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Emotional Intelligence

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Become more aware of your emotions
- Change your emotions for the better
- Develop techniques for dealing with difficult people
- Use empathy to improve your relationships at home and work

Steven J. Stein, PhD

Coauthor of *The EQ Edge:
Emotional Intelligence and Your Success*



***Emotional
Intelligence***
FOR
DUMMIES®

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Intelligence***
FOR
DUMMIES®

by Steven J. Stein, PhD

Foreword by Peter Salovey, PhD

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Dr. Stein has shared information on emotional intelligence with audiences throughout Canada, the United States, Mexico, Europe, Australia, and Asia. You can reach him for speaking engagements via e-mail at ceo@mhs.com.

Author's Acknowledgments

I must admit, I never thought I'd write a *For Dummies* book about emotional intelligence (EI). Although *Emotional Intelligence For Dummies* is my third book on the topic, it's my first that applies EI beyond the world of work to home, family, friends, and strangers.

When I got involved in this area of study almost 15 years ago, the most frequent question I was asked, especially by the media, was how long this fad would last. My answer was that as long as there was more than one person in the world, and she or he had to interact with someone else, emotional intelligence would be important.

I want to thank all the people at Wiley that encouraged me to write this book. First, my previous (and ongoing) editor at Wiley, Don Loney, for introducing me to the idea of a *For Dummies* book. Once I learned more about the nature of this series, I was convinced that this was a great way to spread the word about EI. Many thanks to my editor on this book, Robert Hickey, for patiently keeping me on track and gently educating me on how a *For Dummies* book needs to be written. And many thanks to my developmental editor, Colleen Totz Diamond, for all her suggestions and support, and making sure the words flowed. Thanks to my copy editor, Laura Miller, and project manager, Elizabeth McCurdy — and, of course, the publicity and marketing people who'll help make this book a success.

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Foreword

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When you boil it down, *emotional intelligence* is the idea that emotions are useful; they are important sources of information. Emotions help us solve problems, and they guide our social interactions. And, importantly, some people harness the wisdom of emotions better than others.

So, who are these emotionally intelligent people? They are individuals you know, and you might be one yourself. If you are the kind of person who is skilled at reading emotions in another person's face or interpreting your feelings, if you are a person who can put your feelings into words, if you are a person who manages your emotions effectively and helps others to do the same, and if you are a person who uses your emotions to think clearly about something or as clues to what might be going on in social situations, well then, you are likely someone who is emotionally intelligent. And, if you are not so sure whether you are this kind of person, perhaps this book will help you to learn these skills.

In 1990, when John D. Mayer and I published the first scientific article describing a theory of emotional intelligence in the journal *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, we weren't sure anyone would find the idea that people differ in their abilities to identify emotions, understand these feelings, manage emotions, and use them to guide thinking and action all that interesting or persuasive. We were wrong. Today, in the spring of 2009, while writing this foreword, I typed the phrase **emotional intelligence** into the Google search engine, and it yielded more than three million hits. Interest in emotional intelligence has exploded, and we know a few things now that we didn't know two decades ago.

First, we know that you can measure emotional intelligence, and the author of this book, Steven Stein, is chief executive officer of the company that publishes assessment tools in this area of psychology, including a test we developed called the MSCEIT. Second, we know that high scores on the MSCEIT and other measures of emotional intelligence are related to psychological health, effectiveness at work, and fulfilling social relationships. And third, we know that people can learn how to improve these skills in many different ways. For example, our colleague Marc Brackett has developed and tested school curricula that help children learn emotional intelligence (and do better in school).

These conclusions make Dr. Stein's book especially timely. We know a lot more about emotional intelligence than we did 20 years ago, and he has synthesized this knowledge and presented it here for you in a very engaging and easily grasped way.

However, reading about emotional intelligence isn't enough. It won't make you more emotionally intelligent overnight. I strongly encourage you to engage in the exercises described by Dr. Stein in this book and look for other ways to hone your emotional skills — perhaps by reading great literature, becoming more committed to the arts, or simply spending more time observing other people and reflecting on your own abilities, motives, and behaviors. Once you become aware of the skills involved in being a more emotionally intelligent individual, “people watching” will never quite be the same.

There are no guarantees, of course, but I suspect *Emotional Intelligence For Dummies* will motivate you to adopt a broader view of what it means to be smart, and you will find yourself further developing the emotional skills that allow you to lead a more satisfying life.

Peter Salovey, PhD
Chris Argyris Professor of Psychology
Yale University

Introduction



Emotional intelligence — it sounds like an oxymoron, doesn't it? Just like jumbo shrimp. People tend to think of others as either emotional or intelligent, but not both. So, just what is emotional intelligence? And why are you hearing about it only now?

Emotional intelligence has a lot to do with being intelligent about your emotions. It involves the ability to recognize your own emotions as well as the emotions of other people. It includes understanding emotions. It also has to do with how you manage your emotions and how you manage other people's emotions.

Psychologists have known about many of the concepts behind emotional intelligence for years — decades, even. But the knowledge has been scattered, not really well organized or clearly formulated. When two psychologists — John (Jack) Mayer from the University of New Hampshire and Peter Salovey from Yale University — put together a theory that looks at both intelligence and emotions in 1989, the idea of emotional intelligence really started to take shape.

The first scientific paper on the topic was published in 1990. Since that time, millions of copies of books have been sold about it. A number of psychologists, including our own team at Multi-Health Systems (MHS), as well as groups at Yale University, Rutgers University, the Centre for Creative Leadership, and others, have carried out a great deal of research that looks at the impact of emotional intelligence at work, in families, with children, and basically anywhere that people interact with each other.

Organizations have used the information researchers have discovered about emotional intelligence to select and develop their employees and to produce better leaders; schools have used it to create more harmonious relationships among students; and it has been used with families to improve relationships. I hope an understanding of emotional intelligence can benefit you, too. It can help mean the difference between success and failure in many of the things you do.

About *Emotional Intelligence For Dummies*

What does it mean to be emotionally intelligent? Does it really matter? What can you do about your or your children's emotional intelligence? Or, for that matter, can you do anything to better manage the emotions of your relatives or friends? You can explore these questions, and many others, in *Emotional Intelligence For Dummies*.

The purpose of this book is to provide you with a clear understanding of what emotional intelligence is about. Emotional intelligence is still a new area of study, and you can already find a combination of folklore and science mixed together through the initial exuberance of the media on this topic. I cover some of the science that explains emotional intelligence, but I go carefully beyond the science by expanding on some of those scientific findings.

Here's some of the information that you can find in this book:

- ✔ The most common definitions of emotional intelligence
- ✔ Information about the most validated tests or measures of emotional intelligence
- ✔ Interesting ways to think about your own emotional intelligence, as well as the emotional intelligence of people around you
- ✔ Strategies to improve your and others' emotional intelligence
- ✔ The importance of emotional intelligence at home, at work or school, with friends, and when dealing with strangers

One of the differences between obtaining traditional knowledge and figuring out how to improve your emotional intelligence is the importance of active participation. Although you can find out about many subjects passively through lectures and reading, you need to be more active to get a grip on emotional intelligence. Reading this book can help you take the first step towards improving your EQ (Emotional Quotient). You also have to do some of the exercises and activities in this book to make a real difference in your ability to identify, understand, use, and manage your emotions.

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