

Emotional Intelligence*

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The article correlates the concept of emotional intelligence with Eric Berne's transactional analysis, and observes a close relation between emotional intelligence and transactional analysis. The article explains the constituents (ego states) of the communicator during an interpersonal communication, and explains how a person can develop emotional intelligence through the knowledge of transactional analysis.

Emotional Intelligence (EI), today, is the buzzword in the domain of psychology, and is also expanding its influence to workplaces. The concept of emotional intelligence is being received as a powerful tool to improve the efficiency of the employees and foster a healthy work culture. With the coining of the term EI, the intelligence of a person is not seen as an exclusive baby of his/her cognition. Cognition is just one criterion that qualifies intelligence. Another crucial factor that certifies the intelligence of a person is his ability to understand and manage his emotions, and understand and manage others' emotions. It is the appropriate balance of cognition and emotion that makes a person successful both in his performance and relationship management at workplace. Emotional intelligence

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is imperative for the superiors and managers to ensure the desired performance of the staff. Hence, it is the responsibility of the managers/senior staff to foster the EI culture at the workplace and reap better productivity through better relationship management.

While emotional intelligence, as a concept, has gained significant momentum, an understanding over how to develop/imbibe emotional intelligence leaves a lot to be desired. In this article, emotional intelligence is being viewed from transactional analysis (TA) perspective, facilitating a better understanding of the concept and also enabling its acceptance as a practice.

Transactional Analysis

Transactional analysis is a socio-psychological concept propounded by Dr. Eric Berne. Its efficacy lies in its wide application in the fields of clinical, organizational and personal development and in facilitating successful communication and effective management of relationships and behavior. Transactional analysis is based on the following set of assumptions:

Dr. Wilder Penfield, a famous brain surgeon and researcher, whose pioneering work laid the foundation for Dr. Eric Berne's theories of Transactional Analysis, conducted a series of scientific experiments which went on for several years. His experiments resulted in wide acceptance of the conclusions indicated in Box 1.

Box 1: Conclusions of Penfield's Experiments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The human brain acts like a tape recorder, and whilst we may 'forget' experiences, the brain still records them. • Along with events, the brain also records the associated feelings, and both feelings and events stay locked together. • It is possible for a person to exist in two states simultaneously (because patients replaying hidden events and feelings could talk about them objectively at the same time). • Hidden experiences, when replayed, are vivid, and affect how we feel at the time of replaying. • There is a certain connection between mind and body, i.e., the link between the biological and the psychological, e.g., a psychological fear of spiders and a biological feeling of nausea. 	
<p><i>Source: www.businessballs.com</i></p>	

Transactional analysis model is primarily based on the human social relationships and the resulting psychoanalysis through face-to-face communication. Berne called the first action of communication from one person as the transaction stimulus and the reciprocation to the communication as transaction response. The analysis of this transaction (of stimulus and response) is transactional analysis.

On the basis of his assumptions and observations, Eric Berne divides the personality of a human being (irrespective of age, gender) into three states of ego, viz., parent, adult and child. As the names suggest, the theory characterizes the ego states by their general perceptions.

The parent state of ego is characterized the way a parent (usually father) is perceived as an angry person, impatient in body language and expressions, patronising, using judgmental words, critical words, patronizing language and posturing language. Similarly, the child state of ego is characterized by emotional and sad expressions, excessive jubilation, desolation, temper crabbiness, whining, shrugging shoulders, teasing, squirming and giggling. The adult state, as the word suggests, is a matured state of ego, which is characterized as attentive, interested, straightforward, matured with reasoned statements, logical expressions, and comparative statements.

Now, with the above assumptions and the ego states, transaction analysis analyzes face-to-face communication between people and classifies them as crossed transaction (failed communication) and complementary transaction (successful communication).

A crossed transaction is a communication wherein there is a clash of ego states, and hence, the communication worsens and finally fails. For example, this might happen when the parent state of ego is sending stimulus to the child state of ego, and the response is coming from the adult state of ego to the parent state. Similarly, a complementary transaction takes place when there is a perfect and friendly correspondence between the states of ego, i.e., when the stimulus and response to a communication occur between the same set of ego states (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Crossed and Complementary Transactions		
OK	I am OK, you are not OK	I am OK, you are OK
Not OK	I am not OK, you are not OK	I am not OK, you are OK
	Not OK	OK

Situational Application of TA

EI is all about situational invitation to the states of ego and handling communication effectively resulting in complementary communication.

Taking a cue from the transaction analysis of Eric Berne, the attitudes of the people can be arranged in four ways. These attitudes/positions play a major role in relationship management.

The first quadrant, i.e., I am OK, you are not OK, comprises certain unwanted elements like arrogance, lack of trust, tendency to blame everyone. Here, the self is over-estimated, and others are treated as immature. They behave in annoyed, noncooperative, hostile manner towards fellow beings. This attitude towards the relationship does not promise a subordinate competence and healthy workplace climate. I am not OK, you are not OK is the worst situation of all where one starts feeling that the total situation is against oneself and is hopeless. There is no energy to perform. There is indifference towards work and will lead to negligence. I am not OK, you are OK is a position in which, the person is unsure, less confident, insecure and depressed. The person does not assert, and is not persistent. Such a person would not mind being overridden by others and does what others like. In other words, the person withdraws from the competition and submits to pressure and lets someone else manage, thus creating an unhealthy workplace relationship. I am OK, you are OK is the best of the four. This keeps the person optimistic and confident. In this position, the person shows a lot of respect for self and for others. The behaviour is, supportive, cooperative, treating others as being mature. He is a good listener, a non-defensive speaker and interested in others' welfare.

By correlating the behavioral tendencies of the people in four quadrants, it can be clearly inferred that person in the second quadrant, i.e., I am OK, you are OK, is the one who is emotionally intelligent. This person values self-esteem as well as respect for others. He understands and manages himself, and others equally

well. Due to his caring and understanding nature and interest in others' welfare, he is liked and respected by others. These are the people who recognize the need for Strokes.¹ These are the people who follow Don Miguel Ruiz's four agreements (Box 2) in order to carry out successful communication with emotional intelligence.

Box 2: Don Miguel Ruiz's Four Agreements
<p>Agreement 1 Be impeccable with your word—Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.</p> <p>Agreement 2 Don't take anything personally—Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.</p> <p>Agreement 3 Don't make assumptions—Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.</p> <p>Agreement 4 Always do your best—Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.</p>
<p><i>Source: www.businessballs.com</i></p>

'Adult' of TA has the Most of EI

It is worth sparing a thought as to which state of ego in transactional analysis allows a person to be emotionally intelligent. After having come across the characteristics of the states of ego, it is clear to us that the child state of ego is immature, adamant, inflexible and not a good decision-maker. Similarly, the parent state of ego is directive, instructive and authoritarian in nature. Hence, this state of ego does not allow a person to consider others as important and thus fails to consider others' suggestions and view points. This makes him unpopular among his peers and subordinates.

Adult state of ego keeps a person's thought process balanced. It allows a person to practice equilibrium thinking. Such a person would care for all, considers

¹ Another concept in Transactional Analysis is that of Strokes, which are acts of recognition. Everybody has a hunger for Strokes.

their views, and shows concerns for them. He takes decisions in consultation with others, gives equal importance to personal competence and social competence. Thus, a person with adult state of ego is one who can:

- Understand his emotions.
- Manage his own emotions.
- Motivate others.
- Recognize and understand other people's emotions.
- Manage relationships, i.e., manage the emotions of others.

To sum up, adult state of ego is the one which allows a person to be emotionally intelligent at the workplace, thereby fostering a healthy work culture, and enhancing overall organizational productivity.

Emotional Intelligence – In Practice

EI is the buzzword today across the corporate parliaments and is soon going to be an inevitable component aspired by organizations for its managers and decision-makers to adopt. No surprises, if EI quotient becomes a criterion for selecting candidates for various jobs. And why not? Daniel Goleman says “cognitive skill ‘gets you in the door’ of a company, but emotional skill helps you thrive once you're hired”. EI is a skill demanded by almost all the professions: marketing, personnel management, shop floor management, investment analysis, medical practitioners, legal practitioners, criminal investigators, corporate trainers, academicians, etc. To put it simply, wherever there is a necessity or scope to interact with another person, EI assumes paramount importance to make the interaction purposeful and successful. The level of emotional intelligence of a person gives a 360-degree view of his abilities in getting things done in the most appreciable and efficient manner. According to Goleman, bosses and leaders specially need high emotional quotient because they hold more of responsibility and represent the organization as far as the public is concerned. They are frequently involved in a number of interactions with people. They set the tone for employee morale, as stated by Goleman. He adds that leaders with empathy are able to understand their employees' needs and provide them with constructive feedback. This can be further understood in the light of the spate of corporate scandals in

the USA. What had resulted, do you think, in the downturn of Enron, WorldCom, Yukos or Tyco. Were the leaders/CEOs of these companies not qualified or cognitively less intelligent? Certainly not. These were the leaders, who, though were adept in technical skills, were, however, poor at the moral intelligence, which is an offshoot of emotional intelligence. This resulted in lack of integrity, credibility, and reliability. According to Goleman's research on EI *vis-à-vis* leadership style of executives, close to 90% of their leadership success was attributable to emotional intelligence. In contrast, unsuccessful executives mainly had two characteristics, viz., rigidity and poor relationships, which held them back from adapting their style to changes in organizational culture or listening and responding to feedback on how they needed to change or improve.

The ten habits of Steven Hein give an overall idea of the skills required to develop EI (Box 3). Steven Hein mentions about the prevalence of negative traits of labeling others for their feelings and the "holier than thou" attitude, which, in turn, results in more arguments, animosity and emotional disturbance. Rather, Steven Hein suggests that to be emotionally literate one should label one's own feelings rather than labeling others. According to Steven, we should take responsibility for our feelings and give respect to others' feelings.

Box 3
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become emotionally literate. Label your feelings, rather than labeling people or situations. 2. Distinguish between thoughts and feelings. 3. Take more responsibility for your feelings. 4. Use your feelings to help them take decisions. 5. Show respect for other people's feelings. 6. Feel energized, not angry. 7. Validate other people's feelings. 8. Practise getting a positive value from emotions. 9. Don't advise, command, control, criticize, judge or lecture to others, beyond certain limits. 10. Avoid people who invalidate you.
<p><i>Source: www.eqi.org</i></p>

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The Art of Emotional Intelligence

"Emotional Intelligence" (EI) is nothing but the art of handling ourselves well. John Mayer and Peter Salovey coined the term in 1990 and called it a kind of "social intelligence" which helps us to monitor our own feelings and emotions, and those of the others, and then uses this information as a guide for our thoughts and actions. Daniel Goleman, who subsequently came to be known as "EI Guru," divided the concept into two broad emotional competencies—Personal Competence and Social Competence. These two competencies were further subdivided into "self-awareness" and "self-management," and "social awareness" and "relationship management." All these were preceded by yet another concept called "self-understanding," which is closely linked to "introspection". The journey of life is filled with experiences, and we learn "what we are" and "who we are", by managing the situations we face. Each experience leaves us with some lesson to take home. This learning is a continuous process, and so is "self-understanding" which gets spread over the entire lifecycle of a human being. In some ways, it is similar to the "Know Thyself" concept propounded by Warren Bennis. According to him, 'Know Thyself' means "separating who you are and who you want to be, from what the world thinks you are and wants you to be." Introspection, thus, is a solitary contemplation, or looking into one's inner self, and which is more chemistry than physics. Now, getting back to self-awareness, it is a process of knowing our emotions, motives, personal needs, styles, preferences, and Estimating their effect on our performance. Self-awareness also includes assessing ourselves with regard to our strengths and weaknesses, and their impact on others. This is the key to the actual introspection undertaken by a manager, and it helps in shedding inhibitions to learn, whereby you work on weaknesses and develop on strengths. Closely following on its heels is "self-confidence", which one develops as he carries out a thorough self-assessment. Now, if you are aware of yourself, then, there is a need to manage yourself. Self-management deals with a number of attributes. Emotional self-control is the art of maintaining mental balance, irrespective of the situation we encounter. Next is the flexibility to adapt to changing situations and obstacles. Self-discipline is the ability to restrain oneself from acting inappropriately, that is to say, how honest and trustworthy one is and what kind of integrity one possesses. Self-accountability indicates our owning up of our actions (good or bad), and how conscientious and responsible we are in doing our job, without anyone keeping a watchful eye on us. Next in the line on self-management are our sense of achievement, learning, optimism, and initiative. Am I prepared to run that extra mile? Am I keen on learning new things? Can I differentiate between a half-filled and a half-empty glass? Do I get as much excited in participating in an event as in winning? Am I proactive or reactive? A host of these questions will set you on the path of proper self-management. Man by nature is a social animal, and he gets motivated by being a part of the society once his basic physiological needs are met. To be an effective member of the society, what he requires is the social competence, which is the ability to understand others, and work with them in a win-win relationship. This is yet another fundamental skill required of a manager, i.e., the ability to know and understand the people, the way they think and feel, and mastering the art of persuading, motivating and resolving conflicts, and finally, bringing them together to work for a common objective.

Social Competence

Social competence has been broadly categorized into social awareness and relationship management as mentioned before. Social awareness deals with empathy, an attribute that helps you in putting yourself in the shoes of others, developing insights into their perspectives and feelings, and conditioning your helping attitude towards them. One should possess what we may call as political or organizational awareness, which includes knowing the critical spots and the power centers, etc., as it is more through their networking that people get their work done, rather than throwing their weight around. Next comes the relationship management, which involves respecting others (no matter what level they belong to) and their viewpoints, influencing people

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through proper communications (active listening not to be missed out), and leadership, etc. Promoting teamwork and encouraging collaborative approach are the hallmarks of a leader. Conflicts do occur in a team-based functioning, and he, who can resolve them to the satisfaction of all the people concerned, can be labeled as an effective managerial leader. For this, one needs persuasive, convincing, and even diplomatic skills. Even a good sense of humor proves highly effective in trying circumstances. Again, one needs to understand the diversity among people, and leverage on it, by building strong emotional bonds with friendship and trust. There is a growing tendency to think and conclude that there is nothing wrong with us, of course, only till the obvious hits us where it hurts most. People spend fortunes in developing their muscles or intellectual capabilities or music skills or golf club swinging skills, but when it comes to learning more about ourselves, and nurturing the methods of dealing with others (on an emotional plane), we tend to shrink back. Such issues are rarely or never addressed in our formal education and training. Though emotional intelligence is the key to understand others, it starts with understanding ourselves first. The time you spend in introspection, in asking yourself the right questions, and talking to others about yourself, will never be a waste. Introspection helps you to bridge the gap between preaching and practice. The key to the development of your personal competence (self-awareness and self-management), is to closely observe your emotional reactions to situations, and the reasons there of. It also means thinking of alternate ways to interpret upsetting situations, and methods of dealing with them. A good friend (philosopher and guide) or a mentor can help you in hastening the process of self-understanding and analysis. Similarly, social competence (social awareness and relationship management) can be improved by empathizing, observing people, trying to understand their behavior, and their reactions to your actions, etc. Both the above competencies, in a nutshell, comprise what Daniel Goleman calls "Emotional Competence", which is related to intrapersonal and interpersonal skills of a person. Introspection is the only way of improving these skills.

Source: "Manager in Introspection" by Colonel V R K Prasad.