

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE EXERCISE

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The purpose of this lesson is to introduce participants to a consideration and application of emotional intelligence theory, in an effort to develop and sustain love, nurturance, and awareness within interpersonal relationships.

KEYWORDS

Boundaries
Communication
Emotional
Intelligence
Emotions
Mental Health
Relationships
Stress Management
Trauma

THEME

Identity
& Personal
Development

FORMAT

Workshop

TIME

65 minutes





PREPARATION

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

PREPARATION

WHY THIS LESSON IS IMPORTANT FOR BLACK MEN

Emotional intelligence, generally speaking, is an important skill to gain in one's personal development. For Black same-gender-loving men, evidence suggests that age-discordant relationships often present as an opportunity for younger men to fulfill this aim, through connections made with older lovers and/or romantic partners (Arrington-Sanders, et. al, 2013). Simultaneously, research also points to age-discordant relationships as being a risk-factor for HIV transmission, given higher prevalence rates among older cohorts (Mutanski & Newcomb, 2013); moreover, in cases where younger men conflate emotional intelligence with other more traditional forms of achievement (e.g., economic success), many may also put themselves in psychological compromise while pursuing a false sense of emotional security. Taken together, development of emotional intelligence could prove useful for all Black men, increasing self-reliance and authentic maturity overall.

GOAL

Participants will experience a greater capacity to identify and negotiate emotional reactions to life events.

OBJECTIVES

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

- Define Emotional Intelligence (EI).
- Compare and contrast at least three differences between thoughts and feelings.
- Formulate at least one “Feelings”-focused statement.
- Explore skills and resources for further development of EI skills.

TIME

STEP 1	Introductions and Opening Activity	5 min.
STEPS 2-5	Defining Emotional Intelligence and its Relevance	15 min.
STEPS 6-10	Thoughts and Feelings Activity	20 min.
STEPS 11-12	Practicing Emotional Intelligence: Learn the Acronyms	20 min.
STEPS 13-15	Closing Activity	5 min.

REQUIRED BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE FOR EDUCATORS

Though it is not required, facilitators are strongly encouraged to become familiar with Daniel Goleman's foundational theory on emotional intelligence. More info on his ideas can be found online, at ihhp.com.

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.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Emotion can be a challenging discussion topic for individuals who do not usually prioritize emotions as part of information processing, or who have been socialized to see their emotions as negative. The ideal facilitator for this session will have a keen awareness of their own emotional intelligence, and will actively work to normalize emotional expression among all participants within the learning space.

FACILITATION PREP

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

- ❑ Draw a vertical line down the middle of a sheet of flip chart paper. Label each column as follows:
 - **Thoughts** (*left column*); and
 - **Feelings** (*right column*)

- ❑ Prior to the beginning of your session, make one copy of Facilitator Resource B, "Thoughts and Feelings", and cut out each statement, without including the answers noted on each side. Place the slips of paper into an envelope and keep it out of sight until reaching the Thoughts and Feelings activity during the session.

MATERIALS

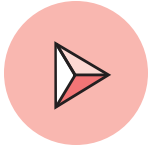
The facilitator(s) should have the following materials for the lesson:

- ❑ Easel with flip chart paper
- ❑ Markers
- ❑ Tape

HANDOUTS

Each participant should be provided with the following printed materials:

- ❑ H1, "The Feeling Wheel"
- ❑ H2, "Emotional Management Acronyms"
- ❑ End-of-Session Evaluation



PROCEDURE

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



Introductions and Opening Activity

STEP 1

Welcome participants to your session and **conduct** brief introductions with the group as needed. **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.*)



Defining Emotional Intelligence and its Relevance

STEP 2

Explain to the group that you will now be reading them a situation in the life of an individual. **Instruct** participants to imagine that the situation is happening to them in the present moment. **Explain** to participants that they may want to close their eyes while you read, or center them softly onto a fixed point in the room. **Instruct** participants to see if they can notice any emotions that come up for them while you read.

STEP 3



Read aloud the scenario in [Facilitator Resource A, “Emotional Intelligence Scenario.”](#) Speak clearly and loudly enough for everyone in the room to hear. After reading the scenario, **wait** 3–5 seconds, and then **invite** participants to share what feelings and emotions came up for them. **Write** the emotions down on a clean sheet of flip chart paper.

STEP 4

After you have gotten all participant responses, **proceed** through the following Discussion Questions:

1. “On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Completely Easy, and 5 being Completely Difficult, how was it doing this activity?”
2. “Activities like these are usually used as a way to get people thinking about the concept of Emotional Intelligence. Based on what we did, how would you define that term to someone who didn’t know what that meant?” (*After participants share their definition suggestions, **share** the definition found under Key Terms in the Preparation section of this lesson.*)

3. “Do you think that having emotional intelligence is important? Why or why not? What affect do you think it would have for a person to be out of touch with their emotions?”
4. “Is it important for Black men, or for Black gay men in particular to have emotional intelligence? Why or why not?”

STEP 5

As this portion of the conversation closes, explain to the group that being able to recognize how we are feeling can help us process our emotions and seek support and solutions when needed. Explain that anyone who feels increased levels of stress, or the risk of becoming stressed or anxious has an even greater opportunity to grow from learning and practicing emotional intelligence as well. Explain that while all people have likely had times when they don’t recognize what they’re feeling in the moment, not being attentive to our feelings can be a source of unintentional harm to ourselves or others, if we’re not careful.

**Thoughts and Feelings Activity****STEP 6**

Reveal the flip chart paper sheet titled “Thoughts and Feelings”. Distribute the slips of paper prepared from Facilitator Resource B, “Thoughts and Feelings,” along with a piece of tape. Instruct participants to silently review their statement, and guess whether or not they think it represents a thought or feeling. After 10–15 seconds of reviewing their statement, instruct participants to place their statement on flip chart paper, under the category they believe it most fits.

STEP 7

Ask participants to read their statements and think about whether the statement expresses a thought or a feeling. Instruct participants to come up to the front of the room to tape each statement under either the label of “Thoughts” or “Feelings” at the front of the room.

Alternate Activity:

If you believe you may have participants who have reading comprehension challenges, read each statement aloud, and then have the group vote for the category in which they believe it fits. Place the statement based on the most popular choice.

STEP 8 Review the submissions under each category, prompting discussion when a statement is in the wrong place and talking it through with the group.

STEP 9 Return each “Thoughts” statement back to participants along with a copy of **Handout H1, “The Feeling Wheel”**. In small groups, instruct them to try to rewrite each Thoughts statement as a Feelings statement.



STEP 10 After five minutes, reconvene the larger group and proceed through the following Discussion Questions:

1. “How easy or difficult was it to do this activity?”
2. “Looking at the wheel, are there any particular feelings that are easier or harder for you to express? If so, which ones and why?”
3. “Which of these feelings do you feel most frequently? Why?”
4. “Which of these feelings do you feel least frequently? Why?”
5. “Do you think it can be harder or easier to feel certain feelings based on our identities? If so, which ones and why?”



Practicing Emotional Intelligence: Learn the Acronyms

STEP 11 Distribute copies of **Handout H2, “Emotional Management Acronyms”**.



Ask participants to raise their hands if they’ve ever seen the acronyms noted in the handout before. *(If anyone raises their hand, invite them to share what their experience with them has been.)* Explain to the group that each acronym can be used as a way for an individual to practice emotional intelligence in moments of high stress, when humans are less traditionally inclined to use it, but may most benefit from it.

STEP 12 Carefully explain each term and its meaning in each acronym; as useful, provide an example for each of when using the acronym makes sense. Solicit and answer any questions, comments, concerns participants may have about the acronyms, and then move on.



Closing Activity

STEP 13

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 14

Ask if anyone has any outstanding questions about the lesson. Respond to these as necessary.

STEP 15

Close by asking each participant to name one thing they are glad to have learned in this session, and one thing they will continue to think about after they leave. Thank the participants for participating and then adjourn the session.

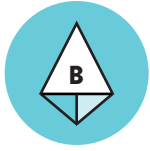


FACILITATOR RESOURCE A

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCENARIO

Broderick is the newest romantic partner of a friend in your social circle. You've been aware of them for the past three months, and it seems that, for all intents and purposes, they do ***not*** like you. You've never had the chance to actually talk to Broderick about it; however, every chance that comes around it seems like Broderick's throwing shots at you—making shady comments under social media pictures you're in, not really engaging with you when you all are out in public spaces, and acting very petty about the time your friend spends with you.

Last week it was brought to your attention (again, via social media) that Broderick doesn't trust you; additionally, rumors have started spreading that they plan to fight you the next time they see you in public. Today, you've been hanging out minding your business, and as you look up the walkway you see Broderick walking steadily up to you.



FACILITATOR RESOURCE B

FACILITATOR RESOURCE

THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

Directions: See **STEP 6**. Cut out the terms below. The Facilitator's key to the correct answers are shown alongside each term.

Thought	You not returning my text message in a timely fashion, when you say you care about me, is disrespectful.	When that woman told me I didn't belong here, it pissed me off.	Feeling
Thought	My boss does not respect me as a human being.	I feel like you don't love me.	Feeling
Feeling	I feel unsafe when someone yells at me.	I just feel like that person has bad energy.	Feeling
Thought	That woman had no right to speak to me that way.	Sometimes I feel like you think I'm stupid.	Thought

Answer:

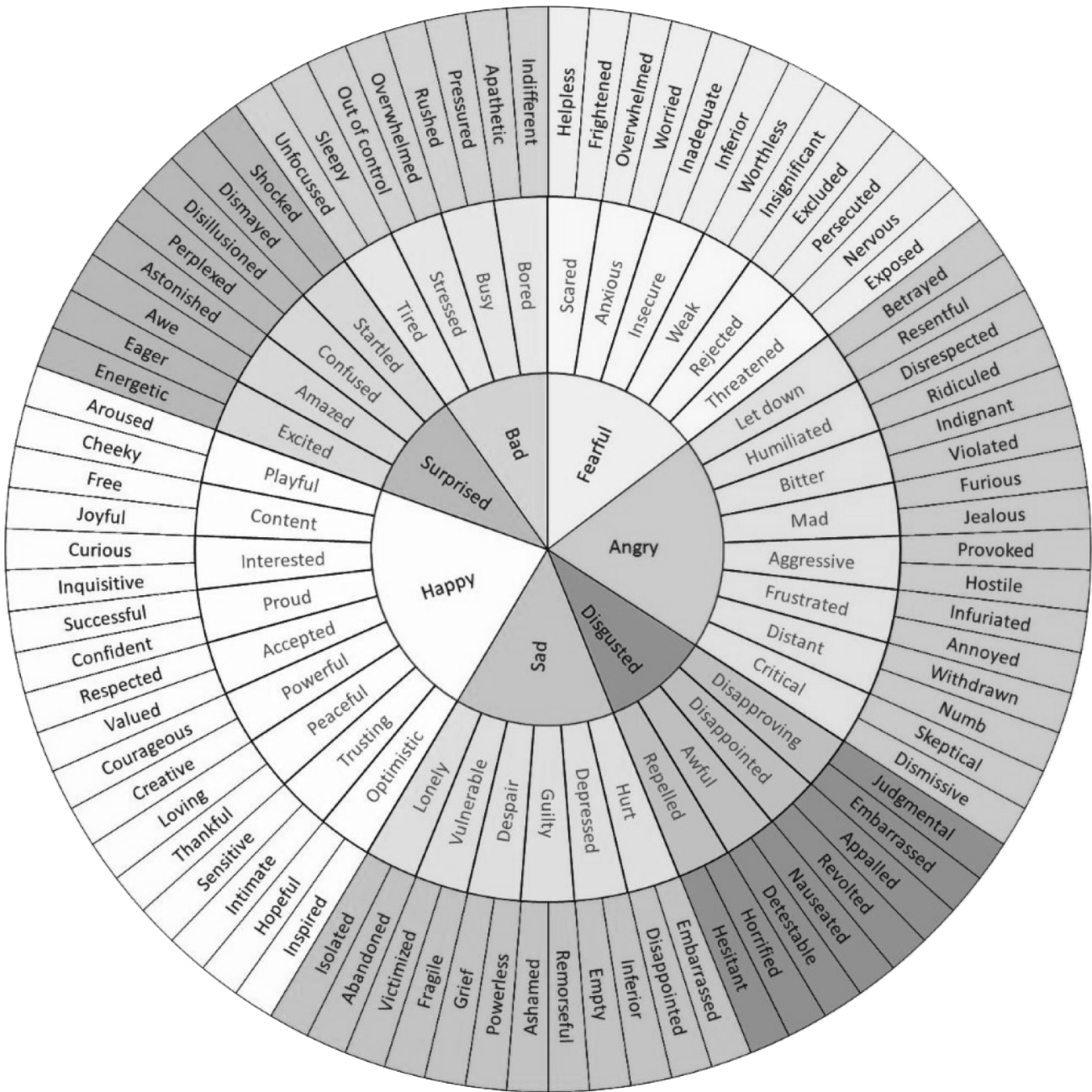
Thought	You walk around thinking you're better than me.	When I see my favorite celebrity rock a cute look on the red carpet, it makes my heart swell with pride.	Feeling
Feeling	When all my friends are dating and I'm not, I feel ignored and unimportant.	Seeing my crush out in public gives me happy goosebumps.	Feeling
Thought	My partner doesn't listen to me when I speak up about something that concerns me.	When you and I are sexually intimate, I feel safe and loved.	Feeling
Thought	You act brand new when you're around your other friends.	When you claim me in front of others, I know I can trust you.	Thought
Feeling	Listening to a really moving song makes me cry.	It makes me feel joyful to know you care about me.	Feeling
Answer:			



HANDOUT

THE FEELING WHEEL

HANDOUT



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/159526011777958604/?lp=true



HANDOUT

EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT ACRONYMS

H.A.L.T.

Hungry

Angry

Lonely

Tired

S.T.O.P.

Stop what you're doing.

Take a deep breath.

Observe what's happening.

Proceed.

R.E.L.A.X.

Recognize that you are actually stressed out.

Exercise to divert your thoughts and release tension.

Let go: separate the necessary from unnecessary.

Accept what cannot be changed; change what can.

Xtra sleep: remember to rest when needed.