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The EQ Difference

A Powerful Plan for Putting Emotional Intelligence to Work

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

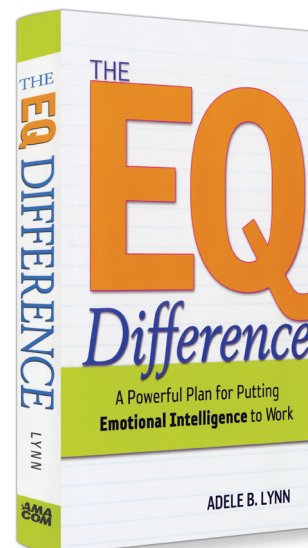
Quality of life is essential. Defining it, however, depends on the individual pursuing it. Some would consider it to be good health. Others may desire ample leisure. Still others would define it as possessions and material wealth.

By picking up *The EQ Difference*, readers are probably indicating they value another type of wealth — emotional wealth. Emotional wealth may be the most important asset of all, because in times of material poverty or poor health, emotional wealth sustains people. The dividends gained from investing in relationships and the comfort found in them can often make everything else bearable. Rich relationships, coupled with the strong inner peace that comes from managing oneself, is the hallmark of emotional intelligence. Unlike material possessions or health, emotional wealth is not only immune to the rise and fall of the markets or the ravages of disease and age, but it continues to grow and pay dividends.

Until recently, living an emotionally healthy and intelligent life was more or less left to chance, but today people take steps to improve all different aspects of their lives. Improving emotional intelligence is just one more avenue to living a healthy, productive life. The steps presented make up a comprehensive plan for developing emotional intelligence and living according to one's intentions.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- The physiology of emotions.
- How emotional intelligence supports living our intentions and values.
- The seven steps to train your “self coach” to develop EQ.
- Methods for dealing with the difficult coaching client.
- How to apply a 360-degree assessment that covers the 10 most essential skill sets of well-balanced, effective leaders.



by Adele B. Lynn

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THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: THE EQ DIFFERENCE

by Adele B. Lynn

The author: Adele B. Lynn is the author of *The Emotional Intelligence Activity Book*. She is a popular speaker and consultant specializing in emotional intelligence, mentoring and building trust in the workplace.

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PART I: EMOTIONS: THE FUEL OF LIFE

The Connection Among Behavior, Feelings and Performance

Emotional intelligence is the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships so we can live our intentions. Indeed, emotional intelligence is about making choices.

Other people's behavior can definitely influence your feelings. Think about the last time someone cut you off on the freeway. That behavior could have caused you anything from mild irritation to road rage. Or think about the last time at work that people expressed gratitude for your efforts. More than likely, that had some positive effect on your feelings.

Emotions can also affect performance; in fact, some emotions translate into action and others into inaction. Recognizing this is an important foundation to understanding how emotions can be channeled in the workplace.

Even though feelings can affect performance, many factors contribute to overall high performance at work. Blending workplace knowledge and emotional intelligence can help businesses and organizations achieve the highest level of success. ●

The Mystery of Human Behavior

Because behavior has such an important effect on performance, it would be worthwhile to understand the complicated factors leading to human behavior, especially our own. Family and societal values, laws and mores of church and state, personality, group influences, assumptions and beliefs, life experiences, and reinforcement and punishment all drive human behavior.

What do you know about your own behavior? Probably a good deal. However, no matter what your current knowledge, increasing that knowledge is a worthwhile and lifelong process. Also, what you do with that knowledge may be the difference between a life of mastery and one filled with repeated errors and struggles.

The Dance Between Values and Emotions

Most major companies have eloquently written values statements suggesting that people — both leaders and employees — know how to behave. But people don't always behave the way they "should."

When emotion overrides values or intention, it is called emotional hijacking. Everyone has experienced this at some time. Daniel Goleman, who described the term in *Emotional Intelligence*, compares emotional hijacking to an emergency signal sent to a part of our brain.

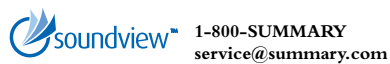
No doubt you've either contributed to or witnessed a hijacking when someone appears with the wrong message. Anger is one of the most obvious forms of emotional hijacking, but muting (feeling one has lost one's voice) and inertia are other manifestations. With effort, these responses can be replaced with new behaviors and reactions. ●

The Way We Are Wired

Emotions are rooted in our biochemistry; they are not simply a matter of the heart. Therefore, a rudimentary understanding of the science of our brains is necessary to understand emotional hijacking.

Three-Brain Structure

Our brains consist of three fundamental areas. One area is our autonomic, or first, brain. According to scientists,



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the autonomic brain is responsible for such important functions as breathing and the beating of our hearts.

Another area of our brain structure is our emotional brain, or limbic system, which consists mainly of the amygdala and the hippocampus. The limbic system records danger and fear, giving us the basis for deciding whether to instantly fight or run in particular circumstances.

As our evolutionary development continued, the cortex and neocortex developed as the center for cognitive responses. The cortex is responsible for higher-order rational thought. It is the seat of problem-solving and decision making. The rational brain can help us navigate the path to living our intentions and avoiding emotional hijacking.

Why Hijacking Occurs

It's important to know that your limbic system works really fast. In a hijacking situation, your limbic system just takes over, and your rational brain is simply not consulted.

Perceived threats have created well-ingrained pathways for reactions. But the reality is that even though our physical survival is not usually threatened, our limbic system still sends signals of risk and danger. Why? Because it has created patterned responses that serve our needs. If screaming and yelling for a cookie at age two produced the desired result, we may still be using that method in production meetings to get something we want. Those pathways are still working as if nothing has changed. The neuropathways contribute as much, if not more, to our behavior than rational thought. ●

Emotions: What Are They?

For our discussion about emotional intelligence, we need to understand the three basic components of emotions: the cognitive component, the physiological component and the behavioral component.

The Cognitive Component

Consider Tom in the Information Technology department. Tom thinks nothing is more interesting, challenging and stimulating than writing computer programs. On the other hand, Karen, a landscape designer, believes nothing is more boring than sitting in front of a computer all day. Tom and Karen have completely different perceptions about the work they like. The thoughts, beliefs and expectations housed in our rational brain definitely contribute to our emotions.

The Physiological Component

Our limbic system goes to work with us every day. In every meeting and interaction, it's scanning the

environment for even the slightest perceived threat. The more in tune you are with the physical reactions triggered by your limbic system, the better you will understand your emotions. Physical reactions are a credible source of information regarding your feelings.

The Behavioral Component

The behavioral component of emotions is how emotion is expressed. A smile is a universal symbol of the emotion of happiness. In fact, nonverbal behaviors are the most common expression of emotions.

The cognitive and behavioral components of emotions are the two areas where we can focus our attention in emotional intelligence. If we can change what we think and how we behave in certain situations, we can positively influence our emotional intelligence. ●

Rewiring for Greater Performance and to Live Our Intentions

Emotional intelligence can best be viewed as a partnership between our rational and limbic brain. By blending the thoughts offered by our rational brain with the rich information from our limbic brain, we can direct our own actions and behaviors. Emotional intelligence allows us to harness our emotions so we can honor our intentions.

Introducing Your Self-Coach

It would be great if we all had someone who could follow us around during the day and help us know exactly what, when and how to interact with others, but in reality, we're generally left to our own devices. By creating a self-coach, we would have someone to consult, someone to whisper in our ear and someone to advise us about the sometimes treacherous path of human interaction. ●

The Five Areas of Emotional Intelligence

Many people think emotional intelligence is equivalent to social skills. That, however, is like thinking that a car is a steering wheel. You're simply missing a huge part of the picture.

Emotional intelligence, therefore, includes skills that drive our internal world as well as our response to the external world.

The model for emotional intelligence contains the following five components.

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1. **Self-Awareness and Self-Control.** The ability to fully understand oneself and use that information to manage emotions productively.
2. **Empathy.** The ability to understand the perspectives of others.
3. **Social Expertness.** The ability to build genuine relationships and to express caring, concern and conflict in healthy ways.
4. **Personal Influence.** The ability to positively lead and inspire others as well as oneself.
5. **Mastery of Purpose and Vision.** The ability to bring authenticity to one's life and live out one's intentions and values.

Three of the components of emotional intelligence relate to our internal world (self-awareness and control, empathy, and mastery of purpose and vision); the other two form our relations to the external world (social expertness and personal influence). All are interrelated, and one builds on the next.

To build emotional intelligence, the model requires that we work from the inside out. For example, you can't influence others until you have mastered self-awareness and self-control. ●

PART II: TRAINING YOUR SELF-COACH

The Doorway to Emotional Intelligence

The doorway to emotional intelligence opens with self-awareness. Self-awareness is our ability to understand ourselves and then to use that information to fully live our intentions. In your quest for greater emotional intelligence, you will find that self-awareness is a circular and cumulative process that is never fully achieved.

The Self-Coach: Your Self-Awareness Partner

So what exactly is the role of your self-coach. First, let's distinguish your self-coach from your conscience. Your self-coach isn't there to tell you right from wrong. The self-coach isn't there to impose guilt when you've done something wrong but rather to help you learn from your experiences. Your self-coach is there to help you monitor your progress; to be a clearing-house for lessons learned; to offer tips, suggestions and advice based on your experiences.

Seven Steps to Emotional Intelligence for the Self-Coach

The Seven Steps to Emotional Intelligence for the Self-Coach are 1. Observe. 2. Interpret. 3. Pause. 4. Direct. 5. Reflect. 6. Celebrate. 7. Repeat.

With continued practice and patience, you'll find your self-coach an invaluable partner in your daily experiences. ●

Step 1: Observe

Every great coach, regardless of the sport or discipline, observes. Coaches watch and analyze each movement of their players.

How can you strengthen the power of observation? For starters, your self-coach needs to get out more; in other words, distance himself or herself. Imagine him just watching, perhaps perched on a ledge and observing you. He can sense your mood, your body language, your breathing and your voice intonations. He can also observe these things in other people around you.

After you practice observing yourself in pleasant situations, you're ready to assume the challenge of observing yourself during conflict or high-stress situations. In conflict situations, at first, try to pay particular attention to your physical reactions. Your physical reactions may well be the first indicators of trouble.

As you cue into your physical reactions, you'll also want to observe other things about yourself. While your self-coach is in training, it might be helpful to ask a trusted colleague or friend to help you with this observation process. It's particularly difficult to see your own nonverbal behavior.

Scanning

Scanning is a technique widely taught in law enforcement to sharpen and broaden officers' perceptions in high-stress situations. Scanning allows a look at the whole picture rather than only one detail. This technique engages your rational brain to help you think and interpret signals from your limbic system. Both systems are giving you data; scanning ensures you are accessing both systems equally and can build a far more realistic picture of the whole situation.

Observing Mood and Emotion

Mood is the underlying effect you experience in a situation. It sets the framework for how you may assess a particular event. Emotion is the reaction to a particular stimulus. For instance, if you're in a good mood and you spill a cup of coffee, you may joke about being a klutz. Spilling a cup of coffee when you're in a bad mood may cause you to become angry and lash out.

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Moods and emotions fall within continuums. Depending on your mood, someone cutting in front of you on the freeway may cause you mild annoyance or rage. These different degrees are important to recognize. As you become more familiar with moods and emotions in yourself, you should become more able to key in to the moods and emotions of others.

Voices

The next step in self-awareness is to assess how others' moods and emotions affect you. One way to do this is to begin to observe your internal dialogue. You'll notice that certain voices appear over and over again. These voices have a powerful influence over our moods and actions.

Getting a handle on the voices that speak most often in your inner dialogue is an important grasp for your self-coach. As he becomes aware of your tendency toward a particular voice, your coach will be able to quickly recognize the voice and determine how it affects behavior.

Triggers

Another important concept for your self-coach is to understand your triggers. Triggers are those factors that influence emotional reactions. Those emotional reactions can be either positive emotional reactions or negative emotional reactions, depending on the trigger. Triggers include mood, moods and attitudes of others, personality, hot words/hot buttons, perceived criticism and situations, among others.

Observing Bias, Prejudice and Filters

It's important to stretch your observation skills to include bias and prejudice. Limbic reactions can be so subtle that your self-coach may need help to see your prejudices. One way to begin is to monitor your self-talk about various groups. Especially look for ways that you are filtering information with your rational brain. Your self-coach can pose questions like, "How might I be excluding others? How might I be sending subtle messages of bias or prejudice?" ●

Step 2: Interpret

Step 1 focused on training the self-coach to be an astute observer. What do we do with all the data garnered through observation? Here again, you need to ask your rational brain for some assistance.

Modus Operandi

One of the most useful concepts for interpreting information is modus operandi (MO), or method of operation. Each person has unique patterns of behavior

that repeat as circumstances repeat. Ask yourself, "How do I typically behave when I experience a particular emotion?" Or "What is the impact of a particular emotion on my behavior?"

Combining MOs with Triggers

The next task in interpreting data is to combine what you know about your MOs with knowledge about your triggers. When your self-coach can quickly determine what triggers cause what emotional reactions, you will be on your way to greater emotional intelligence. You're interpreting not only what triggers hijack you but also how you react when you're hijacked.

Impact on Others

As you observe other people, you'll find that your behavior affects them in different ways. Distinguishing the impact you have on others will help you know how to adjust your behavior. Just understanding that you have an impact on others is a huge accomplishment of self-awareness.

Beware the Pitfalls of Interpretation

If you've done a good job at observation, you should be able to keep bias and judgments at bay as you interpret and analyze your findings. Right? Wrong.

Each of us has an enormous capacity to interpret incorrectly based on some common erroneous beliefs. The problem is compounded because our rational brain has been fooled to think that these beliefs are actually facts.

Decision Time

At this point, your self-coach has assimilated important information for you. He understands your MO and your triggers. He has checked all of this data against potential confirmation bias and suggestion. Now it's decision time. In the moment, your self-coach will have to make the call. If you continue on your present path at this particular meeting or encounter, are you at risk for being hijacked? If so, the red flag should be waving. ●

Step 3: Pause

There are moments when your self-coach decides that if you continue on your present path, you are at risk of being hijacked and not living your intentions. At such times, your self-coach needs a planned and practiced technique for pausing.

First, breathe. Close your mouth and count to eight while breathing in slowly through your nose.

Second, there should be some physical movement you can immediately revert to as you breathe. Examples

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include taking a long sip of coffee, removing your eye-glasses or shifting your body weight.

Third, you should have a mantra to recite while breathing and performing the physical movement. That mantra should be uniquely yours, something that helps you gain perspective.

These actions should be practiced until you can instantly revert to this pattern. Thoughtful pause isn't about extinguishing the emotion you're experiencing but about allowing for another form of expression of that emotion — one that will ultimately serve you better. ●

Step 4: Direct

Step 4 is about behaving in a way that will increase your likelihood of living your intentions. It's about careful selection of words and behaviors so they are congruent with your values.

For your self-coach to help you choose techniques that will keep you from being hijacked, you need to understand a common basic formula. In an unwanted emotional response, A (activating event) + B (belief about the event fueled by triggers) = C (upsetting emotional response and regrettable action).

This is the typical formula that drives emotional hijacking. If, however, you could insert one more step, you could drastically change the situation. This step is redirecting thoughts and beliefs. Let's change the formula to A (activating event) + B (belief about the event fueled by triggers) + C (redirect thoughts and beliefs) = D (new emotional response and action).

Your self-coach can use a variety of techniques to help you redirect irrational beliefs. These include challenging those beliefs with rational thought, adding humor to your thought processes and amplifying the voices that serve your intentions. As you practice these, you'll notice new assumptions forming; for example, "Others want to see me succeed, not fail" and "I have the power to change many things." ●

Step 5: Reflect

Reflection is a wonderful way to get you closer to understanding your emotional reactions in a given moment, which is the true mastery of emotional intelligence.

Reflection is not about regret. It's not about rationalizing or justifying, and it isn't about reflecting solely on our feelings. It should take into consideration not only your intentions and how you felt about your reactions but, more importantly, how others viewed your actions.

Reflection Methods

Your method of reflection will depend on many things, such as your personality and your comfort level with some of these techniques. Experiment with a variety of things, including journaling, mentoring, coaching, volunteering and reading.

Whatever your methods, reflection is a critical component of emotional intelligence. If you keep in mind that its purpose is to draw you closer to living your intentions, the insights will pour into your consciousness. ●

Step 6: Celebrate

Some of the most significant breakthroughs in our thoughts or behaviors probably defined and changed us as much as, if not more, than a graduation or anniversary. In Step 6, we develop an appreciation for those moments and celebrate them.

How should you celebrate? However you like. The only guidelines are that you are clear on what specifically you have accomplished and to celebrate as soon as possible. This will lead to greater reinforcement. Remember, there's a purpose to celebration, and that is to rewire your limbic brain.

Another important thought, so that reinforcement takes hold, is to be sure that you are reinforcing improvements or advancements more frequently than you are chiding yourself for disappointing performance. If you are not, you are likely killing potential progress toward your emotional intelligence because your limbic system is registering negatives and failure. Yes, you are going to make mistakes, but if you pay attention, you're also making progress. ●

Step 7: Repeat

Step 7 is about helping you recognize that the quest for emotional intelligence is a way of life, not a destination. Repeating is about renewing the sense of awe that life has to bring every day.

Most people recognize that new life experiences have added to their insights. As new parents hold their infants, they seem to believe that this birth marks the first time anyone has ever done anything so miraculous. It's that sense of wonder and awe in this new experience that changes the essence of who we are. But subtle experiences also change us. The best way to think of those subtle experiences is that they can accumulate and sneak up as wisdom. All of them can change you if you repeat them and allow them to accumulate into wisdom. But you have to be ready.

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Repeat sets the stage for you to meet each encounter in life with a new mindset. Knowing how requires practice and discipline until it becomes automatic. Becoming emotionally intelligent is about practicing Steps 1-7 repeatedly. ●

PART III: FIVE AREAS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AT WORK

Self Awareness and Self-Control at Work

Understanding your emotions is central to more effectively relating to people and creating a positive emotional climate at work. Conversely, if you have low self-awareness, people may see you as emotionally out of touch or insensitive. As you may be unaware of your emotions and/or your strengths and weaknesses, you may be unable to develop to your fullest potential.

Self-awareness allows us to understand our limitations, and self-control allows us to address them. Self-control is about selecting the words, appropriate time and demeanor that give you the results you seek.

Suggestions for Improving EQ at Work in the Area of Self-Awareness and Self-Control

- Solicit feedback from your manager, employees and peers about your strengths and weaknesses.
- Pay attention to how you feel during a conflict situation. What effect are your feelings having on your actions, word, tone of voice and body language?
- Ask yourself, "If I express my emotion here without thoughtful purpose, what is the risk? What is the benefit?"
- Mentally rehearse staying calm in crisis.
- Given your personality, think about ways you could authentically express positive emotions. ●

Empathy at Work

Empathy is an essential component of success, regardless of your job or level within the organization. Empathy is understanding the perspective of others, and listening is a tool of empathy. Empathy occurs when listening turns to full understanding of why people said what they said. This listening leads to understanding, not only from an intellectual level but also from an emotional level.

Our life experiences can be crucial in supplying us data that will help us become more empathetic. Our goal is to

use those life experiences and the people we encounter as a laboratory where we consciously choose to consider the perspectives of others.

Suggestions for Improving EQ at Work in the Area of Empathy

- When someone is talking to you, ask yourself what emotion is underlying his or her words.
- When someone says something you disagree with, active-listen to his or her statement in a non-judgmental way. Notice the reaction this precipitates.
- When someone says something you agree with, stay silent about your views. Draw the other person out, and ask them to tell you more.
- Think about the times you have jumped to a wrong conclusion. What can you learn from these experiences? ●

Social Expertness at Work

Once you have a firm understanding of yourself (self-awareness), can control your emotional reactions for the desired outcomes (self-control) and are empathetic to others' viewpoints (empathy), you are perfectly positioned to create social bonds, collaborate with others and resolve conflicts effectively. These skills are the components of social expertness.

Suggestions for Improving EQ at Work in the Area of Social Bonds, Collaboration and Conflict Resolution

- Connect regularly with your contacts.
- Always smile and say hello in passing.
- Remember people's names.
- Find ways to collaborate: It strengthens your social bonds and allows you both to give and take.
- Always respect a different view and be willing to change yours when a case is made for the good of the organization.
- When in conflict with someone, encourage them to state their views. Do not dominate the discussion. If anything, do more listening than speaking. ●

Personal Influence at Work

Personal influence is the essence of leadership. Inspiring others through example, words and deeds requires a firm foundation in all the areas of emotional intelligence already discussed.

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Persons with strong personal influence are optimistic. Their optimism even affects their health. They live longer than pessimists. A person with strong personal influence exhibits motivation for one's visions, missions, core values and beliefs. Therefore, influence is directed in two directions: internal to self and external to others.

Suggestions for Improving EQ at Work in the Area of Influencing Self and Others

- Surround yourself with optimistic people. Allow yourself to feel inspired by them.
- Work to your strengths. Gain a good understanding of what you do well. Use that information to advance your ideas, stay motivated and persist. Your strengths will deliver your desired outcomes if you persist long enough.
- Watch your reaction to failure. Are you learning from your mistakes?
- Think about your participation in a truly satisfying and accomplished team. What elements were present to cause this reaction? ●

Mastery of Purpose and Vision at Work

Each of us has a purpose to which we are uniquely called. Your purpose is your reason for being here. Purpose is not about your job or the roles you have in life; it's larger than that.

Mastery of purpose crystallizes our intentions. We can continually review our intentions by touching this base. Remember playing tag as a child? You knew you would always be safe at home base. Home base is our purpose. We know that when we come from this place, everything is aligned. We feel comfort. We live authentically.

Purpose also requires that you use your natural gifts and talents.

Suggestions for Improving EQ at Work in the Area of Mastery of Purpose and Vision

- Think about times when you are truly your best and happiest. What defines these times?
- Think about times when you feel compromised. What defines these times?
- Take an inventory of the things in life that you feel passionate about. How many do you do daily?
- Assess and challenge your values. What do you truly believe in? What beliefs do you hold because others around you expect you to believe in them?

- What actions drain you?
- Think about a time when you did not act on something you believed in. How did you feel?
- Think about a time when you took an action on something you believed in. How did you feel?

Purpose is the foundation of emotional intelligence. When we understand our purpose, our emotional response is much easier to craft. Clarity of intention produces a picture of appropriate emotional response. This works for our lives as a whole and in daily situations.

Discovering purpose is hard work. Skills, knowledge, gifts, values, resources, likes and dislikes all offer clues to our purpose. True discovery, however, requires deep reflection and re-evaluation of all that we are. It also requires sacrifice. But the payoff is profound. ●

Letter to Readers

Quality of life is essential. Defining it, however, depends on the individual pursuing it. Some would consider it to be good health. Others may desire ample leisure. Still others would define it as possessions and material wealth.

Emotional wealth may be the most important asset of all, because in times of material poverty or poor health, our emotional wealth will sustain us. The dividends that we reap from investing in our relationships and the comfort we find in those relationships can often make all else bearable.

As you continue to write the story of your life, go deep within yourself. The amount of emotional wealth you can accumulate is unlimited. Perhaps, at times, you just need to be reminded of your potential.

Carefully consider your words and actions. Honor your relationships with others. Honor the whisper in your own soul regarding your purpose, and expect it to grow into a roar. Honor yourself. Take off and soar. ●

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *The EQ Difference*, you'll also like:

1. ***Working with Emotional Intelligence*** by Daniel Goleman. Goleman identifies the skills of emotional intelligence and shows how they can be fostered.
2. ***Emotional Intelligence for Project Managers*** by Anthony Mersino. Become a better manager by learning these finely tuned interpersonal skills and emotional cues to get the job done right and on time.
3. ***The Reality-Based Rules of the Workplace*** by Cy Wakeman. Learn to calculate your true value to the organization by understanding your current and future potential against your "emotional expense."