

2006

The effects of emotional intelligence in everyday life : what counselors can do to reinforce E.I. in couples counselings

Bridget M. Bencke
University of Northern Iowa

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Copyright ©2006 Bridget M. Bencke

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp>



Part of the [Counseling Commons](#), [Counseling Psychology Commons](#), and the [Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bencke, Bridget M., "The effects of emotional intelligence in everyday life : what counselors can do to reinforce E.I. in couples counselings" (2006). *Graduate Research Papers*. 343.
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp/343>

This Open Access Graduate Research Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Papers by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.

The effects of emotional intelligence in everyday life : what counselors can do to reinforce E.I. in couples counselings

Abstract

This paper will explore the aspects that make up emotional intelligence, compare IQ to EQ, and explain how emotional intelligence plays a role in the schools and in the workplace. This paper will identify how counselors can guide and support couples to recognize their feelings and develop healthy relationships with their spouses. Although techniques involving emotional intelligence skills are important for clients in individual sessions, there has been further research done with couples regarding therapy work and EI (Goleman, 1995). Therefore, this paper will focus on "emotional intelligence in couples" counselors, but will touch on EI in the schools and workplace as well. Counselors must be aware of how EI components act as a helping concept when building relationships with others and managing oneself.

THE EFFECTS OF EMOITONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EVERYDAY LIFE:
WHAT COUNSELORS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS CAN DO TO
REINFOROCE EI

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling

And Postsecondary Education

University of Northern Iowa

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Art in Mental Health Counseling

By

Bridget M. Bencke

May 2006

This paper will explore the aspects that make up emotional intelligence, compare IQ to EQ, and explain for emotional intelligence plays a role in the schools and in the workplace. This paper will identify how counselors can guide and support couples to recognize their feelings and develop healthy relationships with their spouses. Although techniques involving emotional intelligence skills are important for clients in individual sessions, there had been further research done with couples regarding therapy work and EI (Goleman, 1995). Therefore, this paper will focus on emotional intelligence in couple's counselors, but will touch on EI in the schools and workplace as well. Counselors must be aware of how EI components act as a helping concept when building relationships with others and managing oneself.

The Effects of Emotion Intelligence in Everyday Life: What Counseling and other Professionals Can Do to Reinforce EI

Over the years, people have used a rather narrow view of intelligence, known as intelligence quotient (IQ) which is defined as “the ratio of tested mental age to chronological age, usually expressed as a quotient multiplied by 100” (Rovenger, 2000, p. 122). Some people say and believe that IQ is genetic and can not be changed, even if influenced by life experience (Fineman, 2004). In other words, those who have a higher IQ will always be more intelligent and successful in life than those with a lower IQ score. But what these individuals are forgetting is the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI), which has become greatly popular within the last couple decades. It has been argued by many researchers (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On & Parker, 2000) emotions play a great role in life, such as decision making, self-awareness, and motivation. In addition, people with a high EI are more successful in many facets of life, such as relationships with spouses and children and relationship between managers and employees (Goleman, 1995; Maree & Eiselen, 2004).

Emotional Intelligence is defined by Goleman, (1995) as the ability to have insight into our own feelings as well as those of others. Emotional intelligence involves to controlling our emotions to create successful relationships.

Not everyone has the necessary components of EI. However, EI is not fixed and therefore, can be taught to children and adults to utilize throughout their life time (Goleman, 1995). Teachers, parents and mental health workers can assist in training and working with the public to reinforce the skills that make up emotional intelligence which may allow them to have a more thriving life.

The sole purpose of this paper is to identify Emotional Intelligence, why it is important, and what counselors or other mental health workers can do to reinforce concepts of EI. Therefore, this paper will explore the aspects that make up emotional intelligence, compare IQ to EQ, and discuss how emotions work hand and hand. In addition, this paper will explain how emotional intelligence plays a part in the schools and in the work place. This paper will identify how counselors can guide and support couples to recognize their feelings and develop healthy relationships with their spouses. Although researchers find that emotional intelligence skills are important for clients during individual sessions, there has been further research done with couples compared to individuals regarding therapy work and emotional intelligence. (Goleman, 1995; Bocchino, 1999). Therefore, the majority of this paper will focus on emotional intelligence in couple's counseling, but will touch on emotional intelligence in the schools and workplace as well.

Background of Emotional Intelligence

Research has found an individual who has a successful relationship, usually possesses empathy, effective communication skills and self awareness. Although these characteristics have been addressed by counselors over time, EI is a fairly new idea which now is making waves through marriage counseling and even training in business organizations (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999). Surprisingly, Emotional Intelligence has been around for years, dating back to the late 1900's within psychology. Over the years, the term has changed slightly by adding to or changing dimensions of the definition. Many early researchers looked at intelligence as a cognitive figure, which includes memory and problem solving. Other researchers realized that non-cognitive elements were just as important, such as affective, personal and social factors. (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005).

Robert Thorndike identified "social intelligence" in the 1930's. In addition, David Weschsler recognized non-cognitive factors as important, such as adaptation and achievement (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005). The idea of Emotional Intelligence re-emerged again in 1983 with the work of Howard Gardner. Gardner's work implied that there is more than one kind of intelligence, which is popularly known as the Theory of Multiple Intelligence. Gardner opened a new view on intelligence, when he proposed that the "interpersonal and intrapersonal"

are just as significant as cognitive elements of intelligence (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005; as cited in Goleman, 1995).

There are many others who participated in laying the foundation of the concept of emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence concept was coined by Dr. Reuven Bar-On in 1985. Bar-On reported EI focuses on the emotional, personal, social, and survival dimensions of intelligence, vitally important in daily functioning (Cherniss, 2000; Maree and Eiselen, 2004). Derived from 17 years of research, Dr. Reuven Bar-On has experimented on several thousands of people worldwide; the Bar-On-EQ-I is the “first scientifically developed and validated measure of EI” (Maree & Eiselen, 2004, p. 36).

Mayer and Salovey (as cited in Hamachek, 2000; Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005) launched the concept of EI in the early 1990’s as a social intelligence. They described it as the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s emotions, to distinguish how emotions are able to influence ourselves, and to use this insight to learn how to handle our thoughts and behavior. Mayer and Salovey (as cited in Cheriness, 2000; Hamachek, 2000) also implemented a model featuring three components of emotional intelligence; Emotional Perception, Emotional Regulation, and Emotional Knowledge.

Many researchers and readers interested in emotional intelligence are familiar with Daniel Goleman, author of “*Emotional Intelligence, Why it can matter more than IQ.*” Goleman’s book discusses the emotional brain, the nature

of emotional intelligence, windows of opportunity, and emotional literacy.

According to Goldman emotional intelligence is “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship” (Goleman, 1995, p. 43-44).

Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness and impulse control, passion and motivation, persistence, empathy and social deftness. Goleman (1995) believes people must possess these qualities to form effective relationships and thrive in the workplace.

In summary to all researches and theories, EI represents the “street smarts” within a person, meaning one can deal with his or her emotional turmoil successfully, interact on an emotional level with others, and function on an everyday basis within the environment. When an individual practices “stress smarts”, he or she is recognized as a well rounded and educated person. One will be recognized as a well- rounded individual and a positive influence as he or she recognizes and practices these elements known as “street smarts” (Obiakor, 2001). Without emotional intelligence people would lack the abilities to have meaningful relationships and manage one’s emotions in healthy ways.

Aspects of Emotional Intelligence

To understand emotional intelligence, one must first recognize the components of EI. According to Goleman (1995), there are five characteristics that make up the concept of emotional intelligence. The five areas include;

knowing one's emotions (self-awareness), being able to manage emotions, being able to motivate oneself, recognizing emotions, and having relationships. A brief explanation and discussion of each of these follows.

Knowing one's emotions:

According to Goleman (1995), knowing one's emotions is parallel to self-awareness. This concept means being aware of our moods and being able to identify our thoughts about the moods we are experiencing. The skill to acknowledge feelings from one moment to the next is key to psychological insight as well as self-understanding. Individuals who have better self-confidence and understanding about their feelings are better guides of their day to day interaction in life. People who are aware of their feelings can make personal decisions about how they truly feel about a particular issue or person, such as whom to marry, what job to take, and whom to be friends with. This concept highlights the idea of emotional self-awareness and how it is the next fundamental element of emotional intelligence (Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Goleman, 1995).

Managing emotions:

When people can manage their emotions in a healthy way, they are appropriately able to build on self-awareness (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). These individuals have the ability to handle anxiety, a bad day, and irritability. Others, who do not possess emotion management have a difficult time and are constantly fighting the feelings of distress. People who get depressed easily tend to create

very strong networks of association between the negative thoughts taking over their day. Therefore, it is more difficult for these individuals who are evoked with bad moods to suppress the negative thoughts and feelings. In general, those who can manage emotions recover far quicker in life setbacks and stressors (Goleman, 1995).

This component is important for therapists to consider when working with couples in a counseling setting. For example, if a husband has a bad day at work, it may be likely for him to come home to his wife and transfer his stress or frustration on her, such as yelling as if it was her fault, also known as displacement. Therapists can assist couples to create ways to cope with stress or frustration appropriately with their spouse in order to avoid arguments and hurt feelings.

Motivating oneself:

According to Goleman (1995), individuals who are capable of motivating or encouraging themselves are likely to have high emotional intelligence. People who possess emotional self-control, meaning one can delay gratification and overwhelming impulsiveness are known to achieve outstanding performance of all kinds. In addition, one who is able to get into the “flow” state, may be able to accomplish task more successfully. Flow is a state of self-forgetfulness, the opposite of rumination and worry (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On & Parker, 2000). People who use the “flow” skill typically are more productive and effective

when taking on stressors of everyday life compared to those who are unable to master the art of “flow” (Goleman, 1995).

Recognizing emotions in others:

Goleman’s concept known as the ability to recognize emotions in others is commonly known as empathy. The skill of recognizing others’ emotions plays a role in emotional self-awareness. Empathy is the primary “people skill” (Bocchino, 1999). People who tend to notice the subtle nonverbal signals and gesture of individuals are more familiar with the wants and needs of others on an emotional level. These kinds of people do well in careers such as teaching, sales, counseling, and management positions. Knowing the skill to read other’s nonverbal signals, such as gesture, facial expression, and voice tone is the key in Goleman’s concept (Goleman, 1995).

This particular component is especially important for therapists to discuss and teach couples. Therapists can help couples identify nonverbal channels their partners use and teach them how to validate their partner’s feelings or thoughts by using empathic responses. Once couples can recognize emotions in their partner’s, they are more likely to have a healthy communication and successful marriage.

Handling relationships:

According to Goleman (1995) managing emotions in others is in large part the skill of relationships. Specific skills include social competence and

incompetence. Popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness are the qualities people gain when these skills are implemented. Individuals who possess these kinds of skills not only relate to others, but can work with others easily and naturally in a variety of settings. This component is especially important because emotions can be contagious, or in other words, "one can catch moods from someone else" (Goldman, 1995, p.44). Someone who is able to elude and not allow another person's negative attitude to impact one's own attitude has the social art of managing emotions and therefore will have more success in relationships (Goleman, 1995).

Not everyone has all these characteristics or is completely empty of these EI characteristics. It is not an all or none concept. Some people may be higher in some aspects than others, but the more characteristics individuals possess, the better one's emotional intelligence (Bocchino, 1999).

Comparing IQ and EI

While IQ and EQ work hand and hand, an individual with a higher EQ is more likely to succeed in a variety of facets of life. These facets include, relationships with others, security with the self, and leadership in the workplace (Goleman, 1995). Unfortunately, individuals with a higher EQ and less than above average IQ are not granted the opportunities to attend the better schools, and their resumes may be skipped over when hiring for a job. However, once an individual with the higher EQ is in a work environment, he or she will soar in

leadership positions and gain promotions, due to his or her characteristics within the emotional intelligence components (Goleman, 1995).

Goleman (1995) shares a story about Jason H, a sophomore and straight-A student in a Florida high school. Jason wanted to get into medical school at Harvard University, but Mr. Pologruto, his physics teacher gave him a B on a quiz. Jason believed the grade would jeopardize his GPA and chance to go to Harvard; therefore, Jason took a butcher knife to school and stabbed his teacher. Mr. Pologruto survived the stab and took Jason to court. In court, Jason was found innocent, temporarily insane during the incident. Jason stated that he was planning on committing suicide because of the B grade and was going to tell Mr. Pologruto about the grade, but after making it to the classroom was so angered that he stabbed the teacher. Pologruto told a different story, stating, "I think he tried to completely do me in with the knife" (Goleman, 1995 pp 33).

Jason transferred to a private school, where he graduated in the top of his class with a grade point average of 4.614 due to advanced courses. Even as Jason graduated with high honors, his old physics teacher, Mr. Pologruto, complained that Jason had never apologized or even taken responsibility for the attack.

Many people wonder how someone so intelligent could do something so irrational, such as Jason in this story. Goleman (1995) explains that academic intelligence has little to do with emotional life. So, although Jason had a high IQ, he lacked emotional intelligence.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is defined as “the ratio of tested mental age to chronological age, usually expressed as a quotient multiplied by 100” (Rovenger, 2000, p. 31). Individuals with a high IQ are labeled as “geniuses” or “brilliant” (Roitman, 1999). People with a higher IQs are not necessarily capable of making “smart” decisions. In many research experiments and tests, evidence has suggested that emotional intelligence is significantly and highly correlated with job performance and successful marriages, while cognitive intelligence has shown a very low and insignificant correlation with performance in the workplace and committed relationships (Roitman, 1999).

Emotional intelligence is Everyday Life

It has been shown by research regarding both children and adults that with the help of counseling or training that emotional intelligence can be the key in interacting successfully in relationships. Emotional intelligence is demonstrated at school, such as when children use it to make friends and conquer bullying. In addition, it is seen in families, when children and adults show respect and empathy towards each other. Emotional intelligence is also noticed in career and job environments, when individuals utilize the skills to work cooperatively and effectively with others. These people who possess or learn emotional intelligence are recognized as well-balanced and prosperous individuals in many areas of life due to self-awareness, motivation, knowing one’s self and recognizing other’s

emotions (Bruce, Jin, Lutterman, Nganga, Christensen, & Cardona, 2004; Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2003).

This section will focus on the impact emotional intelligence plays in the schools and in the work place. In addition, this section will focus on how and what counselors can do to reinforce emotional intelligence when working with clients in sessions or through training or coaching. Relationships and social settings are major areas that emotional intelligence studies have been focused on due to the fact they involve relations with others. This section will discuss how EI applies to a variety arrays of life.

EI in the schools

Emotional intelligence and emotional literacy has grown rapidly in the schools due to major issues children are dealing with, such as bullying and depression. Many programs and trainings, such as conflict resolution and anger management have been adopted as important aspects of the school curriculum to assist children to deal with their emotions in a healthy way (Rovenger, 2000).

It is significant for teachers to understand how literature plays a major role in enhancing children's emotional intelligence. Through stories, children learn to be aware of themselves, others, and the world in which they live. Children who have the language ability to verbalize feelings, such as fear, distress and anger are more capable of solving their problems and less likely to act out compared to others who do not have the language skills to express feelings. Story books are a

successful way to show children they are not alone. Children can read about others who have similar issues, such as fear of the dark, embarrassment, or bullying, therefore can make connections to characters in the story and grow to accept their challenges and themselves (Rovenger, 2000).

In addition to simple story books, other interventions are being implemented in schools. Greenberg (as cited in Goleman, 1995) has developed an intervention that helps children learn to avoid crime and violence. Greenberg's development is known as PATHS, which stands for Parents and Teachers helping Students. Although the program is targeted towards children subject to violence and aggression, the lessons are used in the schools for all students, in order to avoid stigmatizing one particular group (Goleman, 1995; Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005). Such lessons include impulse control and recognizing feelings. Children who can not "control themselves" and "can't pay attention," typically fall behind in their learning and grade levels. PATHS also teach lessons on basic feelings; a continuum of sad and happiness to jealousy and pride. Another lesson within PATHS is anger management, which focuses on coping with angered words and actions, but also addresses that anger is okay when dealing with it appropriately. Overall, PATHS, allows children the skills to develop friendships that will continue to flourish as they mature into the adult world of the workplace and relationships (Goleman, 1995; Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005).

EI in the Workplace

It was been found that emotional intelligence (EQ) is just as important, if not more important than IQ for work success. There was been many studies that have compared emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence. The first place that completed the study was at a leading Asian bank. Findings show that EQ is more significant in predicting achievement and success in the workplace compared to IQ (McCauley, 2004). However, it was not long ago that many people in the workforce felt that when they let emotions, such as empathy or compassion for others into their jobs, it would interfere with the goals and success. Today, the business world is very different. Emotional intelligence is now looked at as a priority in the workplace (Goleman, 1995).

Businesses have found that teamwork, communicating, listening and social intelligence helps each worker feel more satisfied with one's job and where one works (McCauley, 2004). Emotional intelligence in the workplace operates in the same way that EI is used in a marriage. Harsh criticism and sarcasm are looked at as personal attacks. The negative tone makes the other person feel helpless and angry. When people are feeling angry and helpless they also become less motivated to work, such as on the job or in a marriage (Goleman, 1995).

Lack of motivation can lead to feeling like a failure, in which people give up or stop trying. Psychoanalyst, Harry Levinson (as cited in Goleman, 1995) suggests the following steps when confronting an employee who is behaving

poorly or needs to make changes. First, be specific, second, offer a solution, next, be present, and finally, be sensitive. Levinson points out, “is just as important for praise as for criticism. I won’t say that vague praise has no effect at all, but it doesn’t have much, and you can’t learn from it” (Goleman, 1995, p. 154).

Levinson advises individuals to look at criticism as an opportunity to solve conflicts or problems as a team. In addition, Levinson would urge married couples to manage their conflicts as well as a team, using criticism as a way to build on a healthy relationship compared to a personal attack (Goleman, 1995).

Couples and Family Therapy

“Marital therapy offers a broad perspective, focusing on interlocking problems and neurotic interactions between spouses. Marital therapists today address the affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of the husband-wife relationship within the context of marital and family systems” (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2004, p 103). Many couples seek family or marital therapy due to financial issues, divorce issues, such as trust or cheating, problems taking care of the house or child, and even sexual concerns. These couples want the therapist to fix their problems or give advice, but most couples do not think that a lack of emotional intelligence may be a factor of a failing marriage (Fitness, 2005; Goleman, 1995).

Emotional intelligence is extremely important to guide a successful marriage (Systemic Solutions, <http://www.soulwork.net/couples.htm>). Goleman

(1995) describes a handful of emotional competence, which include being able to calm down, empathize, and listen. Listening skills make it more likely a couple will settle their disagreements effectively compare to the couples who avoid empathy and listening. "Knowing these skills make possible healthy disagreements, the good fights that allow a marriage to flourish and which overcome the negativities that, if left to grow, can destroy a marriage" (Goleman, 1995 p 143). These qualities such as listening and empathy fit perfectly in Goleman's aspects of emotional intelligence and are two techniques in which family therapists can use when working with couples (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2004).

According to Nash (as cited in Ciarrochi, Forgas, & Mayer, 2001) a successful and prosperous marriage is actually simple: couples should know when and how to admit and apologize for being in the wrong. In addition, forgive and forget when their partner is at fault and recognize and learn the right moment to say "I'm sorry" and understanding why. Individuals who are able to accept an apology, no matter how difficult, possess a high form of EI. One must be able to identify his or her partner's needs and feelings, be able to control impulse, and know how to be empathic. "The interesting point about these skills is how similar they are to the proposed ingredients of so-called emotional intelligence" (Ciarrochi, Forgas, & Mayer, 2001, p. 98).

Marital interaction research tends to involve a fairly standard set of procedures. Typically, couples come into a laboratory and discuss both low and high conflict marital issues in front of video cameras. Each spouse may be hooked up to monitoring equipment so that various physiological measures can be monitored, such as heart rate, muscular activity, and skin conductance (sweating), can be taken during the interaction. Later, couples return to the laboratory and separately observe their video-recorded interactions. While watching, spouses indicate what they were feeling and thinking at various segments during the discussions; they may also try to identify what their partners were feeling and thinking. Finally, the transcript of a couple's conversations and videotapes of their nonverbal behaviors (e. g., facial expressions, tone of voice, body movements) may be coded by trained observers for their emotional content. Overall, the results of these kinds of studies have been extremely consistent (Goleman, 1995).

Further research results demonstrated marriage is, certainly, an emotion-rich context, and high-conflict marital discussions are emotionally arousing, as evidenced by physiological measures such as heart rate, skin conductance, and muscular activity. Gottman (as cited in Goleman, 1995) demonstrates individuals do vary in their abilities to accurately perceive and identify each others' emotions, with some spouses apparently unaware of their partners' emotion signals, or prone to misidentify even the most obvious of them, such as interpreting sadness as

hostility. Furthermore, individuals appear to vary considerably in their abilities to clearly express emotions, with some spouses habitually sending ambiguous emotion signals to their partners, such as simultaneously smiling and frowning. Importantly, researchers have found reliable associations between these variations in people's abilities to accurately express and or recognize emotional and marital happiness (Goleman, 1995).

When therapists work with couples, it may be important for them to start by educating the couples on the kinds of emotions. As research shows, there are some people who lack the ability to identify others' emotions or explain their own (Fitness, 2005). Within the session, couples can work with their spouse along with their therapist to practice identifying emotions within themselves and their partner. Once couples understand there is more emotions and feelings besides sad and mad, they will be able to more accurately recognize their own and others feelings (Goleman, 1995)

In addition, the therapist can assist couples in practicing effective communication skills, such as verbal and nonverbal components. Research shows many couples have a difficult time communicating with their partners. Therapists are able to assist couples with these skills by encouraging I-statements, such as "I felt hurt and sad when you were late for our dinner plans. Next time you are going to be late, I would appreciate if you called me." Instead of "you jerk, you are always late so you must not care about me". (Carstensen, Gottman,

& Levenson, 1995). Therapists can also help couples by pointing out nonverbals to each other during the session, such as “I noticed when he said that, he frowned and he looked at the floor, what do you think he is feeling now?” Once couples understand the concepts of communication, not only can they practice these skills with the encouragement of their therapist in sessions, they can practice and make habit of it at home (Tucker-Ladd, 2000).

Other skills therapists can work on with couples to enhance emotional intelligence is the concept of listening. According to Goleman (1995) listening is the skill that keeps couples together. Some couples talk over each other and do not really know or care what the other person is thinking or saying because they are focused only on themselves. When some people hear the yelling or talking of their partner, they may see it as an attack rather than anything else (Goleman 1995).

Therapists or counselors can assist couples in effective listening by encouraging finding meaning and reflections. After one person talks, the other will summarize and reflect feelings of his or her spouse’s words and verse versa. When couples are able to summarize and reflect their partner’s feelings and words, they will be able to communicate more effectively (Fitness, 2005; Tucker-Ladd, 2000). Listening, of course, is empathy, which is actually hearing the feelings behind what is being said (Goleman, 1995). Empathy is a key ingredient to being an emotional intelligent person in any relationship; therefore, if married

couples can grasp how to use this aspect, they will be able to overcome obstacles in their marriage (Ciarrochi, Forgas & Mayer, 2001; Goleman, 1995).

The skills for effective communication, such as I-language, recognizing verbal and nonverbal cues, and listening are the basic components in which family therapists assist their clients in order to address emotional intelligence and help restore a successful marriage (Fitness, 2005).

According to Hamachek (2000), there are some interventions or assignments therapists can give to or practice with their clients to reassure emotional intelligence is applied during session and at home. One thing therapists can do with their couples in sessions is to role play situations that have happened between the couple. It's important for the couple to share the situations, thoughts, and words with the therapist the way in which it happened at home. The therapist will allow the couple to apply the emotional intelligent concepts and have the couple react out the situation utilizing the components of basic listening skills and I-statements that represent emotional intelligence concepts. By having the clients act out the situation, the therapist can learn what was negative about the interaction and then the therapist and the couple can process more positive and productive ways to deal with conflict or arguments (Carruthers, 2005; and Fitness, 2005).

In addition, to the role playing, therapists can assign the couple to keep a journal of their thoughts and feelings about one's self and their relationship and

interaction with one's spouse. During sessions, the couple can share and process their journals with their counselor and eventually learn to process and share their journals at home with their spouse. With assistance from therapists and practice at home, couples can learn skills to become emotional intelligent, which will increase the quality and interaction of their marriage (Carruthers, 2005).

One important concept for therapists to keep in mind when working with a variety of couples on emotional intelligence is to not neglect culture issues (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). In one culture, communication and interactions with one's spouse is very different compared to other cultures. Therapists must also ask questions for clarifications in regard to learning about the couples' way of life. It is important for therapists not to place their own values and beliefs onto their clients, but instead work with the clients to understand and find meaning behind their relationship. If a therapist is uncomfortable working with a particular couple, that therapist should learn about why he or she may feel uncomfortable and find way to learn about whatever cultural issues make them feel uncomfortable. Otherwise, they may want to refer the couple to someone more appropriate to assist their needs.

Conclusion

The basic concept behind emotional intelligence is that success and contentment with life has little to do with IQ. Research as shown that only 20% of life's success related to IQ. However, emotional intelligence is a combination

of personal and social abilities that do relate to a triumph existence. These include “self-awareness and self-control, motivation and persistence, empathy and the ability to form mutually satisfying relationships”, such as in a marriage (Cheeriness, 2000).

In addition, emotional intelligence is a concept that can be learned and taught according to Hamachek (2000). Since EQ can be learned, individuals can benefit from counselors who are willing to address the components of emotional intelligence or can be modeled from others, such as teachers and parents to tackle daily challenges and develop effective relationships (Goleman, 1995).

Emotional Intelligence can be used in couples work to enhance the dynamics between the individuals. Couples can learn and practice the five aspects to assure healthy relationships. The five aspects include, “knowing one’s emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships” (Bocchino, 1999, p. 42).

Overall, Emotional intelligence helps people acknowledge their limits, reach their potentials, and connect with others to form healthy relationships. According to Barrett and Salovey (2002) mental health professionals and teachers are crucial spokespersons to share their knowledge and expertise revolving around EQ. These professionals understand that emotional intelligent skills will help their clients and students succeed in everyday life. It is the job of

not only teachers and counselors, but parents and employers to help individuals expand and develop their EQ potentials.

Reference

- Ashkanasy, N. & Dasborough, M. (2003). Emotional awareness and emotional intelligence in leadership teaching. *Journal of Education for Business, 79*, 18-22.
- Bar-On, R & Parker, J. (2000). *The handbook of emotional intelligence: Theory, development, assessment, and application at home, school, and in the workplace*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Barrett, L. F. & Salovey, P. (2002). *The wisdom in feeling: Psychological process in emotional intelligence*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Bocchino, R. (1999). *Emotional Literacy: To be a different kind of smart*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.
- Bruce, M. A, Jain, S., Lutterman, M., Nganga, R., Christensen, M., & Cardona, B. (2004). Enhance your emotional intelligence to build your virtue, vision, and vitality. *Rocky Mountain Association For Counselor Education and Supervision*. Breckenridge, Colorado.
- Carruthers, J. (2005). Emotional maturity and emotional intelligence. *Systemic Solutions*. Retrieved October 22, 2005, from http://www.soulwork.net/sw_articles_eng/emotional_intelligence.html .
- Carstensen, L., Gottman, J., & Levenson, R. (1995). Emotional behavior in long-term marriage. *Psychology and Aging, 10*, 140-149.

Cherniss, C. (2000). Emotional intelligence: What it is and why it matters. *The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations*.

Retrieved October 17, 2005, from

http://www.eiconsortium.org/research/what_is_emotional_intelligence.html.

Ciarrochi, J., Forgas, J. P., & Mayer, J. (2001). *Emotional intelligence in everyday life*. Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Fineman, Stephen (2004). Getting the measure of emotion-and the cautionary tale of emotional intelligence. *Human Relations*, 57, 719-740.

Fitness, J. (2005). Emotional intelligence and intimate relationships. Retrieved October 22, 2005, from EQ Institute Home Page web site: <http://eqi.org/fitness.htm>.

Goldenberg, I & Goldenberg, H. (2004). *Family therapy: An overview*. (6th ed.) United States: Thomson and Brooks/Cole.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it matters more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.

Hamachek, D. (2000). Dynamics of self-understanding and self-knowledge: Acquisition, advantages, and relation to emotional intelligence. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, 38, 230-242.

- Kaufhold, J. & Johnson, L. (2005). The analysis of the emotional intelligence skills and potential problem areas of elementary educators. *Education, 125*, 615-626.
- Maree, J. & Eiselen, R. (2004). The emotional intelligence profile of academics in a merger setting. *Education and Urban Society, 36*, 482-504.
- Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D., & Salovey, P. (1999). Emotional intelligence meets for traditional standards for intelligence. *Intelligence, 27*, 267-298.
- McCauley, Cindy. (2004). *Linking emotional intelligence and performance at work: Current research evidence with individuals and groups*. Greensboro, North Carolina.
- Obiakor, F. E. (2001). Developing emotional intelligence in learners with behavioral problems: Refocusing special education. *Behavioral Disorders, 26*, 321-331.
- Roitman, J. D. (1999, July 29). Emotional intelligence: The heart is smarter than the brain. Retrieved October 19, 2005, from <http://www.coloraado.edu/iec/summer99RW/eq.html>
- Rovenger, J. (2000). Fostering emotional intelligence. *School Library Journal, 46*, 40-43.
- Tucker-Ladd, C. E. (2000). Handling marital problems. Psychological self-help. USA: Mental Health Net.