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EI4FUTURE



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# EI4FUTURE HANDBOOK

*EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE*

**Project Name:** Emotional Intelligence for Emotional Resilience

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# ABOUT THE PROJECT

EI4FUTURE



EI4Future aims at putting stress on the importance of increasing adults' personal and professional skills related to **emotional intelligence (EI)**, to gain better control of their lives. Through the development of training materials based on *gamification elements and the MOOC*, this project intends to create innovative and highly accessible tools to involve adults in LLP programmes and trainings.



Project's **target group** consists of adults (30+ years old) with fewer opportunities, who are recognised to be the more affected by the COVID-19 crisis in combination with their starting disadvantaged background, as well as adult training organisations and adult trainers that have an active role in their cognitive development.

i.e. belonging to socially disadvantaged backgrounds, unemployed, facing economic and geographical obstacles, belonging to ethnic or national minorities, immigrants, refugees, adults with disabilities.

# PROJECT RESULTS

1) Training materials with techniques using gamification

2) MOOC (Massive Open Online Course)

Main outcome of the **first result** is this manual addressed to adults with fewer opportunities that will help them in acquiring skills to gain emotional resilience. This result is expected to increase awareness and knowledge on EI, provide useful tools to adult with fewer opportunities, improve self-awareness and enhance their abilities to retain newly acquired skills.

**Second result** will be based on the first result. The idea of MOOC comes from the need of involving adults with fewer opportunities, especially those facing geographical obstacles, but also economic obstacles since MOOC will be open and free to all. MOOC will include texts, integrated videos and audio related to the emotional management topic in a digital and attractive way for learners, using visualising of transferable information.

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To explain emotional resilience learning objectives

Created by Cherry Stone from the Noun Project



To improve adults' self-awareness and motivation

Created by Massupa Kae



To develop the Handbook "EI4Future" of approximately 80 pages, based on problem-solving techniques, efficient stress management, and development of work-life balance.

Created by Ribbla Team from the Noun Project



To support adults with fewer opportunities in activities related Emotional Resilience

Created by vectlab



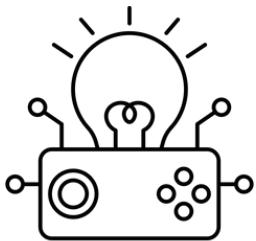
To improve people's work-life balance and develop their abilities in dealing with emotions.

Created by Ribbla Team from the Noun Project



To create an inclusive and comprehensive MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).

Created by jonata hangga from the Noun Project



To enhance awareness and knowledge on Gamification

Created by Ribbla Team from the Noun Project



To ensure full accessibility to the project's contents and results on a wide scale.

Created by Ribbla Team from the Noun Project

# OBJECTIVES



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# PARTNERS



## INDEPCIE SCA

Project Coordinator/ Spain

Institute for the personal development, entrepreneurship, coaching and Emotional Intelligence is a training company founded in 2018 focused in the attitudinal training and the improvement of human performance. The company works with clients with the aim of increasing their results both in personal or professional areas, developing techniques and strategies in the areas of coaching, Emotional Intelligence, soft skills and Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP).



## Eurasia

Turkey

Eurasia Innovative Society Association is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-political, non-ideological organization. Research and analysis along with advocacy are among Eurasia's efforts. Through its practiced multidisciplinary research in the fields of young education, social inclusion, sustainable growth and many more. Eurasia organizes conferences, workshops, trainings, and other activities that promote social growth, behavioural change, and youth and marginalized groups' inclusion



## VAEV

Austria

Vienna Association of Educational Volunteers (V.A.E.V.) is a non-profit, non-political organisation, which aims to empower people, promoting advanced education, modern pedagogy, educational technologies, peace, tolerance and social equality among people and educational institutions through assisting people and organizations in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills and competences for professional and personal success.

# PARTNERS



## InnovED

Greece

INNOVED is a Greek educational and consulting organization focusing on knowledge and innovation transfer in the broader fields of education, lifelong learning and training; entrepreneurship and employment aspects; non-formal learning and training methods with the usage of modern technologies. INNOVED is operating in order to achieve to encourage, support and promote the innovative spirit in various areas.

The logo for Instituto iKigai, featuring the text 'INSTITUTO iKigai' in a bold, sans-serif font. To the right of the text are three overlapping circles in shades of green and blue, with a white crescent moon shape above them.

INSTITUTO  
iKigai

## Instituto Ikigai

Spain

IKIGAI INSTITUTE is a Spanish nonprofit NGO that helps adults with fewer opportunities, development of online training platforms, teaching digital skills and promoting soft skills, personal and professional development.



## GODESK

Italy

GODESK is a shared workspace designed to inspire, to cut down fixed costs of companies and professionals, to promote exchanges among coworkers, clients, to improve their skills and knowledge in a way to stimulate innovation. GODESK is also very active as a business accelerator as it offers a unique ecosystem of resources, inspiration, and collaboration opportunities. The mentorship programmes or some of the services for startups, freelancers and SME delivered are based on the educational strategy of WBL (Work-Based Learning), such as involving learners working for an employer, job shadowing, sharing entrepreneurial experience, apprenticeship, internship and others.



# MODULE 1

***Self-knowledge***  
***(Self-awareness, Self-motivation)***

# INTRODUCTION

In this module, we will talk about three important things: self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-motivation. We'll explain them in a simple way and give examples to help you understand. These three things are all about emotional intelligence, which is important in both work and everyday life.

First, let's talk about self-knowledge. It's like knowing yourself really well. This means understanding your own qualities and figuring out if they stay the same or change over time. It's about looking at yourself closely and trying to see who you are.

Next, we have self-awareness. This is about paying attention to yourself and seeing if your actions, emotions, and thoughts match what you believe in. If you're good at self-awareness, you can look at yourself honestly, control your emotions, make sure your actions match your values, and understand how others see you.

Lastly, there's self-motivation. This means being determined to reach your goals, even if things get tough. It's about taking opportunities and staying dedicated to what you want to achieve.

So, in a nutshell, self-knowledge is about understanding yourself, self-awareness is about being honest with yourself and understanding how others see you, and self-motivation is about staying focused on your goals, no matter what obstacles come your way. These skills are important for both your personal and professional life.



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

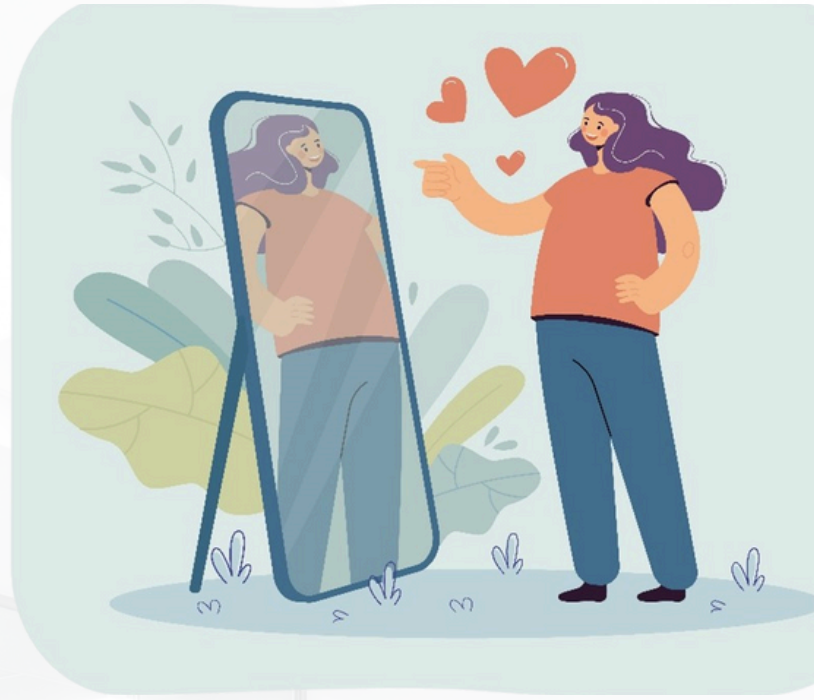
Learning outcomes:

- Get to know who you really are;
- Make reasonable decisions;
- Be confident;
- Understand and evaluate others;
- Be creative;
- Develop critical thinking;
- Set and complete goals;
- Learn to persist and deal with difficult situation.



# SELF-KNOWLEDGE

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## What is self-knowledge?

Self-knowledge is not something you learn from books or websites. Instead, you discover it by thinking about yourself and how you interact with others. Self-knowledge comes in different forms, like understanding your personality, knowing your past, and having goals in life.

To put it simply, self-knowledge is all about getting to know yourself really well. It means understanding your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and desires, as well as how you behave and what you're like as a person. It also includes things like your goals, values, preferences, and what you want to be in the future.

People often measure self-knowledge by comparing what they think about themselves with what others think about them. For example, do you see yourself the same way others see you?

The idea of self-knowledge isn't new; it's been important for a long time and shows up in music, movies, and books. Many famous philosophers like Plato, Socrates, and Nietzsche were interested in self-knowledge, and modern philosophers still are today.

Socrates once said that a life without self-examination isn't worth living. If we don't understand our natural tendencies, strengths, weaknesses, values, and future goals, it can be hard to have a fulfilling life. Sigmund Freud also talked about how sometimes we have thoughts and feelings we don't fully understand, like when we say, "I don't know why I did that" or "I'm not sure how I feel." It's all about understanding ourselves better.

# SELF-KNOWLEDGE- I

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## Why is it important to know yourself?

Knowing yourself is really important for your mental health and for making smart decisions. Self-knowledge helps you live a more consistent and fulfilling life. It lets you understand your fears and motivations and gives you control over your feelings.

When you don't know yourself well, you're more likely to make bad choices in important parts of your life, like your education, who you choose to be with, your career, and more. Not knowing yourself can make you underestimate your abilities, which can lead to doing poorly in school and feeling unhappy with your life.

Self-knowledge also helps you avoid problems like feeling frustrated at work, being jealous of others, feeling insecure, and being stressed about money. It lets you see yourself in a positive way, which makes you feel confident. It also helps you predict how you'll act in different situations over time.

Knowing yourself better makes it easier to control your behavior because you understand your goals, standards, and how to behave the way you want. Plus, it helps you be more compassionate, understand others better, and be responsible for your emotions. In the end, when you know yourself, it also helps you understand and judge other people.

# SELF-KNOWLEDGE- II

## The formation of self-knowledge

People have different ideas about themselves. Some might think they're independent, hardworking, and ambitious, while others might see themselves as sensitive and moody. Some might even think they're a mix of all these things. But how do people figure out what they're really like?

### a) *Physical world*

You can learn some things about yourself from the physical world. For example, you can measure your height to know how tall you are. But there are limits to this. You can't measure qualities like kindness or sincerity this way. Also, knowing your strength doesn't tell you if you're strong; you need to compare yourself to others to figure that out.

### b) *Social Comparison*

According to Festinger, people learn about themselves by comparing themselves to others. But it's important to choose the right people to compare with. Festinger believed you should compare yourself to people who are similar to you, especially when it comes to reaching a goal. Sometimes people also compare themselves to those who are better (upward comparison) or worse (downward comparison) than them. Upward comparison can motivate and inspire, while downward comparison can boost self-esteem, but it might not give you much hope.

# SELF-KNOWLEDGE- III

## The formation of self-knowledge

### I. Social comparison under stress

When people feel stressed or scared, they are more likely to do downward comparisons to feel better. But this might not give them enough hope.

### II. Social context and social comparison

Sometimes, people can't choose who they compare themselves with. For example, in a meeting, you might not know who will be there, so you can't prepare for comparisons.

### III. Role models as sources of despair or inspiration

Many programs use role models to change people's behavior. Role models can be positive or negative examples.

#### c) Reflected Appraisals

Our family, friends, and loved ones are more than just people to compare ourselves with. Their opinions of us also affect how we feel about ourselves. An old sociologist named Charles Horton Cooley talked about this as the "looking-glass self." It means we see ourselves based on how others see us. In simple terms, we see ourselves through the eyes of other people.

## Self-knowledge and false consensus effect

The false consensus effect is when people think that more folks agree with them than they actually do. They assume that others have the same opinions, likes, and attitudes as they do.

For example, if someone asked you if another person likes Indian or Mexican food, you might think about what you prefer. If you like Indian food, you might guess that the other person also likes Indian food. This effect is more noticeable when it comes to negative behaviors or qualities. For instance, if you sometimes do things like cheat on your taxes, not wear your seatbelt, or eat unhealthy food, you might think that lots of other people do these things too, even if they don't.

Unfortunately, this tendency to believe that others share our bad habits can be harmful to our well-being and health. When we think "everyone does it," we make excuses for our bad habits and keep doing things that aren't good for us.

## How to increase self-knowledge?

### *I. INTROSPECTION*

Think of introspection like digging up buried treasures in your mind. Some thoughts and feelings are easy to find, like things close to the surface, but others are hidden deep down. It's like an archaeological dig, and sometimes you have to dig really deep to uncover hidden wishes and urges. Introspection helps us see what's in our conscious mind, like our thoughts and feelings. But it can't directly access the things we're not consciously aware of. To understand those hidden thoughts and feelings, we have to piece together a story about ourselves based on what we do know.

### *II. SEEING OURSELVES THROUGH THE OTHER'S EYES*

Another way to learn about ourselves is by looking at how other people see us. Sometimes, when we see that others have a different view of us than we do, we can adjust how we see ourselves to match reality. It's like trying to understand ourselves from someone else's perspective.

### *III. INFERRING OUR NONCONSCIOUS STATES FROM OUR BEHAVIOR*

Instead of relying on how others see us, we can also learn about ourselves by watching our own actions. According to self-perception theory, we can figure out our inner thoughts and feelings by looking at how we behave. For example, if someone is always late for appointments, they might realize that they're not as organized as they thought. By paying attention to our behavior, we can uncover things about ourselves that we weren't consciously aware of, like our hidden attitudes and traits.



# SELF-AWARENESS

## What is self-awareness and why is it useful?

For a very long time, philosophers and religious thinkers have talked about how humans have a special ability to be aware of themselves. This ability, known as self-awareness, has always puzzled psychologists and philosophers. They've wondered how our brains let us think about ourselves, where we get information about who we are, and how we build a clear picture of ourselves. These questions are some of the most interesting ones in psychology.

Self-awareness is a complex thing made up of different parts. It's about your mind focusing on yourself, thinking about your own thoughts and character. It's a bunch of mental and brain processes that keep track of what you think, what you do, and what you experience. It's like you actively gather, process, remember, and store information about yourself.

People aren't born completely self-aware. Research shows that even babies can tell the difference between their own touch and someone else's. But a more developed sense of self-awareness usually starts to show up around the first year of life and becomes stronger by the time a child is about eighteen months old.

When we have a clear understanding of ourselves, it has some great benefits. We become more creative, confident, and make better decisions. We build better relationships, communicate well, listen carefully, and show empathy. We're less likely to cheat or lie. Self-awareness also helps with decision-making and critical thinking. In the professional world, it's a very useful skill because it allows employees to make decisions on their own and feel confident about their actions. It makes for better leaders, happier employees, and more successful companies. So, self-awareness is pretty important in both our personal and work lives.

# SELF-AWARENESS-I

## Self-knowledge vs. self-awareness

Self-awareness is sometimes mixed up with ideas like self-knowledge and self-consciousness. These terms are often talked about as if they mean the same thing as self-awareness, but they're a bit different.

Self-knowledge is about knowing things about yourself, like your emotions, behaviors, and personality traits. It's like having information about yourself. On the other hand, psychologists see self-awareness as a way to get that self-knowledge. It's like a tool or a way to help you understand yourself better. So, self-awareness is a way to achieve self-knowledge.

## Categories of self-awareness

Over the years, self-awareness has been defined in different ways. Some researchers see it as the ability to understand our inner thoughts and feelings, while others think of it as a brief moment of being aware of ourselves. Some even believe it's the difference between how we see ourselves and how others see us. There are two main types of self-awareness, and they don't have much to do with each other:

### *I. Internal self-awareness/ Private self-awareness*

This is about how clearly we understand our own values, goals, passions, how we react to things (like our thoughts and actions), and how we impact other people. Having good internal self-awareness is linked to being happier, having better relationships, feeling in control of our lives, and being less stressed or depressed. Some examples of this are when you look at yourself in the mirror, feel your heart race when you're attracted to someone, or get a nervous feeling in your stomach when you forget something important.

### *II. External self-awareness/ Public self-awareness*

This is about understanding how other people see us, based on the things we mentioned in the first category. It's like knowing how you come across to others. People who are aware of how others see them can understand other people's feelings better and see things from their perspective. Also, when people know they're being watched and judged by others, they often try to act in ways that fit with what society expects. For example, you might feel this kind of awareness if you have to give a presentation to an audience.

# SELF-AWARENESS – II



## How do we build self-awareness?

### *Walking, particularly in the quiet of nature*

When you take a peaceful walk, your mind often starts to think about things. By being aware of this and making an effort to think about what's happening in your life—like work, relationships, family, or social stuff—you can gain insight.



Created by Becris

### *Practicing mindfulness*

Mindfulness is a bit like self-awareness. It's about consciously turning your thoughts inward to understand your inner feelings and thoughts. It means paying close attention to what you're doing in the moment. This might involve quieting your mind and meditating.

### *Becoming a good listener*

Listening to someone else is a great way to stop negative thoughts about yourself. When you truly listen to someone, you not only help them, but you can also learn how to listen to your own inner thoughts more kindly and objectively. Self-awareness means looking at yourself objectively.



Created by luicv Fish

# SELF-AWARENESS – III

## ***Being Less Critical***

We humans tend to be critical, sometimes toward ourselves and sometimes toward others. But being too hard on ourselves can be bad for our well-being. Nobody is perfect, so we shouldn't expect ourselves to be. Try to evaluate yourself as honestly as possible when you're alone with your thoughts. Look into your beliefs and correct any that don't match your values. Do it with kindness and empathy, like a teacher helping a student.



Created by Adrien Coquet  
from the Noun Project



Created by iconcheese  
from the Noun Project

## ***Journaling***

Writing down your thoughts can help you become more self-aware. It's a way to reflect on yourself and dig deeper into your thoughts and feelings. Write about your sadness, your life story, or your dreams. It can help your subconscious speak to you and reveal what's really going on.

## ***Feedback from others***

Sometimes, others can offer an objective view of you, which can be helpful for self-assessment. If you're brave enough, ask a friend for their opinion or how you handle difficult situations. Constructive criticism can be valuable, but be open to hearing what they have to say.



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## ***Set intentions***

If your life feels aimless, it's easy to end up nowhere in particular. To give your life direction, you need to know what's important to you and what you want to achieve. You don't have to know every step, but you should have a general idea of where you want to go. For example, "I intend to find the right life partner and create a happy family" or "I intend to stand up for myself when my superiors try to make me feel insignificant." Saying your intentions out loud can help reinforce them in your subconscious.

# SELF-MOTIVATION



## What is self-motivation?

Being able to motivate yourself is really important. It means you can keep going even when things get tough, take advantage of opportunities, and stay dedicated to your goals. Self-motivation is all about pushing yourself to make positive changes in your life. It's about taking the initiative and getting things done because you want to, not because someone is making you.

In simple terms, self-motivation is the inner strength and willingness that drives you to do things. It's like the engine that keeps you going. Some people define it as an inner state that helps you start, continue, or stop doing something. For example, you might be motivated to keep working at a job to pay your bills, or you might be motivated to end a relationship that no longer makes you happy.

So, self-motivation is like a superpower that helps you achieve your goals, feel more fulfilled, make your dreams come true, succeed at work, and improve your overall quality of life.

Our motivation also comes from meeting three basic psychological needs: autonomy (feeling in control of your own life), relatedness (connecting with others), and competence (feeling capable and effective). When these needs are satisfied, we tend to be self-motivated. Self-motivation isn't just about external factors or what others tell you to do; it's also at the heart of creativity, healthy behavior, and more.

# SELF-MOTIVATION – I

## The elements of self-motivation

### ***!)* Personal drive to achieve**

Personal drive to achieve is like having a strong desire to reach your goals. It's also about believing in yourself. Think of it as your mindset, which can be in two types: fixed and growth. If you have a fixed mindset, you might believe that your talents are fixed and can't be changed. But if you have a growth mindset, you believe that you can improve your skills through hard work. Research shows that people with a growth mindset are more likely to achieve their goals.

### **II. Commitment to goals**

Setting goals is important for our overall well-being. Knowing where you want to go and how you plan to get there is a big part of staying motivated.

### **III. Initiative**

Initiative means being ready to make the most of opportunities when they come your way. Sometimes, it's easy to hesitate, and then you might miss a chance. But it's also important to think about what you want to do and make sure it's the right decision for you. The initiative is like a mix of being brave and making smart choices.

### **IV. Resilience or optimism**

Resilience is the ability to bounce back after a setback or stay positive when facing challenges. Optimism is about thinking positively and seeing the bright side of things. Resilient people use positive thinking to look at situations that might not make much sense. They also ask for help when they need it and are willing to help others too.

# SELF-MOTIVATION – II

## How to get motivated?

- ***Put your goal on the calendar***

To boost your inner motivation, set a specific date for your goal on your calendar. This deadline can help you stay on track and keep you motivated. For example, if you have an exam to prepare for, put the exam date on your calendar. Having a deadline not only motivates you but also helps you track your progress. Just make sure to be realistic about the time you give yourself.

- ***Convert working towards a goal or a habit***

To make it easier to stay motivated, turn your goals into habits. Habits are things you do without even thinking about them. Identify a daily routine you already have, like brushing your teeth, and use it as a trigger to start your new habit. Create a simple plan, like "If I wake up and brush my teeth, then I'll work out for ten minutes."

Getting started can be the hardest part of a big task. Starting small with tiny actions can make it easier to begin. Small actions prepare your mind for the bigger tasks ahead.

- ***Plan for imperfection***

It's great to be enthusiastic about your goals, but things don't always go as planned. It's essential to remember that not every day will be perfect, and that's okay. Plan for the days when things go wrong. Make a list of potential obstacles and figure out how to deal with them. For example, if your internet goes out during an online course, have a plan to go to a nearby place with Wi-Fi.

- ***Set small goals to build momentum***

Start by setting small goals to build momentum. Completing these small tasks can give you a sense of achievement and motivate you to tackle bigger ones. Even if you have a big goal in mind, break it down into smaller steps. Setting goals at the beginning of each week, month, or year can also boost your motivation.

# SELF-MOTIVATION – III

## How to get motivated?

- ***Track your progress***

Keep track of your progress as it can be highly motivating. Use tools like a to-do list or a calendar to mark off the tasks you complete each day.

- ***Reward yourself for the little and the big wins***

Rewarding yourself for achieving both small and big wins can boost your motivation. Rewards don't have to be extravagant; they can be simple things like taking a short break, going for a walk, reading a few pages of a book, or planning a night out with friends.

- ***Practice gratitude***

Practicing gratitude by thinking about the things you're thankful for can boost motivation and well-being. Spend a few minutes each morning reflecting on what you're grateful for.

- ***Change your environment***

Sometimes changing your surroundings can give you a fresh perspective and renewed motivation. If you're used to studying at home, try going to a university library or a different place to study.

- ***Remember your "why?"***

Keep reminding yourself why your goal is important to you. Find the ultimate reason that drives your goal. Set daily reminders to visualize what success looks like and how it will feel when you achieve your goal. This can reinforce your motivation.



# LESSONS LEARNED

- Be able to distinguish self-knowledge from self-motivation;
- Understanding ourselves, our emotions, and feelings;
- Setting and completing our goals through practicing self-motivation.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

Test below consists of 10 multiple choice questions. After completing the test you can find correct answers in the last page of the module.

1. Understanding your mental states means to know:

- a) How you feel and thin
- b) How your brain works
- c) What you desire and believe
- d) a and b
- e) a and c

2. Knowing thyself develops control over your emotions.

- a) True
- b) False

3. Knowing yourself helps you to understand and evaluate others.

- a) True
- b) False

4. The formation of self-knowledge rises from:

- a) Role models
- b) Social comparison
- c) Physical word
- d) b and c and reflected appraisals
- e) None of the above

5. In false consensus effect people believe that few other individuals share their bad habits.

- a) True
- b) False

6. We are born self-aware.

- a) True
- b) False

7. Feeling your heart flutter when you see someone you are attracted to, is an example of external self-awareness.

- a) True
- b) False

8. Feedback from others:

- a) Makes us happy
- b) Increases our self-awareness
- c) Increases our self-motivation
- d) None of the above

9. Self-knowledge is the strength that drives you to do things.

- a) True
- b) False

10. Self-motivation helps us:

- a) Reach our goals
- b) Feel more fulfilled
- c) Manifest our dreams
- d) Succeed at work
- e) a and c
- f) All the above

# MODULE 2

*Self-conscious and locus of control*

# INTRODUCTION

Self-consciousness means being aware of your own actions, their consequences, and what others think about you. People are aware of the world around them and themselves. Self-awareness is knowing yourself. Self-conscious individuals are aware of themselves as objects of attention.

Sometimes, we focus on ourselves, and sometimes we focus on others; this is part of being human. Our actions can reflect our own thoughts, feelings, or those of others. How much we focus on ourselves can show how self-conscious we are. Researchers suggest two types of self-awareness: External Locus of Control and Internal Locus of Control. People with an external locus of control think that circumstances, luck, or others control their lives, while those with an internal locus of control believe they are responsible for their own success



# INTRODUCTION-I

The first step to becoming more self-aware is to recognize and accept yourself in all aspects. No matter what's going on, you are the person who knows yourself best. As time goes on, you learn more about yourself and your life, and you develop your own way of thinking. This helps you mature and make important life choices, based on your values and personal philosophy.

Self-awareness is like a unique inner world that you create through your thoughts and experiences. This inner world grows and becomes richer as you learn more and gain new knowledge. It has the power to help you mature and find clarity in your life. So, by experiencing life and learning from it, you develop a deep and unique sense of self and make meaningful progress on your personal journey.



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

## Learning outcomes:

- Know the definition of self-consciousness;
- Know the emotions associated with self-consciousness;
- Know the dangers of excessive self-consciousness;
- Understand positive self-conscious emotions;
- Understand negative self-conscious emotions;
- Know beneficial functions of self-conscious emotions;
- Know the difference between self-awareness and self-consciousness;
- Understand the characteristics of internal locus of control and external locus of control;
- Understand the pros and cons of internal locus of control and external locus of control.



# SELF-CONSCIOUS



## What is self-conscious?

People are aware of themselves, their actions, bodies, and thoughts, just like they are aware of the world around them. Self-consciousness means being aware of yourself, but it's different from self-awareness.

Self-awareness involves knowing your strengths and weaknesses, understanding your emotions, using this knowledge to guide your thoughts and behaviors, and expressing yourself clearly. Self-conscious individuals know themselves well, feel confident, and can express their feelings, thoughts, and beliefs openly.

Self-consciousness is about understanding your feelings in general and recognizing your strengths and weaknesses. It's the ability to connect yourself with the external world, enabling you to live in the present, learn from the past, and plan for the future. Self-consciousness helps people assess themselves from others' perspectives and promotes empathetic behaviors, such as altruism.

# SELF-CONSCIOUS-I

## What are the emotions associated with self-consciousness?

Everyday events can trigger our emotions. Some evoke basic emotions like fear, joy, or sadness, while others lead to self-conscious emotions such as shame, guilt, or pride. Basic emotions are universal, expressed through facial expressions recognized worldwide. Self-conscious emotions depend on how we perceive ourselves and how we think others see us. These include guilt, shame, embarrassment, empathy, envy, jealousy, and pride.

Self-awareness and self-consciousness can indicate emotional health. Feeling guilty after hurting someone is seen as a sign of a good character. Remorse for mistakes can improve relationships. Positive and negative self-conscious emotions can motivate us in work and school.

Healthy self-conscious emotions can boost motivation and social skills. However, excessive self-consciousness can be harmful, exacerbating conditions like anxiety, depression, and borderline personality disorder, increasing social anxiety, and leading to social isolation.

In failure, one can choose between feeling shame or guilt, and in success, between authentic pride and arrogant pride. Those who feel shame believe their failure is due to an unchangeable deficiency. Those feeling guilt see their failure as linked to lack of education or experience, and they believe they can improve with the right actions.

Similarly, with pride, hubristic pride is tied to natural abilities, while authentic pride is associated with achievement and self-confidence, and arrogant pride with narcissism and conceit."



# SELF-CONSCIOUS-II

## Overcoming excessive self-consciousness

There are many ways to treat unhealthy or overly self-conscious emotions. Here are a few suggestions;

- Engage in activities that make you feel good about yourself;
- Make a list of accomplishments or traits you are proud of;
- Combat social anxiety by interacting with people in low-risk activities, such as making small talk with shop assistants;
- Take responsibility for your mistakes and make amends if necessary;
- Avoid activities such as lying or gossiping, which can cause negative emotions such as guilt or shame;
- If you are dwelling on past events that caused negative emotions, take a deep breath and practice mindfulness;

If these methods do not help you get rid of excessive self-consciousness, seek help from a certified counsellor or psychologist. A counsellor can help you identify the cause of unhealthy feelings of self-consciousness and provide you with guidance to alleviate anxiety.

## Adaptive and beneficial functions of self-conscious emotions

People who know themselves do not run away from reality and can easily get out of bad moods. Naming their feelings allows them to have those feelings. They are able to talk about their fears, frustrations, excitement and jealousy, as well as to understand others' feelings and to predict and sympathize with their situations.

- Self-conscious emotions motivate people to do their best and strive for success in their field of work;
- Self-conscious emotions motivate people to behave in a socially appropriate and moral manner in close relationships and social interactions;
- Self-conscious emotions are recognized to reinforce behaviors that increase the stability of social hierarchy and affirm the roles of status;
- In addition to their communicative and interpersonal functions, self-conscious emotions also have internal psychic functions..

# SELF-CONSCIOUS-III

## Characteristics of self-conscious people

- They are confident; they do not get nervous at the slightest difficulty;
- They know their weaknesses as well as their strengths; they can criticize themselves, but they are also aware of their self-worth;
- Is aware of his/her feelings and needs; can express them clearly;
- They have their own views; despite pressure from others, they continue to defend these views;
- They accept praise and praise others;
- They have an optimistic view of life and expect good things from the world and people;
- They are determined to overcome difficulties and problems; if one solution does not work, they look for other solutions.

## Development of self-conscious emotions

Self-conscious emotions develop later than basic emotions because they require capacities such as the formation of a coherent self-representation and self-awareness.

- embarrassment Around 18-20 months
- empathy 2 years
- embarrassment: 3 years and up
- guilt: age 3 and up
- pride 3 years and up

People who know themselves do not run away from the truth; they can easily get out of bad moods. Naming their feelings allows them to have those feelings. They can talk about their fears, frustrations, excitement and jealousy, but they can also understand other people's feelings and make predictions about their situations and sympathize with them.

Emotional milestones let us know if a child is gaining skills in the timeframe we expect. The age ranges mentioned here are generally accepted. However, sometimes children may be a little early or a little late with some of these milestones. This does not necessarily mean that the individual's emotional development is backward or advanced.

# LOCUS OF CONTROL

## **Internal locus of control vs. external locus of control**

"The consequences of our actions strongly influence our motivation to repeat those actions. In simpler terms, if we want to avoid negative outcomes, we tend to engage in positive behaviors more often. Over time, these positive behaviors become habits. Your personality is a result of how you interact with your environment. If you change your thoughts or surroundings, your behavior can change. However, the more you've built your beliefs through life experiences, the harder it can be to change.

The idea of 'locus of control' is about an individual's expectations regarding their control over events, which are influenced by life experiences. It can be either internal or external, or it can vary depending on the results of their actions.

Our personality determines whether we tend to be more internally or externally oriented in terms of control. We often have limited control over many aspects of our lives, but we can change our internal narrative by focusing on things we can control.

Remember, locus of control is not all-or-nothing; it's a spectrum. A healthy goal is to feel in control about 70-80% of the time (internally). You can gain internal control by being aware of your thoughts, managing anxiety, and changing your attitudes. Strategies like making lists, planning for the future, making decisions, celebrating small successes, setting goals, and finding reasons to be grateful can help break negative thought patterns and reduce anxiety."

# LESSONS LEARNED

The main concepts discussed in this module were self-consciousness and locus of control.

- Self- Consciousness defines as conscious of one's own acts or states as belonging to or originating in oneself;
- Self-conscious people are aware of themselves as an individuals;
- Self-conscious emotions are emotions that are influenced by how we see ourselves and how we interpret what others think of us.;
- Emotions such as guilt, shame, embarrassment, empathy, envy, jealousy, envy and pride are self-conscious emotions;
- Positive self-conscious emotions can help you to improve yourself;
- Negative self-conscious emotions may cause psychological problems;
- Locus of control has two distinctive faces; internal locus of control and external locus of control;
- Internal Locus of Control - outcomes are within your control;
- External locus of control - outcomes are outside of your control.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

**I.** Which of the following emotions is a self-conscious emotion?

- a) Fear b) Pride c) Sadness d) Anger

**II.** Select the statement indicating one of the negative effects of excessive self-consciousness.

- a) Motivate people to do their best.
- b) Increase the stability of social hierarchy
- c) Affirm the roles of status.
- d) Increase social anxiety and lead to social isolation

**III.** Choose two self-conscious emotion that help you improve yourself.

- a) Hubristic Pride/Shame
- b) Hubristic Pride/Guilt
- c) Authentic Pride/Shame
- d) Authentic Pride/ Guilt

**IV.** What's the main difference between people with internal locus of control and people with external locus of control?

- a) Externals are more achievement oriented than the internals.
- b) Externals tend to be narcissistic people.
- c) Internals believe that they can shape their future, but externals believe that a force greater than themselves is shaping their lives.
- d) Internals feel shame in case of failure and are unable to change their behavior.

**V.** People with internal locus of control can change:

- a) Everything in the world.
- b) All events they involved.
- c) Their thoughts, skills, actions and decisions
- d) The thoughts and decisions of their family members and friends.

# MODULE 3

## *Critical Thinking*

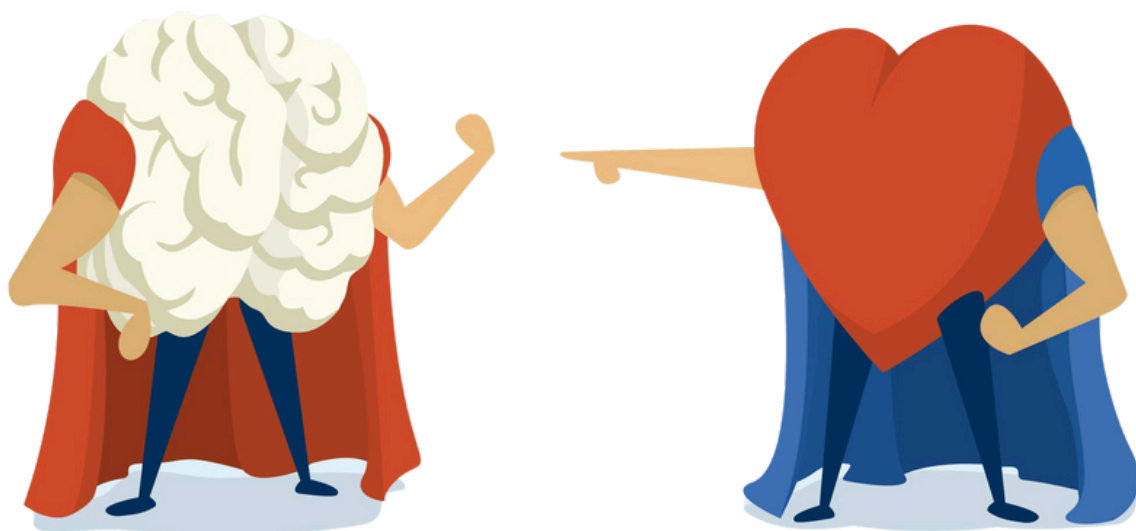
# INTRODUCTION

Critical Thinking is an intellectual capacity that allows one to develop a judgement through mental processes based on objective analysis of facts and evaluation of information gathered through experience and observation in order to develop and find a valid solution: it is an intellectual process and not a faculty and, therefore, can be trained.

The crucial part of the whole operation lies in the objectivity of the subject: the critical thinker must be able to leave aside his or her own feelings, prejudices and interests in order to pursue a view that is as objective and real as possible based on facts and context.

It allows one to carefully evaluate sources, not to trust rumours and to question the information that arrives, evaluating it in the light of real data, reflecting and taking into account the various options: in this way, one exercises what is known as 'comprehension'.

In practice, Critical Thinking allows one to take in all information, evaluate and weigh it all, and then discard those that are certainly erroneous, keep in doubt those about which one is undecided and hold in reserve those that are confirmed, with which to proceed, avoiding an emotional or oversimplified adherence, but applying the interpretation of the facts: this is why it is particularly useful today as we are bombarded with information that is often unreal and false (so-called 'fake news').



# INTRODUCTION- I

In short, Critical Thinking allows one to better understand situations, options, projects and people, and consequently to make better decisions achieving superior results and performance: it allows one to keep an open mind that allows one to communicate and relate better with others.

The use of Critical Thinking frees human beings from ideological blocks and cultural prejudices, as it allows everyone to formulate important problems and questions in a lucid and precise manner and opens the way to new solutions and alternatives. People who do not use it are content with elementary explanations in line with their cognitive prejudices, preferring slogans to arguments and favouring uncritical acceptance over in-depth study and verification of sources.

Just to give a couple of examples, Critical Thinking has enabled man to:

- understand that the Earth was not flat but round, or that it revolved around the sun at the same time as it rotated on itself;
- formulate the 'Big-Bang' theory, which explains the beginning and expansion of the universe;
- understand how species have evolved.

From what has been said, it is clear and evident that it is essential to train ourselves to use this capacity correctly in order to avoid gross errors, or wrong choices and decisions, which can have serious consequences.





# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- What is critical thinking;
- What to do to improve our ability to use critical thinking;
- The link between critical thinking and creative thinking;
- What creative thinking is for;
- What is experiential learning;
- Self-reflection;
- Examples of exercises to train critical thinking;
- Lessons learnt from this module;
- Evaluation of what was learnt;
- References and useful materials.



# CRITICAL THINKING

## How to improve critical thinking?

### Gathering the right and valid info

Avoiding assuming false or unreliable information as true, as wrong data and news often produce irreparable consequences. To avoid this problem, it is therefore necessary to learn to carefully select information sources, using only those that can be considered reliable and serious, being very careful to select useful and important data and news. Moreover, it should never be forgotten that the validity of information has to do with its relevance in the context in which it is applied.



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### Using one's powers of observation more

Paying attention to details, increasing one's curiosity and avoiding being distracted and listless: in fact, details are often really useful tools for correctly interpreting reality.

### Keeping an open mind

Not to close in on oneself and one's rigid convictions because this distances one from reality and prevents the exchange of opinions that are very useful for better understanding and forming objective opinions on the various situations analysed.



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### Using logic

Because it allows one to reason effectively to make deductions, discover reasonable options and draw the right and appropriate conclusions or solutions.

# CRITICAL THINKING- I

## Avoiding the bandwagon effect

Which occurs when, out of convenience, conformity or simple 'mass tendency', a concept that has become popular is accepted and embraced without objective evaluation and observation of the related facts.



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## Broadening one's view

Always trying to have an overall and broader vision, which allows one to concentrate efforts and energies on reasoning and decisions that are more useful and effective for all, adopting a system framework.

## Cultivate intellectual curiosity

Because curiosity is the sign of a mind that is free and open to the wonders of reality and fearless in facing the unknown to gain new knowledge. Curiosity allows one to explore new things, to take in new information, to change the way one looks at things and also to find new ways and means to realise them.



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## Do not always take things at face value

Because very often the information we receive is false and misleading (just think of the messages in advertisements that are never completely true but if listened to and followed without 'judgement' often produce disappointments.

## Being flexible and creative

Because by also learning to use creativity, one can find more and better options from which to choose the best solution to the problems to be faced and solved.



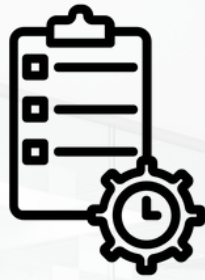
# CRITICAL THINKING- II

## Keeping a sense of humor

Because it helps to relax and think more clearly, maintaining clarity of thought and perspective. Of course, do not overuse it and avoid using laughter as a means to denigrate things or people.



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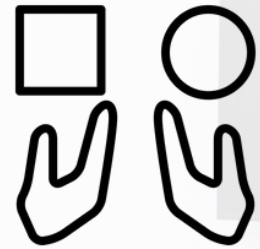
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## Organizing data, ideas and information

Because in a digital age, in which we are overwhelmed by data and information, it is essential to be able to organise all these elements rationally, classifying, grouping and sorting this information and ideas according to their characteristics and perhaps using very useful mind maps.

## Comparing things

As learning to compare two or more options helps to make better decisions.



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## Challenging conventional assumptions

Because truth does not derive from cognitions that remain firm to themselves or that derive from public opinion polls (think of Galileo Galilei who proved with his 'out-of-chorus' observations and against the theories of his historical era that the planet Earth was not the centre of the universe, even having the courage to challenge the Inquisition).

## Resisting emotionality and impulsiveness

Because such states can sometimes cloud our reason (think of when you are in a state of anger or euphoria in which you are not objectively objective in your judgement and you make choices, say things or do things that in a



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# CRITICAL THINKING- III

## Maintaining self-confidence

Because if you are afraid of losing your figure or image on the outside, you might make wrong, often irreparable choices.



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## Being wary of other people's complacent behaviour

Because flattery is often used as a method of persuasion and so, many times, when you receive intentional flattery, it is perhaps bestowed gratuitously just to manipulate the outcome of your evaluations.

## Do not take what famous people or authorities say at face value

Because, for example, the use of such people is one of the favourite ploys of advertising to make people think that because a famous person uses or consumes that product, it is automatically something exceptional and unique that has to be used by everyone! Remember that such people are often paid millions of euros or dollars to give their opinion or judgement on a product and, therefore, their assessment is not objective.



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## Cultivating your listening skills

Because when we listen more carefully, we get more correct information, and if we get more correct information, we make better decisions.

## Analysing causes and effects

Because it helps to identify what the effects of certain actions, behaviours or choices are (there are various techniques that can be used for this purpose, such as cause and analysis diagrams).



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# CRITICAL THINKING- IV

## Maintaining sense of perspective

Because when one is in the middle of an important matter, it is easy to lose a balanced view of the situation. It can often be good to 'distance yourself' from the situation and try to look at the problem in a broader context.



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## Avoid judging without adequate info

Because you might jump to wrong conclusions. It is always necessary to use one's own judgement to try to better understand reality.



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## Taking non verbal clues into account

As the attitudes and behaviour of the people around us can convey the truth that we may not have received in words.



## Looking beyond stereotypes and labels

As stereotypes often negatively influence our thinking

## Always try to be consistent

As consistency is the hallmark of accurate and precise thinking and is one of the criteria, which together with logic, should always be given due consideration to avoid obscuring the truth.



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## Reaching a synthesis

Which allows you to use the data and information you have to identify new possible outcomes.

# CRITICAL THINKING- V

## Evaluating data & situations

Because it helps to make effective decisions (there are some tools for this activity as well, such as the pros and cons method).

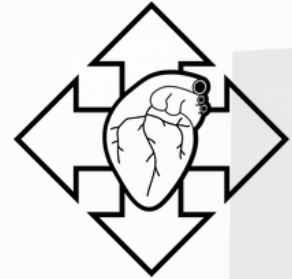


## Practicing Empathy

Because it is good not to judge others if one does not understand the situation well. In this way, one avoids potential judgements that could be rash and that could be regretted in the future.

## Listening to and following one's intuition

Because the feelings people often have about things are the result of information recorded at an unconscious level. Intuition cannot take the place of logical thinking, but it can be developed as a valuable aid, as it increases sensitivity to information.



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## Making sensible predictions

Learning to find, analyse and extend beyond the present moment the trends that are ongoing at the date of the analysis.

## Giving the right priorities

Concentrating on the right activities and putting distractions and trivial tasks on the back burner or eliminating them.



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## Being more rational

Because it allows you to be more objective, preventing your emotions from taking over and preventing you from thinking clearly, impartially and realistically.

# CREATIVITY



## Why is it important to use creativity?

People often take for granted what in reality is not always so: for example, they take for granted their cognitive abilities and their ability to think, but this ability is not necessarily fully exercised.

In order to do so, one should always use not only critical thinking but also creative or divergent thinking, another skill that is in great demand in the business field, especially in recent times characterised by great and sudden changes. Creativity is, therefore, an essential ability that allows us to think outside the box and often develop something completely new.

The brightest and clearest definitions of creativity are those given in 1929 by the mathematician Henri Poincaré, according to whom 'creativity is the combining of existing elements with new connections that are useful', or that given by Albert Einstein, who in the last century defined it as 'the intelligence that enjoys itself'.

Creative thinking presupposes:

- flexibility,
- ability to adapt to the environment in which one lives or works
- freedom to range,
- cross-referencing of information from several sources,
- the use of Critical Thinking.



# CREATIVITY- I

## Why is it important to use creativity?

Tendentially, the left hemisphere, which is the one most used by economists, engineers, mathematicians and scientists, processes fragments of information sequentially, one at a time and is connected to:

- analysis,
- classification,
- logic,
- mathematical calculation,
- reasoning,
- judgement,
- association of ideas.

On the other hand, the right hemisphere, much used by artists, poets, sculptors, craftsmen, etc., processes all information simultaneously and intuitively and specialises in:

- visual memory,
- visualisation and synthesis processes;
- integration of different inputs at the same time,
- perception of an overall view of things,
- verification of similarities,
- insights.

In other words, if we read a recipe book we use the left hemisphere, while when we cook and experiment with 'new' foods with what we have in the fridge we use the right hemisphere.

Obviously, because of what was said above, creative thinking and critical thinking, if used simultaneously, allow us to find new, innovative, untried solutions to our problems.

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Another very useful tool when applying critical thinking is experiential learning, which applies the methodology of 'learning by doing', which is a learning methodology, theorised by the American philosopher John Dewey, that focuses on the use of practice-based teaching systems and is a learning method based on direct experience.

First of all, it is important to clarify the meaning of learning: it is a process through which individuals acquire or modify skills, abilities, knowledge and behaviour: and, therefore, it can be determined by study, education, direct experience, observation and reasoning.

Normally when one thinks of learning, one associates it with 'traditional, formal' study, i.e. that which takes place at school or university when one studies pages and pages of theoretical notions and information in books.

But, in reality, there is also another type of learning that derives, instead, from lived experience and is based on a process based on experience, cognitive, emotional and sensory, from which the construction of knowledge starts.

In this type of learning, knowledge, competences and skills are acquired by the individual outside traditional 'school' learning contexts and the cognitive process does not pass through the classical passive acquisition of information and theoretical concepts, but is based on direct experience.

Experiential learning, being based on an 'experience' also has the advantage of introducing critical thinking, because it helps people using it to solve problems as well as to make decisions in contexts that are personally relevant to them.

In the experiential learning process, the learner is actively involved in actual experiences, and experiments with solutions to problems, expressing and using his or her creativity, also working outside the traditional classroom environment (e.g. during internships, excursions, field research, etc.).

The importance of experiential learning was first expounded by two great authors, John Dewey and Jean Piaget, and then deepened, developed and disseminated by the theorist who popularised it, the psychologist David A. Kolb, who defined it as a spiral process and characterised it as "the process by which knowledge is formed through the transformation of experience".

According to Kolb, therefore, knowledge is the result of the combination of understanding and transformation of reality.

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING- I

Obviously, this type of learning has considerable practical advantages:

- 1.Information acquired through practice remains in the memory more than twice as long as that acquired through theory alone
- 2.It allows one to develop a greater spirit of adaptation to new situations and new activities to be undertaken.
- 3.It makes it possible to assess directly in the field the abilities of different individuals and their improvement over time.
- 4.It encourages reflection, transformation, personal growth and a critical approach.
- 5.It is based on critical observation, abstract conceptualisation, concrete experience and active experimentation.

The model indicated by D. Kolb consists of a sequence of 4 cyclically repeating phases:

**Stage 1:** Decoding the image of experience through critical observation (Concrete Experience/Experience phase).

**Stage 2:** Abstraction of experience where the first solutions to problems appear through the use of lateral thinking (a concept developed by Edward De Bono) which is the ability to see reality from different and innovative points of view. In practice, lateral thinking is a form of problem solving that uses the approach of looking at the problem from different angles, seeking alternative points of view to the traditional sequential logic. The difference between the two approaches Using lateral thinking one can overcome rigidity by exalting creative thinking, mixing data, hypotheses, certainties assumed as absolutes (Observation/ Reflection phase) in an improvised and random way.

**Stage 3:** Placement of learning in a practical phase that will give rise to better future actions (Abstract Conceptualisation phase).

**Stage 4:** Final definition of the ideas and solutions found in the previous phases: what happens in this phase is that the theorised knowledge is put into practice and thus becomes the beginning of a new experience, from which the cycle begins anew (Active Experimentation phase).

The experiential model finds application not only in education, but also in other fields: in fact, experiential learning, as a methodology, is also used by psychologists, pedagogues, animators, educators, coaches and human resource managers (in the latter field, human resources are trained, updated and retrained through the simulation of real experiences, in which the individual is called upon to play roles aimed at developing reflection, creativity and reasoning skills).

# SELF-REFLECTION

It is obvious to all of us that nowadays we live in and are even trapped in the so-called 'world of language', as we are so caught up in a myriad of words and images that we often lose touch with the world of direct and sensory experience.

Awareness is the tool that takes us from the world of language to the world of direct experience. As we have seen so far, human beings tend to use 'critical thinking' and 'problem solving' (i.e. the process of trying to find the quickest and most effective solution to a problem) both to solve material problems and to cope with mental states and the psychic suffering they cause.

Critical thinking and logical skills can solve many of our material problems, but they are, unfortunately, ineffective in dealing instead with mental states that are refractory to verbal control, as argued and demonstrated by linguist George Lakoff in his book 'Don't Think of an Elephant' (e.g. if we mentally impose on ourselves that we want to stop thinking about something, we will probably produce exactly the opposite effect).

In this case, the methodology of self-reflection can definitely be useful, as few dimensions of personal growth foster that intimate and full connection with one's inner self, to ask ourselves what we really want and what it is that puts the thread to our happiness.

Self-reflection invites us to detach ourselves from certainties, to question rigid thoughts, and, in turn, reminds us that we are free beings as well as people with the capacity to be autonomous in making decisions. Self-reflection enables us to reach a possible state of well-being, as it is the ability to be creators of one's own happiness in every area of life.

According to Daniel , self-reflection is crucial to be able to develop, for example, adequate emotional intelligence. Developing good self-reflection is a daily goal in which every person should invest effort and willpower because, as mentioned, it enables us to become what we desire so much, namely free people. This process, facilitated by reflection, allows us to question certain situations, to understand our emotions and, in general, to reduce our unhappiness, because it enables us to know ourselves better, to better understand our motivations and goals in life, to understand our strengths and weaknesses. In this case, we put aside our fears and comfort zone to try to better understand ourselves and our problems.

# LESSONS LEARNED

The main concepts discussed in this module were critical thinking, creativity, experiential learning and self reflection:

- What is critical thinking
- Link between critical and creative thinking
- What is experiential learning and self-reflection

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

- 1) What is Critical Thinking?
  - a) *A vision of life*
  - b) *A typical philosophy of the 20th century*
  - c) *An intellectual capacity*
  - d) *A research model*
  
- 2) The use of Critical Thinking allows one to...
  - a) *Better understanding situations and making decisions*
  - b) *Developing one's own philosophy of life*
  - c) *Becoming a successful manager*
  - d) *Developing fake news*
  
- 3) Indicate which of these techniques or rules is useful for improving the use of Critical Thinking:
  - a) *Realising the bandwagon effect*
  - b) *Always taking things as good*
  - c) *Feeding the sadness*
  - d) *Using logic*
  
- 4) What is creativity?
  - a) *An innate talent that only a few have*
  - b) *An essential skill*
  - c) *A characteristic that only scientists have*
  - d) *A characteristic that only artists have*
  
- 5) What does Creative Thinking allow you to do?
  - a) *Thinking outside the box*
  - b) *Being smarter*
  - c) *Performing mathematical calculations easily*
  - d) *Processing fragments of information sequentially*
  
- 6) Which of these statements about the human brain is wrong?
  - a) *It consists of two hemispheres*
  - b) *The left and right hemispheres have the same functions*
  - c) *The left and right hemispheres have different functions*
  - d) *It is a unique organ*
  
- 7) Who made Experiential Learning famous with its insights into the subject?
  - a) *Albert Einstein*
  - b) *Jean Piaget*
  - c) *Henri Poincaré*
  - d) *David A. Kolb*
  
- 8) How many phases does the cycle of the Experiential Learning model consist of?
  - a) 7
  - b) 5
  - c) 4
  - d) 3

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

9) Which phase of Experiential Learning is known as the 'Abstract Conceptualisation' phase?

- a) 1
- b) 3
- c) 4
- d) 5

10) What is self-reflection for?

- a) It enables the development of adequate emotional intelligence
- b) It fosters unhappiness
- c) It prevents one from achieving a state of well-being
- d) It limits the understanding of our strengths and weaknesses

# MODULE 4

## *Empathy*



# INTRODUCTION

Empathy can basically be defined as the ability to feel the emotions of others, or the ability to imagine what others are thinking and feeling. It is possible to see the ability of empathy in many emotions. It means being able to feel what someone who has lost a loved one or someone who has just given birth is going through at that moment.

According to Merriam-Webster, empathy is defined in part as “the act of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and indirectly experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another.”

While people can adapt to their own emotions, it can be difficult to achieve this harmony for the emotions of others. For people with high empathy, this situation is easier and they are able to feel the emotions of others. Empathic people do this by cognitively and emotionally perceiving an experience that someone else has experienced or observed.

Empathy studies have revealed that empathetic people are more likely to show compassion and help others.

According to the Greater Good Science Center, a research institute that studies psychology, sociology, and neuroscience, “Empathy is a building block of morality—following the Golden Rule helps people put themselves in someone else’s shoes.” It helps us understand their perspectives, needs, and intentions.”



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes:

- will have gained knowledge about the phenomenon of empathy;
- will have a clear understanding of the different manifestations of empathy and the role they play in our social relationships;
- will be in the position to self-understand in what form his/her own empathic dimension manifests itself as an individual;
- will have skills regarding why it is important to develop it;
- will learn how empathy differs from sympathy;
- will have insight into what are the inherent barriers to empathy.

In addition to this new knowledge and food for thought, through the use of interactive quizzes the participant will be able to test his/her knowledge on the subject and adapt it to his/her daily life.



# EMPATHY



## What is empathy?

Empathic people usually show similar characteristics that can be listed as follows:

- Frequently thinking about how others are feeling;
- Feeling overwhelmed by tragic events;
- Being really good at listening to others;
- Being one of the people people usually talk to about their problems;
- Be good at understanding other people's feelings;

You can learn more about empathy by watching this video.

Simon Sinek - Understanding Empathy

Psychologist Daniel Goleman defined empathy in terms of five basic elements:

- The first is to understand others. People who can successfully understand others are good at both verbal and nonverbal communication and can follow emotional cues.
- The second is to develop others, which means mobilizing them in the face of their needs and concerns and helping them develop to their full potential.
- The third is to have a service orientation. In this way, it is to understand the people you serve and to try to offer the best alternative for them.
- The fourth is leveraging diversity. It means interacting with different people as they need to. It is recognizing that different types of people bring different opportunities and developments.
- The fifth and last is political awareness. This shows individuals the importance of collective work.

# EMPATHY- I



## **What is the difference between empathy and sympathy?**

People may choose you as a listener in difficult times. In such situations it becomes easier to understand the difference between empathy and sympathy. Expressions of sympathy are mostly used while performing a social function and are a cultural norm. In such cases, you may have to order sentences that are appropriate for the situation. This is the way you express sympathy. In order not to make yourself or others feel uncomfortable, you will have to say these common, almost obligatory phrases. So you don't have to deal with the other person's problem. There are limitations between you and the people you communicate with with sympathy, and you cannot establish the necessary intimacy on the basis of the subject and change his or her current emotional state. In fact, you expect this situation to end immediately. Sympathy does not create any healing, resolution, connection. This does not mean that sympathy is wrong or bad. We must accept that it is normal and natural. In other words, we can say that sympathy is more of a reaction rather than a response.

Empathy, on the other hand, is a phenomenon that creates a more emotional bond and makes one feel more intimacy than sympathy.

# EMPATHY- II

## What are the barriers to empathy?

Some people lack the ability to empathize. For this reason, they are not sufficiently affected by the feelings and experiences of others. This can sometimes seem repulsive and reckless. At the same time, it has been observed in studies that in narcissistic personality disorders, the person's sense of empathy often does not develop enough.

There are some general reasons why individuals lack empathy:

### **a) Cognitive Biases**

When people make prejudices about people other than themselves, they often think that what's holding them back is internal reasons. When they criticize the situations they do not like and do not want, they talk about external obstacles. The reason for this is cognitive biases, because cognitive biases can prevent all the factors in the formation of a situation from being revealed.

### **b) Dehumanization**

People do not think that people who are not like them have feelings and feel like them. The reason for this is that the person in front of them has different conditions or characteristics from them. While observing war societies, they may think that those who suffer there are different from themselves. This is one of the barriers to empathy.

### **c) Don't Blame the Victim**

Seeing people who have had bad experiences, people around them sometimes make the mistake of choosing to blame the victim. They make this mistake by needing to figure out why the criminal did this to the victim of crime. The reason for this is basically the need to believe that the world is a just place.

# EMPATHY- III

## **Why do we empathise?**

Psychologists and researchers have spent many years studying why we try to understand the feelings of others. The term empathy was first introduced in 1909 by psychologist Edward B. Titchener as a translation of the German term *einfühlung* (meaning "feeling into"). There are several different theories to explain empathy.

### ***a) Neuro Scientific Explanations***

Neuroscientific explanations revealed that certain areas of the brain have a significant impact on empathy. Researchers also think that different regions of the brain, including the anterior cingulate cortex and anterior insula, have an impact on empathy.

Functional MRI research also shows that an area of the brain known as the inferior frontal gyrus (IFG) plays a critical role in the experience of empathy. Studies have shown that people who have damage to this part of their brains cannot perceive facial expressions.

### ***b) Emotional Explanations***

Early research on empathy has shown that people share in others' experiences by feeling what they are feeling. It involves empathizing, including fictional characters.

### ***c) Prosocial Disclosures***

Sociologist Herbert Spencer suggested that empathy serves an adaptive function and helps species survive. Since people are natural beings, the improvement in social relations can be seen as a step in the recovery of individuals. Empathy is the part of this puzzle that increases cooperation in social relations.

## **Types of empathy**

Empathy is a topic that is still being studied in depth by researchers. Researchers divided empathy types into three. It's important to know these types because each species manifests itself in a different way. People become more aware of empathy types and practices in life because they have this awareness when they happen to themselves or their environment. Empathy is a concept that can be developed for all age groups.

### **a) Cognitive Empathy**

Basically, it is understanding the mental state of another person and how they will react and think in the face of this situation. Psychologists also refer to it as theory of mind.

Renowned psychologist Daniel Goleman describes cognitive empathy as "Just knowing how the other person is feeling and what they might think. Sometimes it can also come across as perspective taking.. This type of empathy focuses more on thought, understanding, and reason.

Cognitive Empathy has some good and bad aspects. Good aspects contribute to the development of negotiation skills. This type is seen in people who can help motivate other people and have the ability to understand different perspectives. Cognitive empathy blends the emotional and reflective perspective. It is more based on understanding. Cognitive empathes are likely to be cold to their partner because they only act on understanding.

### **b) Emotional Empathy**

Emotional Empathy is the ability to successfully understand another's emotions and respond appropriately. In this case, it is possible to be worried or distressed for the well-being of another.

According to Daniel Goleman, the definition of emotional empathy is feeling "When you feel physically together with the other person, as if their feelings are contagious.". This type of empathy focuses more on emotions, physical situations, and mirror neurons in the brain. This type of empathy can become inappropriate and overwhelming in some situations.

Emotional empathy, as the name suggests, means directly feeling the emotions and experiences of another person. According to Goldman, empathy can actually be called rooting deep into a person's mirror neurons. It can be paired with the act of acting in animals.

When an animal sees the animals next to it moving, they have neurons that enable them to act in a certain way. This happens because they associate themselves with the actions of others.

# EMPATHY- V

Emotional empathy can also be thought of as basically human experiences. When your loved one hurts, you feel strange from that pain or your heart rate increases are examples. It is natural and instinctive. Usually in this type of empathy, the connections are sincere and strong.

"A disadvantage of emotional empathy arises when people lack the ability to manage their own distressing emotions," writes Goleman. He adds that in this case, burnout can occur. This explanation shows that having too much empathy can tire people psychologically.

## **c) Compassionate Empathy**

Daniel Goleman uses this phrase to describe compassionate empathy: "With this kind of empathy, we not only understand and feel a person's plight, but we also take spontaneous action to help when needed".

Compassionate empathy is based on reason, emotion and action. In addition to being the most empathetic type, it is also a type that deals with the person as a whole.

Our heart feelings and brain thoughts are closely linked at the same time in a complex way. Sometimes we can approach things more emotionally or more rationally. Compassionate empathy is halfway between the two.

## **What are the benefits of empathy?**

- Empathy reduces prejudice and racism;
- Empathy improves marriages because it increases intimacy and increases relationship satisfaction;
- Empathy reduces bullying;
- Empathy allows us to step outside of our comfort zones for others;
- Empathy fights inequalities;
- Empathy helps to create a peaceful working environment between employees and employers in work environments;
- Empathy is important for members of the public, such as doctors and police, because their ability to empathize will help them develop understandings of service.



# EMPATHY- VI

## How to be more emphatic?

Empathy is one of the concepts developed with human development. In the evolutionary process, the presence of empathy has been observed not only in humans, but also in primates, mice and dogs. There are studies that reveal that when people's developmental processes are observed, they feel empathy during infancy and even early infancy.

Although the ability to empathize is shaped by the person's environment and genetic factors, it is possible for us to stay at the same level of empathy throughout our lives or to develop it. Empathy is thought to have evolved in mammals as part of offspring care.

Empathy has been getting harder and harder lately. This is because people's tastes and desires evolve in the same direction. Because there are often people like us around us, we have lost the ability to think about different lives to develop this ability. However, it is not impossible for us to develop this ability, we can try some scientific actions and try to improve ourselves in empathy.

- Provide an active listening experience, i.e. make the other person feel heard and important.
- Think about or write down what you have in common with someone very different from you, thus creating a shared identity.
- Try to picture the profiles of people you see on the news or on the internet and try to guess their lives so you put a face to the pain.
- Be prepared to make sacrifices for others.
- Focus your attention on the outside, that is, study the actions and behavior of other people.
- Get out of your own head and focus on what others might be going through.
- Don't make hasty conclusions about others and avoid the perception that everyone deserves what they're going through.
- Create an empathetic body language, not only with your words, but also with your expression, tone of voice, and eye contact.
- Neuroscience research by Richard Davidson and his colleagues has shown that people who meditate constantly increase their empathic abilities.
- You can improve more by reading and watching fictional things that explore imaginary worlds.
- It has been revealed that collaborative studies have improved the ability to empathize more, engage in teamwork.
- Believe that empathy is a learnable concept.
- Pay more attention to the faces of the people in front of you.
- It is common for high-status people to have less need for others and to cooperate less, and such people's ability to fight against inequalities improves their ability to empathize.
- Babies can guide you in empathy, and spend more time with them.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

1) Which of the following statements is not true?

- a) Empathy affects certain parts of the brain.
- b) Empathy is a phenomenon that cannot be developed.
- c) Empathy is seen in humans from infancy.

2) Which of the following statements is not true?

- a) The environmental factor has little effect on people's different emotions and feelings.
- b) Cognitive biases inhibit empathy because they cause you to make judgments about others.
- c) Blaming the victim makes it harder to empathize.

3) Which of the following statements is true?

- a) While empathizing, we can give advice without asking the person in a difficult situation.
- b) When we empathize, we can make judgments about others.
- c) When we empathize, we must put ourselves in the shoes of others.

4) Which of the following statements is not true?

- a) According to Daniel Goleman, in compassionate empathy we not only understand emotions but also take action.
- b) Cognitive empathy means knowing how the other person is feeling and what they might think
- c) People with emotional empathy know the feelings of the other person, but they cannot understand what they are feeling.

5) Which of the following is not a benefit of empathy?

- a) Empathy reduces prejudice and racism.
- b) Empathy makes it difficult for others to step outside of our comfort zones.
- c) Empathy fights inequalities.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

6) Which of the following is not an activity that enhances empathy?

- a) Paying attention only to what people say in communication.
- b) Thinking or writing about what we have in common with different people.
- c) Trying to imagine the profiles of people in the news and trying to guess their lives.

7) Which of the following statements is not true?

- a) Experiences of empathy have an impact in certain parts of the brain.
- b) Our empathy for fictional characters shows that we share others' experiences by feeling what others are feeling.
- c) Empathy does not cause any improvement in people's social relationships.

8) Psychologist Daniel Goleman defined empathy with 4 basic elements as understand others, develop others, have a service orientation, and political awareness.

- a) True
- b) False

9) Empathy supports a person to establish a more accurate and close communication in many private and social environments, from business life to marriage life.

- a) True
- b) False

10) Cognitive empathy is also known as perspective taking or theory of mind.

- a) True
- b) False

# MODULE 5

*Managing and expressing the emotions  
&  
taking responsibility*

# INTRODUCTION

In this module, you will learn how to manage, express your emotions and take responsibility for them. The module will include:

## ***1. Theoretical Outline - How Does Our Brain Work?***

This part explains the basic functioning of our emotional brain and what emotions are; this will help you make sense of why and how we make sense of feelings.

## ***2. Anger Management***

Since anger is usually the most complicated and problematic aspect of interpersonal relationships, the second paragraph is entirely dedicated to its management. It introduces its importance and how to deal with it.

## ***3. Taking responsibility***

This paragraph addresses the issue of taking responsibility in the workplace. The advice offered here focuses on three core rules that need to be respected in order to be a responsible employee. These involve practical, interpersonal and personal aspects.



# INTRODUCTION - I

As you can see, this module seeks to give a coherent explanation as well as practical advice to deal with feelings, especially those of distress. Human beings are social creatures that interact with themselves and their environment through emotions: these offer us joy, relief, happiness, surprise, warnings, ways to defend ourselves and create meaningful connections. This module wants to present some tools to navigate your feelings and develop emotional intelligence.

Emotions are not just simply something we experience in a definite span of time. Emotions influence or affect our body and mind, which is reflected in our environment (both private and professional).

Being able to behave in an emotionally intelligent way will help you better understand your goals, needs, and abilities and therefore advance your career.

On the next page, you will find: the expected learning outcomes, the three paragraphs, a summary of the lessons learned, questions to assess what you have learned, the complementary materials to dig deeper into the topic and, lastly, the sources used to write this module.



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes:

- the definition of affect regulation;
- the definition of emotions;
- how the emotional brain works;
- how to manage anger in a healthy way;
- how to take responsibility in the workplace.







# THEORETICAL OUTLINE- I

Emotion is the response of a part of the brain called “amygdala” to inputs from the outside world. The amygdala evaluates every single piece of information before it is sent to the cerebral cortex for processing by comparing the new input with the memories stored and thereby equips everyday events with personal significance.

The main purpose of the scanning process is to sort out threats from non-threatening happenings. Therefore, it serves as a survival mechanism to prompt immediate, unreflected reactions during a crisis that jeopardizes our lives. When the amygdala dictates action, the whole brain is hijacked to serve the sole purpose of survival, without pondering or evaluating the consequences of the (re)action performed.

Crucially, the emotional brain does not consist solely of the amygdala; it is composed of another part called “neocortex” which controls the stimuli from the amygdala to re-assess them to better consider alternative actions. This dynamic takes more time than the dire emotional reaction. We see, therefore, that pausing to reflect on feelings of anger and distress is a fundamental way to develop emotional capacity. Specifically, this process of affect regulation purports to:

- attune to one’s feelings without trying to suppress or dodge difficult emotions;
- develop the ability to ponder and deploy emotions as a source of information.

# ANGER MANAGEMENT



Anger is one of the six basic emotions; it can be triggered by external (a coworker, for instance) or internal events (e.g. excessive worrying) and serves to react to threats to our survival. Anger is not a negative feeling; indeed, it can help us recognize our needs and feelings if managed correctly.

The instinctive reaction is to behave aggressively regarding the perceived threat in order to defend ourselves and lash out at the stressor; however, letting it all out is not the best response.

Contrary to what many of us used to believe, when it comes to anger "letting it all out" is not helpful. This behaviour usually makes things worse each time it happens and doesn't fix either the problems with others or the ones you're feeling inside. Instead, it's better to take a break to calm down before addressing the issues properly. This doesn't mean you shouldn't express your feelings of distress. Indeed, this simply aims at *responding* to feelings instead of reacting, as this is more likely to both lead to an agreement and a healthy, non-harmful expression of an angry emotional state.

Researchers suggest taking (I) **20 minutes** to recover from an intense state of distress; you can either communicate this directly, or excuse yourself from the room, or go for a short walk, or a break. If that is not possible, (II) **count until 30 while taking deep breaths**.

Even though 20 minutes seems a long time, especially in a more tense situation in the workplace, remind yourself and the other person that this is the best option to reach a solution as well as keep communication constructive and respectful. It is in the interest of all parties involved to solve the conflict and find a compromise.

It is important not to overthink what made you angry, as this will likely result in finding more reasons and self-justifications for the distress. What is essential during the break is to try to look at the situation from a different perspective, without invalidating your own anger. It is not simply venting that reduces the anger, but also the additional change of narrative might help in managing your emotions.

# ANGER MANAGEMENT – I

As written in the previous page, the aim is to respond to anger. This involves two crucial moments:

1) **suppression**

2) and **outward expression** through conversion.

Suppression must be followed by a moment that aims to share the feelings. Therefore, the term refers to the act of suppressing the instinctive aggressive reaction in order to turn this into constructive behaviour and communication. The two moments are **necessarily complementary** and build upon each other. The attempt to neutralize the anger without a healthy way to channel it outwards results in its internalization, which comes with great health damage. For instance, hypertension, high blood pressure, or depression are possible consequences. Moreover, it can also result in negative behaviours (cynical expressions, passive-aggressive comments, or over-criticism), which affect interpersonal relationships.

## ***Hands-On: What You Can Do?***

The following techniques can be used to manage emotions in general; we will focus on anger as the best example of a basic emotion that is distressful and is often difficult to cope with.

### *- Check-in on yourself*

To become more aware of your own feelings, you can start by asking yourself these simple questions:

**How do I feel?**

**How do I know?**

**How do others feel?**

**How do I know?**

These simple questions will help you take time to notice your emotions and reflect on what memories might underpin them. This helps in assessing the response and the origin of your anger.

As mentioned before, the neocortex is responsible for our rational management of raw emotional inputs issued by the amygdala. In practice, this happens by mastering the ability to talk to yourself in an internal dialogue. You can use the following questions as a guideline:

**How do I feel about this situation?**

**What do I think I should do about it?**

**What effect do I think that would have on me and other people?**

**What response would fit my values?**

**Is there anyone else that I could ask about this who might help me?**

The last point is of high importance; indeed, if you feel like it is not safe or preferable to express your anger to the person who triggered it, you can find someone else you trust that you can talk to. Either way, it is recommended to express it.

# TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Taking and complying with work responsibility involves, among others, performing successfully those duties indicated in the job description that you, your employer and your colleagues have agreed upon. Moreover, when accepting a job, you also agree to follow the company policy, values and regulations, which you should inform yourself about during your job interview.

*"Taking responsibility means that your co-workers know they can rely on you as a helpful, supportive and diligent colleague and that you can establish with them mutual dependence"*

If all co-workers trust that they will perform their duties and you will respect yours, it is easier to build a more open, relaxed and predictable environment, with no sudden disruptions and changes of plans.

## **Hands-On: What You Can Do?**

Specifically, there are some crucial rules you need to follow to create a more responsible working environment:

### *Do not miss deadlines:*

Deadlines are a sort of 'expiry date' on a certain task. It is fundamental to respect these dates, as on one hand not doing that will likely complicate other colleagues' deadlines and schedules and possibly disrupt the timeline of a certain project or initiative. Not missing a deadline means that your co-workers can count on your efficiency and timeline - and vice versa.

If you find yourself overloaded and realize you cannot respect a deadline, inform your colleagues and/or supervisor and/or boss. Try to explain how you're feeling, and which other priorities you have. Offer an apology and ask for help, advice, or an extension. If that is not possible, you can take a moment to think of the things that led up to this outcome and prevent it in the future. Being responsible does not mean not making mistakes; this is perfectly fine and it is part of trying out new things, or even old ones. What matters to your colleagues and yourself is that you are able to work out what went wrong, why and what can be improved. Taking responsibility, therefore, means also to be able to learn by doing introspective, honest reflection.

### *Establish a trusting, motivating relationship with your co-workers:*

Responsibility, however, does not include only duties. It also entails the treatment you offer to your colleagues; in other words, your behaviour needs to be mindful and respectful of your own feelings as well as those of others.

A sensitive approach will also create a more supportive environment where you and your colleagues can share appraisals for your work and give each other constructive feedback for those things you are missing. Listen actively to them: make eye contact, eliminate distractions, do not speak over them, have an inviting attitude and ask follow-up questions. Encourage and support each other for the things you are doing.

# TAKING RESPONSIBILITY- I

*Self-evaluation:*

In order to become more responsible, you need to be aware of your own performance and behavior, as well as have the ability to **evaluate your own progress** on a regular basis. Take some time to check in with yourself and look back on the tasks you've performed:

**I set these goals. Are they achievable?**

**How stressed do I feel?**

**What did I particularly appreciate about my performance?**

**What aspects of my performance did I feel uncomfortable/unsatisfied with? Why? What tasks did I enjoy?**

**What tasks did I not enjoy?**

**What did I particularly appreciate about my colleagues' performance?**

**What did I not appreciate about my colleagues' performance?**

After asking yourself this question, it is important to communicate both the satisfaction and discontent to your coworkers. Crucially, you can also reward yourself for the things you appraised about your own actions. This can be a snack, a vacation, a break, going to your favorite restaurant, or dedicating your time to people and/or hobbies you enjoy yourself with.

## **All Sharing Circle - A Group Activity:**

The activities listed so far focus on developing the tools necessary to reflect upon your emotions individually in order to be able to express them. This one, instead, plays on enhancing interpersonal skills such as empathy, active listening and trust. In the sharing circle, coworkers express and listen to each other's feelings and ideas on a voluntary basis. This helps bonding, create a safe space, find commonalities and understand differences between the people involved, thereby strengthening respect.

*Rules:*

Establish a person to moderate the circle and make sure everyone behaves respectfully; ideally he/she writes down what behaviors are not accepted and welcomed where everyone can read them and ensure their abidance.

Stand in a circle, preferably sitting down, and ask if anyone volunteers to share their thoughts and feelings in that precise moment. Make sure this person gets appraisal for taking a leap of faith and breaking the ice. If nobody steps forward, you can go first and talk openly and honestly.

Make sure everyone is actively listening to the person speaking: no distractions, eye contact and even follow-up questions are welcome.

Close the circle by warmly thanking everyone for sharing their vulnerabilities and offer validation.

# TAKING RESPONSIBILITY- II

## Lessons Learned

- Emotional and cognitive intelligence are complementary and need to work hand in hand. It is possible and important to control emotional inputs issued by the amygdala.
- Emotional regulation aims at processing, rather than suppressing emotions and using them as a source of information.
- Letting out all the anger or just suppressing it does not help processing the emotion and will have repercussions on your health and those around you.
- Taking a moment to cool down and reflect on your anger and then communicate it to either the person who stirred it or someone you trust is a healthy way to deal with distress.
- Ideally, it takes 20 minutes to cool off the input from the amygdala. However, taking deep breaths while counting until 30 might mitigate the steam.
- It is important to express your needs when it comes to processing anger. How long and what do you need? It is also in the best interest of all parties involved in the conflict.
- Taking responsibility means both performing the tasks agreed upon in the job description as well as behaving towards others in a respectful and mindful fashion.
- Responsibility will help you create a safer, more trusting working environment.
- Increasing responsibility includes not missing deadlines, encouraging your coworkers, taking constructive feedback and tracking your own progress through self-evaluation.

The Sharing Circle is a good way to establish trust and empathy on the workplace and creates an environment to express emotions.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

1) Write down the two fundamental aspects of dealing with anger and a possible way to do that in practice.

2) Think of something that makes you really angry. How do you feel, what are your thoughts? What was the situation? Would you change how you dealt with it?

3) What are the three core rules of responsibility?

4) Write down at least 4 questions that you can use to track your own performance at work.

# MODULE 6

*Developing communication skills  
&  
developing emotional repertoire*



# INTRODUCTION

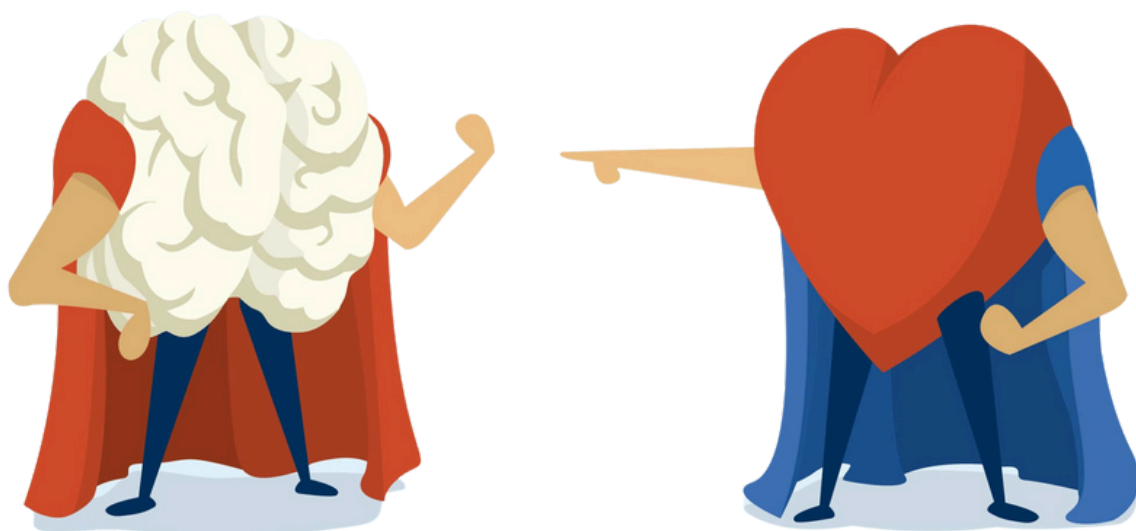
This module teaches how to develop practical communication skills and create an emotional repertoire by establishing social relationships that enable the users to observe and analyse these relationships.

## ***1. Theoretical Outline - How Does Our Brain Work?***

Hereby we will explain the primary link between practical communication skills and emotional repertoire in social relationships. In other words, the chapter examines the impact that the development of communication skills has on the development of dynamic repertoire.

## ***2. Development of communication skills in social relationships***

This section will discuss the importance of communication skills in general. It includes an overview of the definition of communication skills in social relationships and how they can be developed. Additionally, it comprises the extent to which communication skills may be effective in delivering healthy communication in social relationships.



# INTRODUCTION - I

### **3. Emotions as communication tools in social social relationships - emotional repertoire**

In this section, we will discuss how emotions alone can be used as communicative tools during people's interactions; and how emotions support and influence the establishment of social relationships.

The module seeks to explain communication skills in social relationships, considering that human beings can communicate in several ways. Individuals communicate verbally, but also emotionally. When an individual is aware of their own emotions, understanding other people's emotions is easier and this reflects drastically in their social relationships. Better verbal and emotional communication is not only necessary for making social relationships but also for keeping them. It is essential to know that, as humans, communication skills, whether verbal or nonverbal, improve our social life and as a consequence, our mental health.

To build relationships based on open communication, make your interlocutor feel more secure. Security enables people to gain trust. On the contrary, social relationships that lack communication might lack also of security, creating mistrust that harms mental health and general well-being.

Within this module, the reader will gain a better understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and social relations, and crucial factors in communication to not damage our social sphere. At the end of this module, the reader will be provided with advice that helps with increasing self-awareness in communication, and emotional management, as well as the positive impact that effective communication has on our lives, whether it is verbal or nonverbal.



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes:

- the effect of communication on social relationships;
- how to use emotions in a communicative way;
- how to take control of a negative social situation due to a lack of communication;
- the importance of communication skills both verbal and nonverbal;
- ways to improve emotional communication;
- importance of one's social relationships.



# THEORETICAL OUTLINE



As we know, emotions and communication are the basis of human survival. The link between effective communication skills and emotional repertoire is very similar to the connection between a person's food diet and daily exercises: they are interdependent to one another. Positive communication and emotional exchange with one another will keep individuals in a positive state, whereas hostile or unfavourable communication and emotion may cause negative body states such as high blood pressure. Creating emotional connections between individuals will allow them to bond, to develop skills of empathy and will enable them to establish a connection where they can relate to each other.

Communication and emotion are essential throughout all types of relationships. For instance, we can consider three different fields.

- 1) The lack or poor communication can endanger a relationship, as well as, the inability to show, recognize and handle emotions.
- 2) Poor communication and informative skills may lead to frustration in the workplace, causing dissatisfaction and lack of commitment by employees, impacting the company's revenue.
- 3) If poor communication occurs during military practice, it may lead to events that can be revealed to be catastrophic for the individuals involved. Therefore, effective communication is undeniably crucial.

It is vital to notice that the main link between effective communication skills and emotional repertoire is that emotions may affect communication in many ways. When we express our emotions directly and healthily, the information affects a person's internal state. Furthermore, the integration of emotion and communication makes it much simpler for the person who is listening to know the intentions of the information being received.

# THEORETICAL OUTLINE - I

Moreover, emotions are a significant part of human beings. We daily experience a high number of emotions. These emotions could be caused by actions from the people around us. But, it could also be from the people's reactions toward them, which highlights the importance of communicating through emotional repertoire, which helps individuals to understand themselves, the people they are interaction with and the surroundings in a healthy manner.

Individuals play an active role in managing their feelings, thoughts and emotions; and they can develop and nurture their skills for empathy.

Emotional repertoire may be a way to help facing obstacles and challenges given by the interaction with others.

The interdependency of emotion and communication explains the cost and reward factor discussed within the social exchange theory. Rewards are the outcomes that we get from relationships and costs are the emotional support and favours that the relationships provide.

Relationships are generally balanced on this double standard, which generates expectations and if rewards are not received, the relationship is affected and it might cause dissatisfaction. Also, if the costs and favours granted are too high in a particular social relationship, once again the balance is spoiled and it would negatively impact the relationship and feelings of the people involved. This highlights the importance of emotional repertoire as it helps with communicating the needs and wishes of people so that they can know what to offer to keep certain social relationships. However, the more social relationships a person can create or go through, the more experience they will have with what might suit them and what might not.

# DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS



The social nature of human beings, in general, was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions on our everyday social interaction through the lockdown have shown effects on our physical and mental health. Social engagement influences us in the way we are and the way our minds work.

Interpersonal relationships impact the way people interact and affect each other. These influences may come in the form of sharing their thoughts and feelings or even engaging in certain activities together. This exchange creates an interdependence between individuals. Therefore, inadequate communication skills in a social relationship or a personal relationship might lead to misunderstanding and then damage.

For example, a teacher-student relationship includes effective communication skills; if the student or teacher fails to communicate effectively, they will send the wrong idea to the student. In other words, when a teacher is grading the students, they have a unique effective way to communicate the student's shortcomings. The same thing is implied in the workplace. When the head of the office is talking to an employee regarding their work, whether they are trying to give positive or negative feedback, it's crucial to communicate the input in a particular manner. Where the employee would understand it rather than get offended or hurt by the feedback itself as it may affect future work conditions in the workplace. This, in general, is referred to as verbal communication—the use of words to send out an idea.

# DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS – I

## *Nonverbal communication:*

Rather than traditional communication with words, a massive part of effective communication falls under the category of nonverbal communication; that is communicating without words. This is shown in body language. For example, being anxious might lead to avoiding communication with others and eye contact, speaking very softly, to escape from criticism or due to fear of judgement.

Moreover, humans can communicate through their body language and through their tone of voice, which can help others learn about:

1. One's emotional state: how a person feels at the moment
2. Attitude: what is their attitude towards you
3. Honesty: are they being honest, or is there a hidden agenda
4. Knowledge of the topic being discussed.

There are some nonverbal behaviours that we should pay attention to as they may speak for us on our behalf in either a negative manner or a positive manner:

1. Voice tone and volume
2. Posture
3. Facial expressions
4. Movements and gestures.

## ***Hands-On: What You Can Do?***

Here are some tips on how to be more effective in communication:

- Know the person listening to you; different communication methods attract different types of listeners;
- Watch your tone; make sure your voice matches what is being communicated;
- Be well aware of your body language;
- Have an active and assertive voice;
- Always listen to understand rather than give a reply.

# EMOTIONAL REPERTOIRE



According to the American Psychological Association (APA), emotion is defined as "a complex reaction pattern involving experiential, behavioural and physiological elements." Therefore emotions are the way individuals deal with situations that they find significant. When a life-changing situation happens, for example, a heartbreak or buying a new house, these two different incidences will provoke emotions. On the other hand, the repertoire is the total of responses a person is capable of performing. In short, the emotional repertoire is the same as emotional language.

It is vital not to confuse emotions for moods, as there is an immense difference between them. Moods are a short-lived emotional state with a short intensity. However, emotions can be volatile in-depth and are perceived as more long-lasting.

To understand how emotions can be used as tools of communication, it is crucial to know that any emotional experience has three components:

**a) Subjective experience:** refers to emotions derived from personal experiences, which can be as simple as seeing your loved ones or seeing your favourite movie to losing someone you love.

**b) Physiological experience:** refers to emotions derived from a reaction from the autonomic nervous system, the fight or flight response our body triggers as soon as we experience fear.

**c) Behavioural or expressive response:** refers to the actual expression of the emotion, which can include a laugh, smile, or sigh, depending on the situation; behavioural responses are signals of how we feel.



# EMOTIONAL REPERTOIRE – I

To know how to use our emotions as communication tools, we must know how to regulate our emotions. Individuals are expected to be able to manage and healthily navigate emotions, especially since heavy loads of stress may reveal powerful emotions, which need to be regulated. For example, in a moment of anger, an individual can say something hurtful to a partner, colleague, or supervisor, which may affect the good functioning of the relationship itself. Learning how to regulate our emotions help us to avoid falling into these mistakes. Nevertheless, it is also vital to learn how to control one's emotions for their own sake. For example, extreme sadness or anger over a long period may have negative health impacts on an individual.

Some skills can help us regulate our emotions, such as:

1. Become aware of what you truly feel, and embrace them.
2. Name what you feel so you can become aware of it mentally and physically.
3. Give yourself some space, pause, and reflect.
4. Accept the emotions that you feel, especially that you are not alone.
5. Do not judge yourself for how you feel.
6. Practice mindfulness and engage in positive self-talk.
7. Again, pause and choose how you want to respond.

### ***Why is emotion important in communication?***

Earlier, we discussed nonverbal and verbal communication. Like both, we have emotional communication, which is the process of using communication to influence an individual's emotions. Expressing emotions through communication is vital because it delivers authenticity and enriches messages to be perceived as more raw and deeper, helping to develop trust. Furthermore, once trust is developed, security in relationships is followed.

### ***Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in the emotional repertoire:***

Emotional intelligence is the ability to observe one's own emotions as well as observe other's people's feelings and emotions as well as the ability to distinguish them. Emotional intelligence allows one to use all the information to guide thinking and behaviour. Emotional intelligence includes considering how and when to express certain emotions by improving our emotional vocabulary. It is a kind of cognitive-emotional processing.

# EMOTIONAL REPERTOIRE – II

## Hands-On: What You Can Do?

Here are some tips on how to use emotion as a communication tool:

- Know that people's emotions are a reflection of themselves and not of you, forgive;
- Practice acceptance;
- Work on being empathetic to the people around you;
- Express your emotion, even if it means taking a risk;
- Allow yourself to feel your emotions; don't hide them with other emotions;
- Be a good listener and observer of other people's emotions.

## Lessons Learned:

- Social engagement influences us at an ultimate level as it shapes the way we are and the way our minds work;
- People that are involved in an interpersonal relationship have inclinations to have some influence on one another;
- A massive part of effective communication falls under the category of nonverbal communication;
- Humans can communicate through their body language and tone of voice;
- Some nonverbal behaviours we should pay attention to as they may speak for us on our behalf in either a negative or a positive manner;
- Expressing emotions through communication is essential;
- Emotional intelligence plays a huge role in emotional repertoire;
- Emotional intelligence is a skill that needs to be practiced;
- Effective communication leads to more social relationship success;
- Effective emotional repertoire leads to more social relationship success.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

- How is emotional repertoire related to communication in social relationships?
- What's the significant difference between emotions and moods?
- What role does emotional intelligence play in emotional communication?
- What are the three components of any emotional experience?
- What are the crucial nonverbal communication behaviours that an individual should pay attention to?
- What can body language and tone of voice reveal in a conversation?
- Give an example of a real life situation, where you felt like it would have been better with more effective communication?

# MODULE 7

*Balancing relationships  
&  
maintaining work-life balance*

# INTRODUCTION

Before we dive into this module, we would like you to take a pen and paper to reflect and answer the following questions:

- What does work-life balance mean to you?
- Consider the fit between your current work role and your life outside work. Are you satisfied with your work-life balance?

According to Sodexo (n.d.), one of the main problems for many people today is the feeling of always being working. Advances such as digitization, while they have streamlined work and boosted efficiency, have also brought with them the growing sense of dissatisfaction that many employees suffer from.

In addition to the hours that can be spent within the four walls of the office, they have to be on their cell phones all the time or spend time on issues such as commuting to the office.

We are talking about small aspects that involve a disconnection of the employee with his or her personal life. Having to answer emails outside working hours or making plans for the next day before going to bed can interfere with the vital obligations of each employee.



# INTRODUCTION - I

There are numerous studies that highlight this problem:

- **45% of employees** feel that they do not have enough time to take care of their personal activities (Fordham, 2017).
- **67% of HR professionals** think their employees do enjoy a good work-life balance (Sodexo, 2016).
- **90% of employees** say they want to spend more time with their families (Sodexo, 2016).

In this module, we will explore in depth what it means to maintain a good work-life balance and how to achieve it. We will also identify the main causes that can lead to a lack of work-life balance and learn strategies and tips that can help you in your day-to-day life to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Enjoy it!



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes:

At the end of the module, you will:

- Learn the evolution of work-life balance throughout generations;
- Understand what work-life balance means;
- Learn the benefits of having a proper work-life balance;
- Identify strategies to achieve a better work-life balance.



# WORK-LIFE BALANCE



## What is work-life balance?

Life balance is the proportional relationship of the time you work compared to the time you devote to family, recreation, rest, leisure and self-care, according to OECD.

Work-Life Balance is about being able to create a balance between family commitments, leisure and work – including both paid and unpaid work. It is also pointed out by the OECD that finding a suitable balance between work and daily living is a challenge that all workers face. Families are particularly affected. Thus, the ability to successfully combine work, family commitments and personal life is important for the well-being of all members in a household (OECD, n.d.).

## Employees working long hours

A critical aspect of work-life balance is the amount of time a person spends at work. Studies indicate that lengthy work hours can affect personal health, jeopardise safety and increase stress. 10% of employees in the OECD work 50 hours or more per week in paid work. Overall, more men work very long hours in paid work; the percentage of male employees working very long hours in paid work across OECD countries is almost 14%, compared with about 6% for women (OECD, n.d.).

## Time devoted to leisure and personal care

Furthermore, the more you work, the less time you have to spend on other activities, such as personal care or leisure. The amount and quality of leisure time is important for people's overall well-being, and can bring additional physical and mental health benefits. A full-time worker in the OECD devotes 63% of the day on average, or 15 hours, to personal care (eating, sleeping, etc.) and leisure (socialising with friends and family, hobbies, games, computer and television use, etc.). Fewer hours in paid work for women do not necessarily result in greater leisure time, as time devoted to leisure is roughly the same for men and women across the OECD countries (OECD, n.d.).



# WORK-LIFE BALANCE - I

## Work-life balance throughout generations

Over the years, the knowledge and approach of work-life balance has been constantly evolving, so it might be helpful for you to understand the evolution of this concept. Let's now embark on a journey throughout different generations to understand the difference in opinions among the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials.

### Baby Boomers and Work-Life Balance

According to an article by Forbes (2018), for the generation of people born after the time of World War II, between 1945 and 1960, making a decent living was their priority. They were exposed to a lot of hardships from a very young age so, as a consequence, this generation of baby boomers craved stability in the workplace and highly valued the opportunity to have a job and make ends meet. Baby Boomers tended to stay at companies for longer periods of time than following generations. Many of these employees are currently in senior or director level positions that require a high degree of responsibility. As a result, 80% of Baby Boomers report moderate to high levels of stress (Huffpost, 2014).

### Gen X and Work-Life Balance

Due to the fact that children of the Baby Boomers, the so-called Gen Xers (typically born around the years of 1961 and 1980) grew up witnessing the long hours and poor work-life balance of their parents, they recognized the importance of keeping a better work-life balance (unlike their parents). Many of these employees prioritised spending qualitative time with their family and started to take extended maternity/paternity time and adequate vacation time (Forbes, 2018).

### Millennials and Work-Life Balance

For those born between the years of 1981 and 2000, work ethic is thought to be secondary or 'just a part of life.' However, it is also true that finding a stable job to pay their bills and higher education remains amongst the highest of priorities. For millennials, it is also very important to find a career path that will support their "lifestyle", which in this context means their life outside of work. The 2017 Workplace Benefits Report by Bank of America Merrill Lynch found that 59% of millennials report feeling worried about finding a career path that will support the lifestyle they've envisioned for themselves (Forbes, 2018).

# WORK-LIFE BALANCE - II

## Consequences of the lack of work-life balances

### Stress and psychosomatic manifestations

Stress can manifest itself in different ways, ranging from a marked irritable character to psychosomatic manifestations. According to a report elaborated by Eurofound (2010), stress is identified as a serious problem in most European countries, being among the major causes of absence from work.



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### Burnout Syndrome

The workers who suffer the most from professional burnout, whether they are working long daily commutes or taking on various responsibilities, are the most vulnerable to this disease. Its symptoms are chronic fatigue and inefficiency, aspects that reduce productivity.

### Increased Depression

Many of the personal problems are the result of incompatible schedules and work overload.



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### Insomnia and workaholism

Although they are not diseases "per se", they are factors that can harm your health.

### Lack of motivation

Due to disconnection with your life purpose.



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### Discomfort and Distance

From loved ones.

# WORK-LIFE BALANCE – III

## Benefits of having a good work-life balance

So, if you are suffering from some of the signs described above, maybe it's high time to reconsider learning new ways of battling these symptoms. But why is it important to keep a good work-life balance? Here are some benefits to establish a balanced amount of time between your life and work:

### 1) Good working environment

Numerous studies show that companies with happy employees are more profitable and more productive, and their employees are more likely to stay in their current job over the long term.

### 2) Good social life

Satisfaction that your job is not a burden, but allows you to have a social life. There is a direct correlation between the number of social interactions a person has each day and their feelings of joy and belonging.

### 3) Improve health status

Those who have flexible work options, for example, tend to be less stressed, maintain better physical and mental health, and enjoy better sleep.

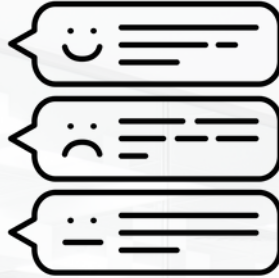
# WORK-LIFE BALANCE - IV

## Strategies to achieve a better work-life balance

**Set daily goals at work** to avoid overworking. Make a work schedule every day with clear and achievable goals. This way you make sure you don't set yourself more than you are capable of doing.



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**Do a thorough review** of what works for you and what doesn't. Try to be open about what you really need. Start by making small changes and then once you are confident, move in that direction.

**Delegate responsibilities** learn to delegate those tasks that can be done by others, both at home and at work. Say goodbye to the attribute of "being perfect" and do not carry all the obligations. This is key to coexistence in any place.



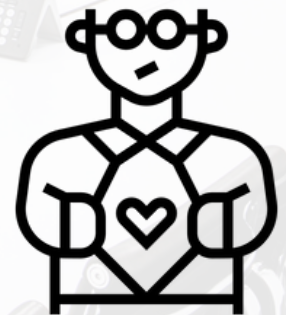
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Created by dDara

**Prioritise** although all your tasks are important, not all of them are equally urgent or necessary at the same time. Put your tasks in order and focus on one at a time.

**Express yourself** if you feel you are doing too much, if you don't have enough time, if you can't bring order to the chaos, communicate with your colleagues and superiors, and with professionals who can help you.



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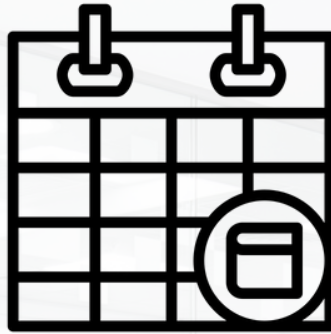
**Relax and discover what activities boost your energy** set aside time for pleasure. Maybe you should go dancing, exercise, take up a hobby, eat healthier, get the sleep you should, spend more time with your family, breathe or meditate.

# WORK-LIFE BALANCE - V

**Learn to say no** it's okay to help others or offer to do extra work, but don't overdo it, recognize how much workload you can handle and don't accept it when it compromises your time off.



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Created by Becris

**Establish schedules** not only with your bosses, but also with your co-workers and, even more, with yourself. Determine when you are going to work and when you are going to disconnect to be with your loved ones.

**Be flexible and practical** understanding that things don't always happen as planned is key to not overloading yourself. When problems occur, look for practical solutions.



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If you are having a hard time taking these steps, consider **asking for help**. Your work environment as well as your social and family environment can contribute to improve your life balance and harmony. If you are unable to do so, consider seeking assistance from a health professional. If you want to know more about this, don't worry. We will delve more into this topic in the next module.

# PRACTICAL EXERCISES

## Exercise 1

We propose you to do the following exercise adapted from "Soulwork Finding the Work You Love, Loving the Work You" by Bloch & Lee (1998) to reflect about your time management.

1. Under the column labeled "Current Level," estimate the relative amount of time you spend on that life role.
2. Now consider whether this is how you want to spend your time. Alter the percentages under the "Preferred Level" column to reflect how you want to spend your time.

Role	Current Level	Preferred Level
Worker	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Learner	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Religious or spiritual participant	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Person at leisure	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Citizen	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Friend	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Spouse or partner	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
Family member	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
	= 100%	= 100%

**Reflective Question:** What changes would you need to make in your life to spend your time in a way that brings greater satisfaction?

## Exercise 2

After estimating the relative amount of time you spend on different life roles, now you can meditate on the following statements:  
I need to:

Start doing

-----  
-----

Stop doing

-----  
-----

Continue doing

-----  
-----

Do more

-----  
-----

Do less

-----  
-----

Do differently

-----  
-----

# PRACTICAL EXERCISES

## Lessons Learned

### Work-life balance definition

Life balance is the proportional relationship of the time you work compared to the time you devote to family, recreation, rest, leisure and self-care.

### Work-life balance evolution

Over the years, the knowledge and approach of work-life balance has been constantly changing.

### Consequences of work-life balance

Stress and psychosomatic manifestations, burnout syndrome, depression, insomnia and workaholism, demotivation and distance from loved ones.

### Benefits of work-life balance

Good working environment, good social life and improvement on health.

### Strategies for a work-life balance

Set daily goals at work, delegate responsibilities, prioritise, express yourself, relax and take care of yourself, learn to say no, establish schedules...

# SELF ASSESSMENT TEST

1) *What's work-life balance?*

- a) A balance between family commitments, leisure and work.
- b) The time you spend working in your office.
- c) A balance between your house chores and work.

2) *The ability to successfully combine work, family commitments and personal life is important for the well-being of a person.*

- a) True
- b) False

3) *Which of these statements is false?*

- a) Lengthy work hours can affect personal health, jeopardise safety and increase stress.
- b) Long work hours don't have an influence on someone's health.
- c) 10% of employees in the OECD work 50 hours or more per week in paid work.

4) *Which of these statements is true?*

- a) For Baby Boomers making a decent living was their priority.
- b) Gen Xers didn't recognise the importance of keeping a better work-life balance than their parents.
- c) For Millennials, finding a career path that will support their lifestyle isn't a big priority.

5) *What are some of the consequences of lacking a work-life balance?*

- a) Burnout syndrome and chronic fatigue.
- b) A better professional career.
- c) Stress, burnout syndrome, depression, demotivation, insomnia (among others)

6) *Establishing a balanced amount of time between your life and work can have more benefits than disadvantages.*

- a) True
- b) False

7. *Some strategies to achieve a better work-life balance are:*

- a) Setting daily goals, establishing schedules and prioritising.
- b) Delegating responsibilities and expressing yourself.
- c) All of the above.



# SELF ASSESSMENT TEST

8. *If you are having a hard time taking measures to keep a good work-life balance, you should:*

- a) Consider asking for help.
- b) Work harder. The storm will pass.
- c) Keep it to yourself. It's better to face obstacles on your own.

9. *Helping others all the time should be your motto, so never say no when someone asks for help.*

- a) Not always. Helping others is okay but you need to reconsider how much workload you can handle.
- b) Of course. You should always help everyone no matter what.
- c) Never. I have enough with my own stuff.

10. *It's good to reflect upon the time you spend on different areas of your personal and professional life and ask yourself: What changes would I need to make to have greater satisfaction?*

.....

# MODULE 8

*Seeking for support  
(Professional, Spiritual and Social)*

# INTRODUCTION

Mental health issues are of increasing concern on a global scale. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 84 million people (i.e. 1 out of 6) were diagnosed with a mental health condition in the EU. According to the OECD (2020), one in two people will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime, and many will not receive the care they need.

The need for mental health- and psychosocial support has only grown, first with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns, and now with the war in Ukraine. However, mental health conditions are still largely stigmatized by society at large (Renew Europe, 2022).

Luckily, the conversation around mental health is growing. There are now more options for those seeking help and support for their mental well-being. And the stigma around mental health concerns is shifting. The importance of addressing anxiety, depression, and overall mental fitness is undisputed. Yet, the idea of seeking professional, spiritual or social help can sometimes seem daunting (Eatough, 2021).

In this module, we will explain the reasons why seeking for external support is beneficial for you. You may ask yourself: "how do I know if I should seek help? When is the right time to reach out? Who should I turn to for help?" If you want to find the answers to these questions, read on to learn more!



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes:

At the end of the module, you will:

- Understand why it is important to seek for support and when;
- Learn the benefits of seeking professional, spiritual or social help;
- Identify the signs that you should ask for help;
- Learn how to improve your spiritual health and wellness;
- Know how to help someone else.



# SEEKING FOR HELP



## Benefits of seeking for help

Many people today question the effectiveness of seeing a psychologist or seeking outside help. From a young age, we have been taught to deal with our own worries and problems as a sign of resilience and strength. Children often hear from their parents "big kids don't cry", so they have internalised in their minds the idea of not showing signs of weakness in the face of certain events that may overwhelm them.

Fortunately, many of these stigmas about seeking external help are slowly breaking down as the topic of mental health is increasingly being talked about in our immediate environments and in the media. Here are some of the reasons why seeking help is beneficial to you (Eatough, 2021):

### 1) You will no longer struggle alone

Being isolated while coping with a mental illness can be very difficult. Additionally, battling it out on your own is not a viable option. By asking for assistance, you can create a network of people who can support you and relate to your situation. This community can provide helpful guidance and appropriate advice.

### 2) You can build better relationships

You'll be able to re-establish contact with your loved ones with the help of mental health counselling. By communicating openly and honestly, you may create connections that are better and healthier.

### 3) It reduces your risk for other medical issues

Other medical problems can result from poor mental health. Poor sleep and sleep disorders, obesity, digestive problems, and other illnesses are all linked. Early intervention will reduce your likelihood of developing problems.

### 4) It teaches you to develop coping mechanism

Seeking professional help will give you the coping tools and strategies you need. You'll be able to navigate challenging situations with a greater degree of awareness.

# SEEKING FOR HELP – I

## **5) You can enhance your performance at work**

Your ability to perform at work might be adversely impacted by mental health issues. By asking for assistance, you can learn how to deal with problems that could harm your wellbeing and mental health. Even when you are under pressure, you will provide your best effort.

## **6) It improves your quality of life**

Getting assistance will help you improve your friendships and make new ones. Additionally, you'll learn how to cope with challenges that arrive on a daily basis, while discovering what does and doesn't work for you.

All these things can positively benefit your life in the long run while creating a healthier and happier you.

# SEEKING FOR HELP – II

## 8 signs that you should ask for help

It's not always easy to know when to start seeking professional help. It's also important to mention that everyone's mental health journey is different. Below are just a few signs to be aware of. But remember, you are the best judge of you. Not experiencing any of the below but still don't feel well? Ultimately, it's always best to reach out and ask for help (Eatough, 2021). Dr. Erin Eatough, an occupational health psychologist, proposes 8 signs to detect when you should ask for help:

### **You are finding it difficult to concentrate**

Changes in performance at work are common among those battling poor mental health. This includes a lack of concentration and poor productivity levels. You may feel disconnected from a job that once made you happy. You may even receive feedback from your managers that your work quality and concentration are low.



Created by Eucalyp

### **Your friends and family are concerned about you**

Friends and family members are sometimes (but not always) equipped to notice patterns from the outside that are difficult to see on the inside. If your loved ones have voiced concerns about your mental health, try and listen. They may have noticed something in you that you're not yet able to see.



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### **You are having sleeping difficulties**

Depression and anxiety can both cause insomnia. Persistently struggling to sleep and poor sleep hygiene can interfere with your ability to function. If you're not getting enough high quality sleep, it could be time to seek help. But remember, lots of things can affect your sleep, so it's best to speak a medical or a mental health professional. Regardless of why you are not sleeping well, poor sleep should never be ignored.



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# SEEKING FOR HELP – III

## Nothing excites you

Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed, and in life in general, may be a sign you should reach out and speak to a professional. The past few years have been a difficult time for everyone and discovering what excites you, post-pandemic, can feel overwhelming.



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## You are feeling isolated and alone

Poor mental health can isolate us. They can make us feel alone, distressed, or uncomfortable around other people. A lack of understanding from your peers about what you are going through may compound the problem.



Created by Kamin Ginkae

## You keep getting ill

Emotional distress and stress can affect your body. It can manifest as a wide range of ailments, from chronic stomach issues to frequent colds, headaches, and general physical pain. If you're physically not feeling well and your medical doctor can't find the cause, ask them to recommend a mental health professional for you to speak to.



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## You are abusing substances to cope

If you find yourself abusing drugs or alcohol, or even eating too much or too little, this may be a red flag. Using these crutches to cope with poor mental health may numb you in the present but it may be a symptom of a larger cause and time to reach out for help.



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# SEEKING FOR HELP – IV

## **You have suffered a traumatic event**

Traumatic events such as deaths, breakups, divorces, and job losses, just to name a few, can all require counselling to address. These traumas and associated grief don't always resolve on their own. They can impact your daily functioning if they persist.



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*If you notice that you aren't engaging in life or you're pulling away from your loved ones, it might be time to seek professional help .*

## 7 ways to improve your spiritual health

When conflicts overtake you or you feel hopeless when a situation occurs, a good way to regain your mental balance can be through activities or strategies that help you to re-establish your spiritual well being. According to the Illinois State University, here are some ways to improve your spiritual health (Geary, 2014):

### Explore your spiritual core

By exploring your spiritual core, you are simply asking yourself questions about the person you are and your meaning. Ask yourself: *Who am I? What is my purpose? What do I value most?* These questions will take you down a path that will cause you to reflect more deeply on who you are and enable you to identify traits that will make you happier.



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### Get it out

Expressing what is on your mind will help you to maintain a focused mind. After a long day or a significant event, you may feel confused and not be able to make sense of your feelings. You might be able to think more clearly and take action by writing down your ideas.



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### Look for deeper meanings

Looking for deeper meanings in your life and analysing occurring patterns will help you see that you have control over your destiny. Being aware of this can help you achieve a happy and healthy life.



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### Try yoga

Yoga is a physical technique that can help improve your spiritual wellness by reducing emotional and physical strains on your mind and body. Yoga is taught at all levels and has several health benefits, including lowering blood pressure, boosting the immune system, and reducing stress as well as anxiety, depression, exhaustion, and sleeplessness.

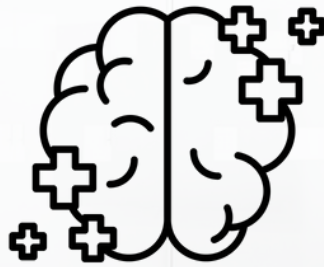
# SEEKING FOR HELP – VIII

## Travel

It's true! You will feel more connected to yourself when you are in a state where your mind can block out outside distractions while yet allowing you to think and rest. This enables you to eliminate stressors and orient your thinking toward general wellness. When travelling, it's a good idea to engage in activities like working out, talking with a counsellor or advisor, meditating, or adopting a brief vow of silence.



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from the Noun Project

## Think positively

Once you start viewing things in your life in a positive manner, you will find yourself thinking differently and refocusing your mind to a happy, healthy place. When you eliminate negativity and re-frame how you think of certain things and situations, you'll notice yourself being more relaxed. See opportunities for growth in the challenges life brings you.

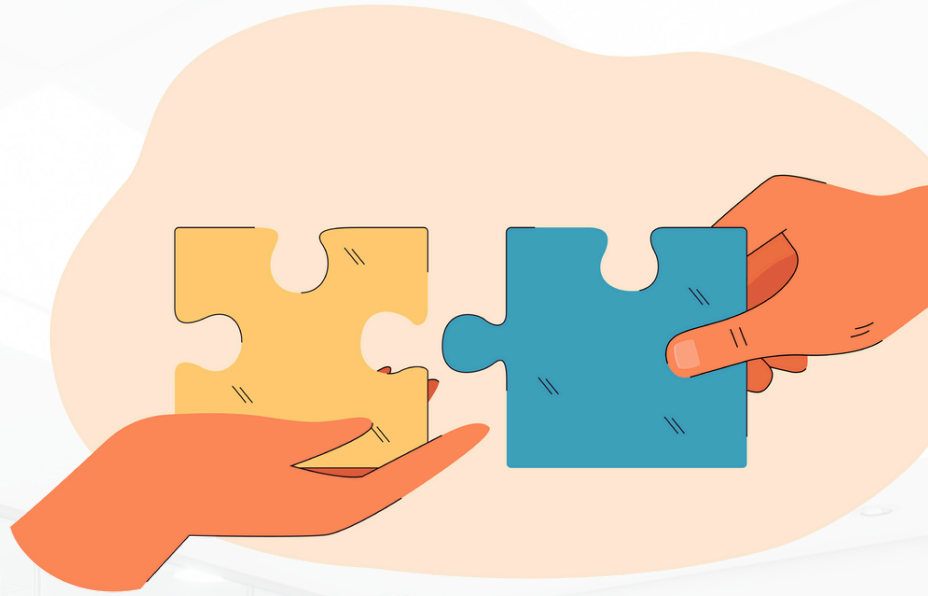
## Take time to meditate

While managing your time and daily tasks can be hard, it is crucial to devote time to connecting with yourself. Whether in the morning when you wake up, during your lunch break, or before you go to sleep, take five to 10 minutes to meditate each day. Fitting meditation and relaxation into your lifestyle will free your mind and foster a stronger relationship with your spiritual wellness. Be fully present in everything you do.



Created by Tinashe Mugayi  
from the Noun Project

# SEEKING FOR HELP – IX



## How to help someone else?

It's important to seek out help when you are struggling but it goes without saying that it is equally crucial to make an effort to help those in your life who you notice are having difficulty.

Dr. Erin Eatough proposes some suggestions you can use to assist someone else:

### 1) Let them know they are heard

Many individuals are reluctant, if not afraid, to reach out. It's essential not to dismiss their worries. Listen to their concerns and offer advice only if they're receptive to it.

### 2) Listen without judging

You never know what a person dealing with mental illness is going through or how they are processing their own hardships and tragedies. Be empathetic, keep an open mind and refrain from criticising their behaviour or coping mechanisms.

### 3) Suggest seeking professional help

Gently advise your friend or colleague to start seeking help for their mental health issues with a trained professional. This may help to ensure their safety and guide them in the right direction.

### 4) Validate their feelings

You can validate someone's feelings by telling them that you believe them when they say that they are struggling.

### 5) Seek professional guidance yourself

It's crucial that you don't try to give mental health advice to your friends and acquaintances yourself when the situation is too complicated. Seek guidance from a professional to provide your peers with accurate advice that will help instead of harm them.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

1) Which of these statements is false?

- a) Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 84 million people (i.e. 1 out of 6) were diagnosed with a mental health condition in the EU.
- b) One in two people will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime, and many will not receive the care they need.
- c) One in six people will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime, and many will not receive the care they need.

2) Seeking external help is a sign of weakness:

- a) True
- b) False

3) What are some of the benefits of asking for help?

- a) You will no longer struggle alone and will develop coping mechanisms.
- b) It improves your quality of life and performance at work.
- c) All of the above

4) A good way to regain your mental balance can be through activities or strategies that help you to re-establish your spiritual well-being.

- a) True
- b) False

5) Which of these actions can improve your spiritual wellbeing?

- a) Doing yoga and meditating
- b) Keeping your problems to yourself
- c) Expressing your thoughts and thinking positively
- d) A & C

6) When someone else is struggling, you can help him or her by:

- a) Letting them know they are heard
- b) Validating their feelings
- c) Suggesting seeking for professional help
- d) All of the above

7) When a situation is too complicated and you don't know what best advice to give to your friend:

- a) It's better to say something, at least.
- b) It's better to seek for professional help yourself so you know what to do
- c) You can suggest them seeking for professional help
- d) B & C

8) Which of the following sentences is false?

- a) When you eliminate negativity and re-frame how you think of certain things and situations, you'll notice yourself being more relaxed.
- b) Expressing what is on your mind will help you to maintain a focused mind.
- c) If you are feeling overwhelmed, alcohol and drugs can help you be more relaxed.

# RESOURCES

*Complementary materials and answers*

# PICS & ICONS

EI4FUTURE

All the icons are obtained from [thenounproject.com](https://thenounproject.com).


All the illustrations are taken from [freepik.com](https://freepik.com), [pexels.com](https://pexels.com) and [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

Illustration on the introduction page is taken from:


<https://www.pacificoaks.edu/voices/from-the-magazine/roundtable-2017-emotional-intelligence/>

# MODULE 1

EI4FUTURE



Here you can find a set of quizzes to improve your self-awareness.  
Here and here you can find a quiz to discover how self-motivated you are.  
Some helpful links: self-knowledge, self-awareness, self-motivation.





# MODULE 1

EI4FUTURE

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Some helpful links: [self-knowledge](#), [self-awareness](#), [self-motivation](#).

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## **Complementary materials and resources**

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## **The answers of self-assessment test**

1-e, 2-a, 3-a, 4-d, 5-b, 6-b, 7-b, 8-b, 9-b, 10-f.

# MODULE 2

EI4FUTURE

"How to Stop Feeling Self Conscious" is a very helpful article for people who constantly worry about their appearance, status, intelligence, etc. Retrieved October 31, 2022, from <https://wikihow.com/Stop-Feeling-Self-Conscious>

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# MODULE 3

EI4FUTURE

You can find out more about Critical Thinking and Experiential Learning by consulting the following sites and texts:

- [https://www.criticalthinking.org/files/Concepts\\_Tools.pdf](https://www.criticalthinking.org/files/Concepts_Tools.pdf)
- <https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/uv/uv/UV9407/critical-thinking.pdf>
- <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-experiential-learning-definition-theories-examples.html>
- <https://experientiallearninginstitute.org/resources/what-is-experiential-learning/>
- <https://educationaltechnology.net/kolbs-experiential-learning-theory-learning-styles/>
- 

and videos:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch/HnJ1bqXUnIM>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TeaFPSQsMY>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnJ1bqXUnIM>
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- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1bgdwC\\_m-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1bgdwC_m-Y)
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## Solutions to the self-assessment test

- 1.c
- 2.a
- 3.d
- 4.b
- 5.a
- 6.b
- 7.d
- 8.c
- 9.b
- 10.a

# MODULE 4

EI4FUTURE

You can find out more about Empathy by consulting the following video:

- [Simon Sinek - Understanding Empathy](#)

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## Self-assessment answers

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. c
5. b
6. a
7. c
8. False
9. True
10. False

# MODULE 5

EI4FUTURE

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## Self-assessment answers

1. a
2. a
3. b
4. a
5. c
6. a
7. c
8. a
9. a

# MODULE 8

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## Self-assessment answers

1. c
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. d
6. d
7. d
8. c

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