1

Review all established group agreements and reaffirm consent from the group. If group agreements have not been completed, please create them at this time (use the *Community Agreements lesson*, if necessary.) For the purpose of this lesson, be sure to add agreements that correspond to the following ideas: Feelings are always valid, validate emotionally safe space, care for yourself, speak for yourself, etc.

STEP 2

Reveal the sheet of flip chart paper entitled “**Emotional Intelligence.**” Ask participants to share how they would define or describe emotional intelligence. Write all responses on the sheet of flip chart paper, and then read back the responses to the group to confirm accuracy.

STEP 3

Reveal the flip chart sheet that has the **definition of Emotional Intelligence** written on it. Read the definition aloud to the group, and then ask for a show of hands of individuals who have heard of the term before. Solicit 2–3 initial responses from those whose hands are raised.

STEP 4

Ask the group for examples of why emotional intelligence might be important to Black gay men; allow 2–3 volunteers to share. If the point has not been raised, explain to the group that because many Black gay men have to navigate a great deal of stress and anxiety in their lives, communities and relationships, being able to recognize feelings increases the ability to process them in more effective ways, and to get support and solutions from others when necessary. (You may have no volunteers to answer the question; in that case, use the question, “Where did you learn how to express feelings?”, or, “When you were growing up, what emotions were acceptable to express?” to keep the conversation moving toward the intended direction.)

STEP 5

Return to the flip chart sheet with the Emotional Intelligence definition on it; **underline** the word “recognize” with a marker. **Proceed** through the following Discussion Questions:

1. “On a scale from 1 to 10, how easy is it to recognize our emotions when they happen?”
2. “From a show of hands, how many folks have ever been called out for having a feeling they didn’t realize they were having in the moment—like anger when they didn’t realize it, or a pattern of behavior when they’re upset?”
(Invite 2–3 participants to share their experiences.)
3. “Has anyone ever had the experience of ‘blinking out’, or behaving from an emotional place without realizing it? How did that situation go?”
(Invite 2–3 participants to share their experiences.)

STEP 6

Explain to participants that while many people have had times in their lives where they didn’t recognize what they were feeling, sometimes not being attentive to those feelings can make us unintentionally hurt others or be hurtful to ourselves. **Explain** that this fact is one reason why building emotional intelligence is so important. **Invite** participants to consider that one way people build their emotional intelligence is by understanding the difference between a feeling and a thought. *(Allow participants to respond to this thought if they are interested.)* **Explain** that sometimes, we may express thoughts that we believe to be feelings, but they honestly don’t adequately describe what’s going on inside of us. **Close out** the thought by encouraging participants to consider that when we focus on identifying the feelings underlying our actions and motivations, we can sometimes better center ourselves and move from a more empowered place, further developing our emotional intelligence. **Solicit** any final reflections participants may have about this last thought before moving on.



The Feeling Wheel Discussion

STEP 7

Distribute a copy of **Handout H1**, “The Feeling Wheel”. **Solicit** a show of hands of individuals who have seen or heard of it before. **Explain** that The Feeling Wheel is a tool to help individuals develop their emotional vocabulary and intelligence. **Explain** that the center of the wheel includes more simple emotional words that might be heard on a regular basis (e.g., sad, afraid, happy), while the edges of the wheel include words that cover more complex aspects of those emotions.

Solicit any initial reactions people have to the Wheel, and then **proceed** through the following Discussion Questions:

1. “What feeling word on the Wheel best describes how you feel about the Wheel itself? Thinking about it further, where do you think those feelings come from?”
2. “Why do you think someone thought to create a device like this?”
3. “Do you think it’s hard to verbalize feelings? Why or why not?”
4. “Do you think it’s harder for Black men to verbalize their feelings? How about Black same-gender-loving men?”
5. “How might this wheel be helpful to someone?” *(If no one responds to this question, explain that having an expansive emotional vocabulary helps us better learn how to express how we feel.)*

STEP 8

If it has not been said at this point, **end** this part of the discussion by reminding to participants that men—and Black men in particular—are often socialized to not express their emotions, or to ignore how they feel. **Explain** that ignoring our emotions directly impacts emotional intelligence and can make it difficult to navigate a world where emotional triggers are happening all the time. **Explain** that the more people can learn to work with and acknowledge their feelings, the more emotional strength they have to persevere.



Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence Activity

STEP 9

Explain to participants that they will now be responsible for doing a bit more thinking about emotional intelligence, through thinking about “The Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence”. **Reveal** the flip chart sheet that has the list of the five domains; **solicit** a show of hands from participants of those who’ve seen these before, and/or can explain what they mean.

STEP 10

Separate participants into five small groups, and then **assign** one of the Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence to each group, along with five sheets of flip chart paper and markers.

STEP 11

Instruct participants to write down and prepare to present responses to the following questions on each sheet of flip chart paper:

1. What do you think your domain of emotional intelligence means, or looks like in action?
2. Why does/should this dimension matter to Black men?
3. What skills or tools do you believe a person would need to develop this domain further?

Give the groups 7–10 minutes to write their responses.

STEP 12

After 7–10 minutes has elapsed, **instruct** each group to adhere their flip chart sheets to the wall. Beginning with a volunteer, **instruct** each group to present and share what they learned.

STEP 13

Review each definition of the Domains, as written in the Key Terms section of the lesson plan, and then **review** the following Discussion Questions:

1. “Referring back to The Feeling Wheel, how do you feel now that you have completed this exercise?”
2. “Did these definitions match up with what your group thought they would be? How were they different?”
3. “What new information do you believe you have now as a result of this exercise?”

STEP 14

Distribute a copy of **Handout H2**, “**Domains of Emotional Intelligence**” and a writing utensil. **Read aloud** each question on the handout, and **give** participants 2–3 minutes to respond to each one. **Solicit** any reflections or responses participants have about the handout before moving on.



Closing Activity

STEP 15

Ask if anyone has any outstanding questions about the lesson. Respond to these as necessary. Distribute a copy of the End-of-Session Evaluation to each participant. Allow participants 5–7 minutes to complete the evaluation, and collect them as they are completed. After five minutes, invite any participants who have not completed the evaluation to do so after the next activity.

STEP 16

Distribute a marker to each participant, and then post a clean sheet of flip chart paper. Ask participants to imagine a friend or family member who isn't present, but whom would benefit from the information they gained here today, and to develop a one-line message they would share with them about this session. Invite participants to write their messages on the sheet of flip chart paper and encourage them to consider taking screenshots of the messages to meditate on during the rest of the week.

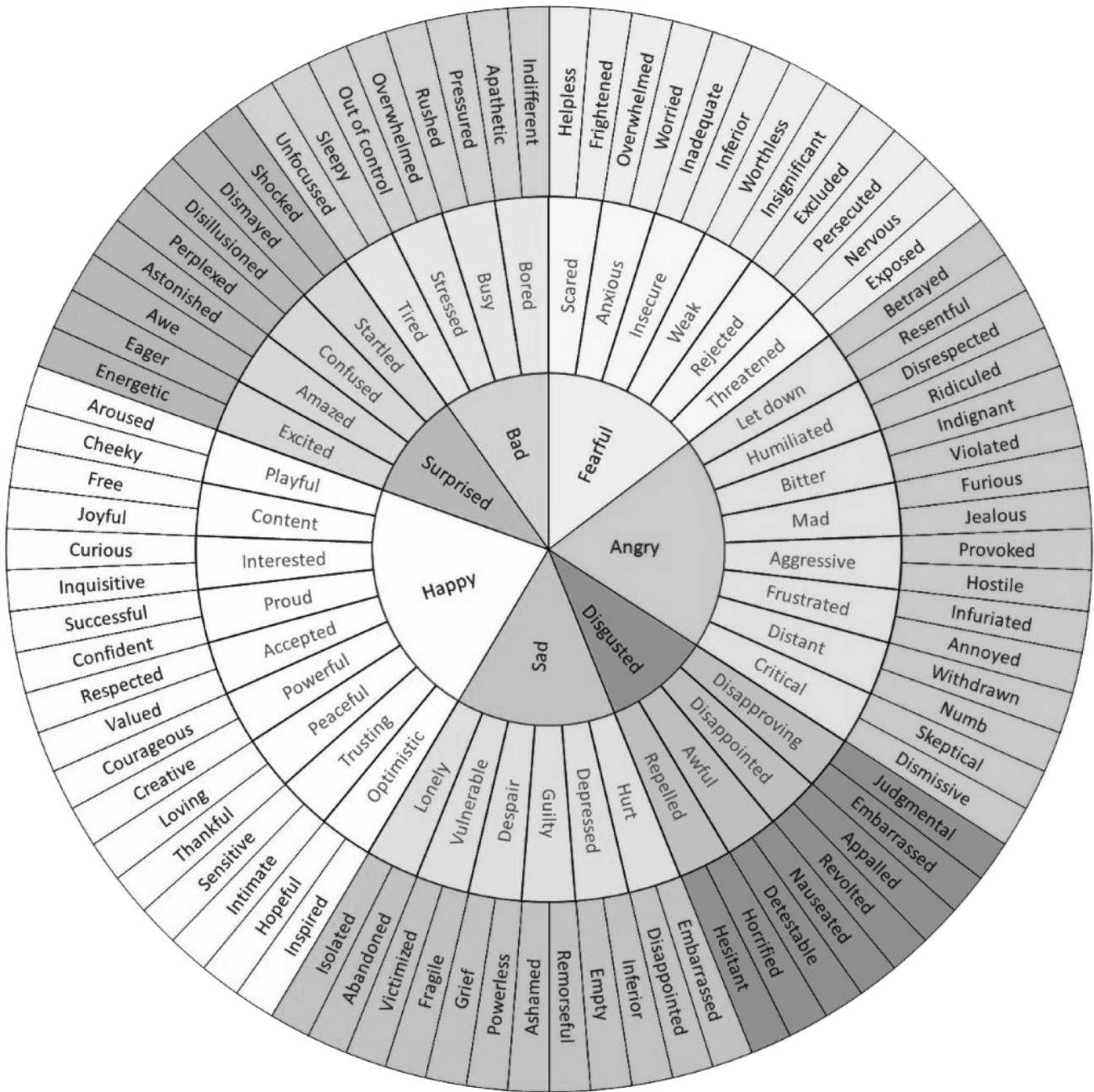
STEP 17

Thank participants for attending and adjourn the session.



HANDOUT

THE FEELING WHEEL



Willcox, G. (1982). The Feeling Wheel: A Tool for Expanding Awareness of Emotions and Increasing Spontaneity and Intimacy. *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 12(4), 274–276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/036215378201200411>. Image source: pinterest.com/pin/15952601177958604/?ip=true



HANDOUT

HANDOUT

DOMAINS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

1. What feeling words or thoughts come to your mind when you think of emotional intelligence? _____

2. What relationship do you think emotional intelligence has to sexual decision-making and sexual health? _____

3. What domain(s) of emotional intelligence do you believe you are strong in? Which do you need to work on? _____

4. What resources can you access to help you get better with emotional intelligence? _____
