

ADAM L. SAENZ, PhD

THE

EQ

Intervention

Shaping a
Self-Aware
Generation
Through Social
and Emotional
Learning



Dr. Saenz's experience working with students and staff makes this book a very powerful tool for all educators. This book validates how social and emotional learning impacts school cultures and positively impacts academics in the process. Emotional intelligence is an essential component of education...of life!

Orlando Farias

Principal, Mission Collegiate High School

The Mission Consolidated School District

Kudos to Dr. Adam Saenz for laying the groundwork in "best practices" for Social Emotional Learning! As educators we often focus our work on improving instruction in order to meet standardized testing expectations but fall short in addressing this critical area. Now more than ever we must provide social emotional learning as statistics continue to show that mental health concerns are clearly on the rise in our younger children. Heart Smarts goes beyond school safety and emphasizes why we must prepare our youth to handle the adversities of life. Simply put, our children's lives depend on social emotional learning. Thank you Adam for always being a "Life Giver". Your insight and kindness never cease to amaze me.

Diana Otero, Ph.D.

Director of Special Services

The Ysleta Independent School District

Heart Smarts: How We Can Live Socially and Emotionally Intelligent Lives and Why It Matters is more than a book about how to improve the social and emotional learning that occurs in our classrooms. It is more than a book about identifying ways for educators to work with students so they find a place of belonging and investment in school. It is a book about connecting ... connecting with ourselves (within the walls of our own hearts and minds) and connecting with each other (within the walls of our homes and within the streets of our neighborhoods). It brings insight, wisdom and compelling arguments to the necessity of having smart hearts to make our schools and (in my opinion), our homes and communities more connected and safer for everyone.

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The EQ Intervention: Shaping a Self-Aware Generation Through Social and Emotional
Learning

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Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.

--Aristotle

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CHAPTER 1

WHY SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING?

Success in school admits of things other than intelligence. To succeed in his studies,
one must have qualities that depend on attention, will and character.

--Alfred Binet, creator of the first IQ test

Emotional intelligence could save your life. Literally. Consider the case of former United States Army Officer General James Lee Dozier, who graduated from West Point Academy in 1956. Following his tour of duty in Vietnam, General Dozier was serving as the Chief of Staff at a NATO land force headquarters in Verona, Italy in 1981.

At approximately 6 p.m. on December 17, two men posing as plumbers entered his apartment in Verona and overpowered him. He initially resisted, but then opted for compliance the moment he saw his wife being held at gunpoint. His captors left his wife handcuffed to a table in the apartment, but they covered his head with a pillowcase, stuffed him into a cardboard refrigerator box, and proceeded to disorient him while in transport to the designated holding-place, an apartment 90 kilometers away in Padua.

What followed were 42 days of torture—a controlled, sustained explosion of traumatic stress. General Dozier was confined to a windowless room, where he was chained to a steel cot that was under the constant glare of an electric light bulb. He was forced to listen to a continuous stream of loud music through headphones that were taped to his head. He experienced temporal loss of time, grossly disrupted circadian sleep rhythms, and permanent hearing damage.

His captors, he would soon learn, were members of the Red Brigades, a left-wing terrorist organization who had grown angry at the good diplomatic relations between the United States and Italy. They targeted General Dozier because of his high-profile military standing in the country and his association with NATO. While the Red Brigades issued international communications acknowledging that General Dozier was in their captivity, they never established terms for his release. Instead, their communication

consisted of the disgruntled rants of a terrorist organization expressing its dissatisfaction with the political state of world affairs. Given the absence of terms for General Dozier's release, most involved presumed that the Red Brigades had no intention of releasing him; they were simply holding him hostage to gain international attention and would kill him when that attention waned.

Let's analyze the details of Colonel Dozier's case through the lens of emotional intelligence (or, social and emotional learning—SEL—as we like to refer to it in schools), as his case offers a textbook illustration of the value of well-implemented SEL. First, the instant Colonel Dozier saw his wife's life at risk, he knew he would have to manage his thoughts and feelings for both of their safety. That behavioral protocol—identifying and managing his intense emotions—continued through his captivity. **These are components one and two of SEL: self-awareness and self-regulation.**

Having shown the capacity to identify and regulate his emotions, Colonel Dozier knew that he would first have to understand his captors if there was any chance he could influence them. He listened to their nuanced use of language, their references to the media, and he looked for patterns in their behavior as they interacted with him and each other. One guard seemed more inclined to discuss soccer. Two leaders always ate with their guns on the table. Their collective mood elevated when they saw that they were referenced in national media, and they became irritable when they were not mentioned for time periods greater than four days. **This is component three of SEL: social awareness, or empathy.**

Finally, Colonel Dozier kept an extremely consistent daily routine within the confines of his captivity to ease his captors' anxiety; his schedule made him very predictable (and, therefore, safer) to his captors. He always made a point to speak calmly and respectfully, without antagonizing his captors in any way. He talked about non-political topics, and he regularly expressed concern about his wife, whom they left bound and chained in their apartment. He knew he was making progress building a relational connection when they honored his request to lower the music's volume in his headphones and agreed to play classical rather than rock music. **This is component four of SEL: relationship skills.**

In the end, because he was self-aware and self-regulated his emotions, and because he was socially aware and used effective relational skills, Colonel Dozier was able to act adaptively when his rescuers arrived. Even though a gun was pointed to his head when Italian police entered the apartment, not a single shot was fired by anyone. Colonel Dozier knew to remain calm and to stay low during the 90 seconds of chaos in which his captors were overwhelmed by the rescue force. **This is component five of SEL: responsible decision making.**

"It's just like combat," he would later say. "You do the best you can in the moment rather than worrying about what might happen."

Ultimately, it was not Colonel Dozier's command of the many troops under his leadership that saved his life, but his command of himself. Dozier would go on to complete a successful military career, being awarded the Army Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, and the Purple Heart among other highly prestigious decorations.

Maybe the case of Colonel Dozier seems too far removed from your day-to-day role as an educator for your buy-in. You might be wondering, “*Great. But what does this discussion have to do with the lesson plans I haven’t yet prepared for tomorrow and the ever-increasing scope of what’s being asked of me as an educator?*” Fair enough. I would invite you, then, to consider this second and final case involving the educator Jason Seaman. While the details of Jason Seaman’s case are different than Colonel Dozier’s (the sustained length of the trauma, in particular), both cases illustrate the relationship between stress and emotional intelligence.

Mr. Seaman, a 29-year-old science teacher at Indiana’s West Noblesville Middle School and former defensive lineman for Southern Illinois University, entered his classroom on May 25, 2018, starting his day off like any other. His students would take what would be their final science test of the school year.

I can’t say for sure, but I’m willing to bet that Mr. Seaman had engaged his students or colleagues in discussion about the shooting in Santa Fe, Texas that left 13 dead and 10 injured just a week before. I know that 130 miles to the northeast of Santa Fe, we in Bryan/College Station, Texas were still processing the event and at various stages of grieving.

As Mr. Seaman’s students took their test that morning, one student asked to be excused from class. He probably just requested a restroom break, but the details aren’t clear. What we do know is that moments later, that student returned to the classroom armed with .22 and .45 caliber handguns and immediately opened fire.

“Mr. Seaman started running at him,” a student witness reported, “He tackled him to the ground. We were all hiding in the back of the classroom behind some desks, and then Mr. Seaman was yelling to call 911, to get out of the building as fast as we could, so we ran out.”

Mr. Seaman’s actions were immediate and decisive, but the damage was done. Before Mr. Seaman could even reach the shooter, seven rounds struck a female student in the face, neck, hands and chest. As he rushed the student, Mr. Seaman was shot three times, once in the abdomen, once in the hip, and once in the forearm. He was able to disarm and detain the student until the school resource officer arrived to assist only moments after the initial shots were fired. Mr. Seaman was taken by ambulance to the Indiana University Hospital, where he made a full recovery. The wounded female student was also hospitalized in critical condition, yet she was expected to recover after having sustained collapsed lungs, a broken jaw, and significant nerve damage.

As we did with Colonel Dozier’s case, let’s study the details of Mr. Seaman’s case in the context of SEL. It’s important for us to remember, though, that while Colonel Dozier had 42 days to fine-tune his SEL skill set as his traumatic stress evolved, Mr. Seaman’s experience was an acute, immediate blast of terror in which he had just a handful of seconds to act. With Mr. Seaman’s case, we’ll start at the end of the trauma and work our way back toward the beginning to find the SEL lesson.

We know that Mr. Seaman demonstrated responsible decision making (SEL component five), as evidenced by the fact that he subdued and contained the shooter. Protecting children’s lives and maintaining safety always represents sound and

responsible decision-making. But given the moment's urgency, it's highly unlikely that Mr. Seaman's navigation through the first four SEL components was a conscious process: "Because I feel angry and afraid that a student is shooting (self-awareness), I'll control that emotion with two deep, strong breaths (self-regulation); meanwhile, it is likely that the shooter feels anger, given the weapons in his hands (social awareness/empathy), and since I don't have the liberty of talking to him about his anger, I will intervene physically (responsible decision-making)."

Nope, not likely. Rather, the heart of our SEL lesson from Mr. Seaman is found in his words during a subsequent television interview: "I care deeply about my students and their well-being," he noted to the reporter, "that's why I did what I did that day."

My goodness. That is powerful.

What we learn from Mr. Seaman is that when we don't have the luxury of time to consciously engage our SEL skills, our core-level beliefs—our deepest values, fears, biases and prejudices—drive our behavior automatically. Fortunately for the students in Mr. Seaman's classroom that day, his core-level belief was that his students mattered above all, and it was that foundational belief that resulted in his automatic action to risk his life to save his students' lives.

So, there you have it, without hyperbole: the case of Colonel Dozier illustrates that well-developed SEL could save your life, and the case of Mr. Seaman illustrates that our actions are driven by deeply-embedded value systems and/or biases. SEL is relevant whether you are a United States Colonel on an overseas deployment or a seventh-grade middle school teacher administering a final exam.

The Broad Application of SEL: Life Givers Versus Life Suckers

While Colonel Dozier and Mr. Seaman displayed a life-saving understanding and implementation of SEL, you might be wondering what role SEL plays in your professional, as well as your personal life? Let us not embrace the false assumption that SEL is only about being prepared for crises such as those just presented. Far from it. We'll explore the relationship between aggression, violence and SEL in Chapter 7, but this book is not centrally about preparing ourselves to deal with active school shooters. That kind of preparation, sadly, is more urgent now than it has ever been, but SEL has *so* much more to offer us. SEL is essential to our capacity to live adaptively in our daily lives—days that don't involve hostage situations or active shooters. The classroom teacher dealing with postpartum depression as she returns to work from maternity leave? Exercise in SEL. The angry parent who uses social media to air his misinformed conclusions of you? Exercise in SEL. Your passive-aggressive neighbor who still leaves his garbage cans on your driveway even after you've politely asked twice that he not do so? Exercise in SEL. Your spouse, who twenty-three years later still doesn't know the correct direction to mount the toilet paper roll? Exercise in SEL.

The list could go on, even down to each moment-to-moment interaction we have with any other human being who, in whatever way and for whatever reason, evokes within us a potentially conflict-producing emotion. In every case, **the successful return to**

mental wellbeing is dependent on our ability to know and regulate ourselves, and to understand and interact with others.

I was in my early thirties when I finished my doctoral degree and started working as a school psychologist. It was the early 2000s, and I was jumping into the world of education eager to make a difference but also feeling overwhelmed by my lack of experience in school systems. Stress, I was learning, is not only a feeling our bodies produce when we wonder whether we can deal effectively with a new situation, but also an energy that mobilizes us to respond. To cope with my stress, I searched for mentorship from professionals in the district who had a long history of service in the schools. I hoped they could speak from their years of experience to give me guidance, shortcuts, or anything else that offered me hope that I might grow older well and live to tell about it. I never would have predicted what that search revealed: two groups of near-retirees, distributed neatly into two categories. Group One: Life Givers, and Group Two: Life Suckers.

Fortunately, the Life Givers were by far the bigger group. They were approaching their retirement with mixed degrees of sadness and excitement, but also with a deep sense of having run the race well. Some had plans for significant life changes, and others said they would like to stick around in any capacity possible since they couldn't imagine a life apart from students. As seasoned veterans, they were filled with joy about the immeasurable investment they had made in countless individuals, young and not-so-young, over the course of their careers. They often reminisced, with a smile and distant

look in their eye, as they with me shared (ever so generously) the lessons they had learned along the way.

In contrast, the Life Suckers were the much smaller group. Unlike the Life-Givers, the Life Suckers were bitter and cynical, and they seemed to be approaching their retirement as a get-out-of-jail free card that was not actually free and came *way* too late in the game. They seemed to go out of their way to make sure that nothing they said was ever contaminated by an encouraging word or any sense of hope or optimism. They routinely made subtle and not-so-subtle comments that degraded and demeaned children and adults. They were miserable.

I was baffled: how could anyone end up at this stage in their career, so deeply soaked in bitterness and resentment? What went wrong for them, and at what point?

How did they not have the wherewithal to take note and act at the first indication that their hope was circling the drain?

Looking back, I'm convinced that the variable that predicted the differences between the two groups was not the narrative of their professional experience. It wasn't like the Life Givers had somehow lucked into having been dealt 30 years of more playable cards—ideal students from ideal families being educated on ideal campuses by ideal faculty, year after year. I knew for a fact that many of the Life Givers had invested long windows of their careers in high-needs educational settings. I also don't think it was correlated to their education or professional training: both groups had individuals with graduate degrees from prestigious universities. It wasn't a factor of sheer intelligence,

either; the Life Givers weren't all in the genius range, and the Life Suckers weren't all dull. Indeed, high IQs were present in both groups.

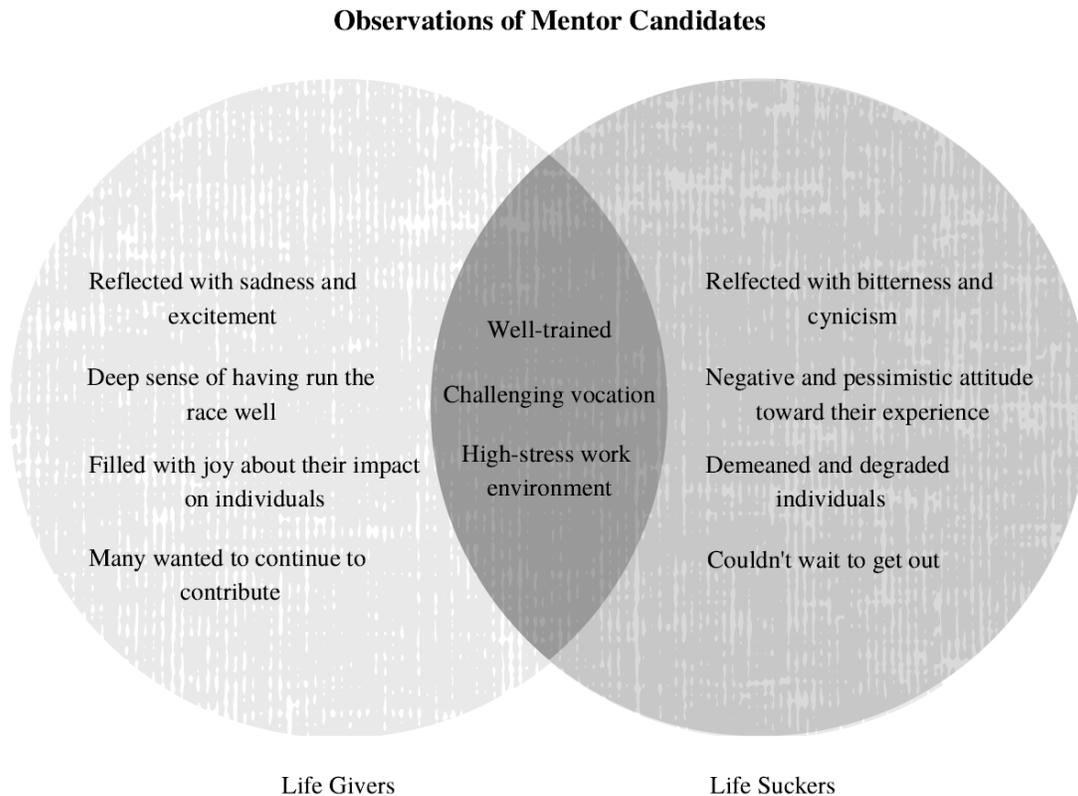


Figure 1: Life Givers Versus Life Suckers

If it wasn't any of that, then, what *was* it that explained the variance? After fifteen years of research and clinical practice, I'm convinced that the deciding factor that sorted the Life Givers from the Life Suckers was emotional intelligence. Life Givers have heart smarts. They intuitively understand the necessity of emotional hygiene, and

they practice it just routinely as they bathe their bodies and brush their teeth. At some point along the way, Life Givers somehow figure out that their emotions are packets of energy and information, and how they process and regulate their emotion positively correlates with their quality of life. They also learn that since their emotional life is *that* important, then everyone else's must be also, and how they interact with others is pertinent to ensuring the best possible outcomes.

I knew three things at that early point in my career: I really enjoyed my work in schools, I wanted to be in it for the long run, and I wanted to land where the Life Givers had landed. I would learn very quickly that the soon-to-retire Life Givers were not just the kind of professionals I wanted to become, they were the kind of people I wanted to be.

What I observed almost twenty years ago was the actual playing-out of the vast body of emotional intelligence research that consistently tells us that **individuals who live emotionally-intelligent lives experience a variety of benefits**: greater job satisfaction, higher sustainability, increased productivity, physical and psychological longevity, and the capacity to thrive in high-stress and high-demand jobs. There are benefits apart from work, too. People who live emotionally-intelligent lives report **a greater sense of overall wellbeing, a deeper sense of satisfaction with life, and a deeper sense of peace with their journey. So, no, SEL is not just about being prepared for crises; it's about deliberately living well.**

We know that SEL benefits adults cross-situationally, but can the same be said of kids? Joseph Durlak's 2011 meta-analysis rendered results that are not particularly

surprising. He and his Chicago-based research team reviewed 213 universal SEL programs involving 270,034 kindergarten through high school students. Compared to controls, students who had received SEL education demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and (here's the kicker) academic performance, reflected by an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement. In sum, then, we can confidently say that when students can accurately identify and regulate their feelings, and when they demonstrate social awareness and social skills, then they engage in responsible decision-making. Therefore, the students demonstrate both social and academic growth.

So, yes, SEL is widely-encompassing and relevant to so much more than just gun violence. In fact, I would summarize my work in schools over the past 20 years by saying that **I have become a firm believer that the best academic or behavioral intervention for every student is an adult living a life characterized by physical wellbeing and emotional intelligence.** Unlike IQ, which is a relatively stable trait (aspects of which peak in our early 20s and decline as we age), SEL is a skillset that we can continually grow and retain. This is good news: our prognosis to be Life Givers is excellent.

Measuring Intelligence

If you lived in Philadelphia, say in 1843, and you wanted to know your child's cognitive ability, you would have made an appointment with Dr. Samuel Morton, physician and professor of anatomy at Pennsylvania Medical College, who had all that was needed to answer your question: the right hands, a tape measure and a caliper.

“Good morning,” Dr. Morton would greet you in his office. “What brings you in today?”

“Well, Dr. Morton,” you would answer, “I heard a public lecture last night by a politician named Horace Mann. He spoke at great length about the changes he would like to see in schools. He talked about all kids being in the classroom together so they could have a common experience, and to give opportunity to the less fortunate. His words excited me, and I thought about my daughter. I’m here to see if you think she’s smart enough to do well in school. Can you measure her intelligence?”

“Very well, then,” Dr. Morton would say. He would turn toward your daughter and motion her toward a table. “Sit right up here, young lady.”

After your daughter hopped on his table, Dr. Morton would begin the intelligence exam by moving his hands across all aspects of your daughter’s scalp, looking for irregularities in her skull structure. He would jot down a few notes and then reach for his tape measure. A measure of cranial circumference. A measure of pupillary distance. If your daughter’s case warranted, Dr. Morton would use calipers to measure distances between locations on her skull.

“Ah, yes,” Dr Morton, would say in a summarizing tone as he reviewed his numbers to offer you a diagnosis. “Bumps toward the temporal lobe suggest a predisposition toward alimentiveness and philoprogentiveness.”

So, now you know that your daughter loves food and will probably love her offspring. Great. But no help with regard to your initial question.

“Yes, doctor,” you say with some degree of impatience. “But what about her *intelligence*?”

“Oh, her intelligence? Well, I would say it’s probably about average.”

“And how do you know, doctor, that her intelligence is about average?”

“By the circumference of her head. It’s about average, so we might deduce that her intelligence is also about average.”

“So, do you think she will fare well in school? Does she have the ability?”

“Maybe. Then again, maybe not. Hard to tell.” And that would be that from your visit with Dr. Morton.

Not only was Dr. Morton a physician and professor, he was also a practitioner of phrenology, which was the (very soft) science of rendering personality diagnostics based on the bumps on a person’s skull. Phrenologists believed that an individual’s mental capacities could be determined by measuring the area of the skull that overlies the area of the brain that was thought to house the given capacity. All in all, it was a straightforward process that rendered grossly invalid results. At that time, though, it was about the only show in town.

The roots of formal, statistically-sound psychometric assessment had soil in which to sprout thanks to Alfred Binet’s failed research in subconscious automatism (hypnotism) and the French government’s desire to educate all children. Binet’s first formal research position was at Jean Martin Charcot’s neurological laboratory in Paris. Charcot’s early research in subconscious automatism promised tremendous benefits for its practitioners, and Binet published several articles citing the value of Charcot’s work.

Upon independent external peer review, however, Charcot's studies were found to be flawed by poor methodology, forcing Binet to publicly recant his findings. A dejected Binet turned to the study of child development for solace, a field he found particularly relevant given the recent births of his two daughters, Madeleine and Alice. Over the course of the next twenty years, Binet would come to be recognized as an expert in the field, prolifically publishing in the areas of human development and social psychology.

Meanwhile, the French government passed a law mandating school attendance for children ages six to fourteen, and they soon faced the challenge of effectively educating children of diverse cognitive abilities. They approached Binet: what test should we give to identify children thought to have learning differences so that we might offer them appropriate instruction?

Binet's years of working with children taught him that at certain ages, most children can answer certain questions correctly. He partnered with Theodore Simon, a medical student, to create a series of questions that an examiner could expect most children to answer correctly at specific ages. Can a child track a beam of light when it shone across a wall? Point to various body parts when asked? Repeat a long series of digits? Construct a sentence from three given words—dog, city, and treasure? More challenging items asked children to repeat a number series in reverse order or to answer questions based on ambiguous stimuli: "My neighbor has been receiving strange visitors. He has received in turn a doctor, a lawyer and then a priest. What might be taking place?"

The child's performance on the test could be compared to a mental age, which is the age at which the average child would be expected to know the answers. The mathematic relationship between a child's mental and chronological age were central to computing the child's intelligence quotient: divide mental age by physical age, multiply times 100, and *voilà*, you have IQ. For example, if a child scored at a mental age of twelve while being chronologically ten years old, the child's IQ would be 120 ($12/10 \times 100 = 120$). The resulting test and scoring system that arose from that initial endeavor commissioned by the French government would become the Binet-Simon Measuring Scale for Intelligence, the first formal measure of IQ.

Across the Atlantic, American psychologist Henry Goddard had been appointed Director of Research at the Vineland Training School for Feeble-Minded Girls and Boys. Goddard translated the Binet-Simon Measuring Scale for Intelligence to English and found it helpful in identifying children with intellectual disabilities. In 1910, he advocated for a system of classifying levels of intellectual disability: those with an IQ of 51-70 would be referred to as morons, 26-50 would be referred to as imbeciles, and 0-25 would be idiots. It sounds shocking to hear, I know, but in Goddard's day, those terms had none of the negative connotations they do today. The eventual stigma those terms came to communicate led to their being replaced by the terms "mild, moderate and severe mental retardation." Then, the eventual stigma *those* terms came to communicate led to their being replaced by the present nomenclature of "mild, moderate, and severe intellectual disability."

By 1916, Stanford Education professor Lewis Terman normed the translated Binet-Simon scales with an American population, thereby allowing American examiners to make a truer apples-to-apples comparison when establishing standard and percentile scores among examinees. The newly-normed instrument became known as the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test, and is still widely used and in its fifth edition at the time of this writing.

Fairly early on, psychometricians began to wonder what, exactly, was going on in the brain that was being measured? Surely, repeating a number series measured a different cognitive skill than, say, stacking colored blocks to recreate patterned designs. English psychologist Charles Spearman was the first to apply formal statistical analysis to explore correlations between tests and among test items. When he analyzed the statistical relationships among school grades across seemingly unrelated subjects in individual children, he found strong positive correlates; children who scored higher in math also scored higher in language arts and history. There must be some common cognitive factor, he reasoned, that would explain the correlation—some innate general intellectual ability that fueled all mental tasks. He named that general ability “*g*” for “general factor,” and he proposed that when we’re talking about intelligence, we’re talking about *g*. “One can talk of mind power,” he noted, “in much the same manner as about horse power.”

Intelligence is intellectual power, or intellectual work divided by time. The child who, in ten years, demonstrates the intellectual abilities that the average child needs twelve years to demonstrate is clearly advanced on the time track; in contrast, the child

who needs eighteen years to demonstrate the intellectual abilities that the average child needs only five years to develop is clearly delayed. One of Spearman's students, David Wechsler, would go on to develop what have become two of the most commonly-used IQ measures, the Wechsler Intelligence Scales for Children (now in its fifth edition), and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (now in its fourth edition).

So, Binet, then Goddard, then Terman, then Spearman and Wechsler. The final stop worth making in the developmental journey of psychoeducational assessment is based on the work of three American psychologists, Raymond B. Cattell, John L. Horn and John B. Carroll. Their work is central to the current process used in the evaluation of learning disabilities. All three suspected that while a general factor of intelligence may drive some aspect of broad cognitive ability, surely, we can find more specific subskills that factor in to the variety of intellectual tasks we face on a day-to-day basis. Their resulting body of work is referred to as the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory. Cattell endorsed two forms of ability that emerge as a function of age: fluid and crystallized. Fluid intelligence involves the capacity for reason (like figuring out the best route to drop off your child before picking up the dry cleaning on the other side of town) and the ability to learn new things, and it tends to decline in late adulthood. Crystallized intelligence involves knowledge that has come from past experiences (like understanding what you are reading on this page), and it tends to increase or remain stable with age.

If you lived in College Station, Texas, say in 2019, and you wanted to know your child's cognitive ability, you would make sure to sit next to me in the bleachers next Friday night, since our boys play football together.

“Hey, Adam,” you would start, maybe with some degree of timidity, as the defensive line started pre-game warm up drills. “I hope you don’t mind, but can I ask you a question about testing for learning disabilities? It’s about Mark.”

“Of course,” I would respond.

“Well,” you would continue, “he’s been struggling academically, and we’ve tried everything—tutoring, support with homework, we’ve offered him the moon and the stars as carrots, we’ve taken away the moon and the stars as sticks. You name it, we’ve done it. I’m really starting to think that if he could do the work, he would, and I’m wondering if maybe he actually just can’t. Maybe he has a learning disability? Do you test for that?”

“Yes, I do test for learning disabilities,” I would answer, “and I’d be happy to evaluate him. There are some important things to keep in mind. First, since insurance companies don’t deem educational testing medically necessary, they won’t pay for it, and it would be an out-of-pocket expense for you. Second, even if I did test and determine that your son has a learning disability, the school district doesn’t necessarily have to take my word for it. They might, but they also have the right to conduct their own testing, and it won’t cost you anything. And hopefully, before they did that, they would offer him a series of academic interventions first to see how he responds. There is usually a longer wait in the school system, but they do have timelines that keep them accountable. It’s a lot to think about, but again, I’d be happy to help. Just let me know.”

If you opted to make an appointment in my office, the good news would be that my hands would not need to touch your son’s scalp, and I wouldn’t use a tape measure or caliper. We know now that the cognitive abilities at the heart of CHC theory predict all

kinds of tasks involved in academic endeavor. Processing speed correlates with academic fluency skills; auditory processing correlates with listening comprehension (and the subsequent ability to follow verbal directions); fluid reasoning correlates with applied math problems. Identifying patterns of cognitive and academic strengths and weaknesses (and the potential learning disabilities associated with them) has never before been a more reliable or valid process.

I'll conclude this section on IQ testing by acknowledging that the field of intelligence testing, as data-driven as it is, has been controversial almost from the get-go. Terman and Princeton University psychologist Carl Bringham argued that the collective IQ of the United States was dropping due to the influx of immigrants, and they recommended (among many other unthinkable interventions) that children be segregated by racial identification to decrease the phenomenon of breeding across races. Consider this from Terman:

“High-grade or border-line deficiency ... is very, very common among Spanish-Indian and Mexican families of the Southwest and also among Negroes. Their dullness seems to be racial, or at least inherent in the family stocks from which they come ... Children of this group should be segregated into separate classes ... They cannot master abstractions but they can often be made into efficient workers ... from a eugenic point of view they

constitute a grave problem because of their unusually prolific breeding.”

I could go on here, but I’m sure you get the point. IQ testing has been used to harmful ends, and those abuses have created a public relations struggle for the field. We must make no mistake about it, though: **today, intelligence tests are more valid and reliable than any other kind of psychological measurement.** IQ as a construct is more valid than any other phenomena we measure in the social sciences. Intellectual abilities are real, they vary across individuals, and they do have predictive qualities.

What about *emotional* intelligence, though? Can the same be said of it, or was Peterson right? Let’s move to the second stop in our ethics journey.

Measuring Emotional Intelligence

While Goddard and Terman’s work popularized the use of IQ tests in educational and military settings, a psychologist at Teachers College of Columbia University wondered about the utility of such testing in the workforce. As America settled into the throes of its second industrial revolution, labor leaders, business managers and executives were tasked with the challenge of creating effective work teams from an increasingly diverse population. Edward Thorndike, a psychologist who worked on solving industrial problems, suggested that successful employees would have the ability to understand and manage ideas (abstract intelligence), concrete objects (mechanical intelligence), and

people (social intelligence). Could a test be developed, Thorndike wondered, that would increase our “ability to understand and manage men and women and boys and girls, to act wisely in human relations”?

Thelma Hunt answered. As a psychologist at George Washington University, she created one of the earliest measures of social intelligence—the George Washington University Social Intelligence Test. The field immediately recognized that unlike IQ measures, which were fixed models measuring relatively stable traits, measures of social intelligence were more fluid approaches capturing nuanced and dynamic human traits. For example, the most recent version of Dr. Hunt’s test includes items that ask respondents to recognize the mental state of a speaker, demonstrate judgment in social situations, and demonstrate a sense of humor. This line of psychoeducational assessment would lay the foundation for current assessments and procedures used to diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Early on, many in the field of psychology embraced the value of the study of social intelligence. They recognized only by intuition at that point, given the absence of accumulated data, that our internal emotional landscape *must* factor into the ultimate quality of our experience. Even David Wechsler (of the IQ testing hall of fame noted above), suggested that affective—and not just intellectual—aspects of our experience may not just be related, but in fact essential to human achievement. (Wechsler is reported to have recanted this claim later in his career, a detail that speaks to the division that remains in the field about whether emotional intelligence is a viable, measurable construct.)

Fast forward to 1983 and Howard Gardner's release of *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. He had touched on the idea of multiple intelligences in his 1973 *The Shattered Mind*, in which he explored the impact of brain trauma on subsequent cognition. *Frames of Mind*, though, represented the formal introduction of his theory of multiple intelligences to the world. Surely, he thought, humans possess a variety of cognitive skills and process information differently from one another, and with skills that are not necessarily correlated. Rather than seeing intelligence as Peterson does, being driven by a single underlying factor (g) and subfactors (G_v , G_s , etc.), Gardner proposed that we might be better served in understanding intelligence if we consider these modalities: 1) musical-rhythmic; 2) visual-spatial; 3) verbal-linguistic; 4) logical-mathematical; 5) bodily-kinesthetic; 6) interpersonal; 7) intrapersonal; 8) naturalistic. He concluded that each of these modalities share common underlying factors and meet certain life-function criteria.

The idea was generally well-received, but there were detractors. The mixed reaction to Gardner's theory illustrates the importance of distinguishing actuarial versus clinical validity. Before I tell you why reactions to Gardner were mixed, though, let me first explain what I mean when I mention the difference between actuarial and clinical validity in the context of measurement.

A valid test is one that is logically sound and shown to measure what it reports to measure. Actuarial validity is considered the gold standard when establishing a test's validity. Is a given yardstick, for example, truly thirty-six inches? We might say that a yardstick with actuarial validity is one that has, in fact, been measured against many other

yardsticks that have proven to be thirty-six inches, and the data shows that our yardstick consistently matches the comparison group.

In contrast, a test's clinical validity is established not so much by proven data, but when we've used the test and found good results. Clinical validity is more of a real-life test, and for the pragmatist, clinical validity is the bottom line. In sum, actuarial validity asks, "*Does the data prove it true?*", while clinical validity asks, "*Does this thing help?*"

Now, back to the mixed reaction to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Opposers of his theory argued that it had no actuarial validity: that is, there was no hard data to verify that these different kinds of intelligences exist, let alone ways to measure them (quite unlike CHC's *g*, *Gs*, etc.). No hard data means no validity. Period. You might think of the opposers, Peterson among them, as embracing the worldview summarized by the quote from American engineer W. Edwards Deming, "In God we trust, all others must bring data."

However, some people—educators, in particular—*loved* the idea of multiple intelligences. "*I don't care what the data does or does not say, they reasoned, now that we know that kids might learn differently, we can diversify our educational strategies to access the strengths of the individual learner and, therefore, increase learning in our classrooms.*" In other words, the idea of multiple intelligences had "clinical validity," meaning that it was useful in the classroom. More on how clinical validity relates to SEL soon, but first let's finish the timeline of our emotional intelligence journey—by way of Peter Salovey, John Mayer (not the musician), Daniel Goleman and CASEL.

After Gardner formally brought the idea of multiple intelligences, Peter Salovey and his colleague John Mayer developed a theory of emotional intelligence and authored one of the most widely-used measures of emotional intelligence, the Mayer-Solovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test. Test items require examinees to read emotions in people, landscapes, and designs, and to compare emotions to sensations like lights and colors. It also asks that test-takers determine which emotional strategy would be most effective in a certain social situation.

Although Salovey and Mayer are credited with coining the term “emotional intelligence,” it was Daniel Goleman’s 1995 New York Times bestselling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* that solidified the term into the public lexicon. “If your emotional abilities aren’t in hand,” he wrote, “if you don’t have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can’t have empathy and have effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far.”

As Goleman’s work was taking the corporate world by storm, we in schools were beginning to see an alarming rate of aggression and violence on our campuses. Could pro-social training be an answer? Thus, SEL entered in on mainstream education when the Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was formed as a national organization to serve as a clearing house, per se, for all things SEL. The organization moved to Chicago in the late 1990s and eventually changed its name to the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning. A key element of

standardization that arose from CASEL was the foundational understanding that SEL would incorporate the following five components:

1. Self-awareness: identifying emotions; accurate self-perception; recognizing strengths; self-confidence; self-efficacy
2. Self-regulation: impulse control; stress management; self-discipline; self-motivation; goal-setting; organizational skills
3. Social awareness: perspective-taking; empathy; appreciating diversity; respect for others
4. Social/relationship skills: communication; social engagement; relationship building; teamwork; conflict resolution
5. Responsible decision making: analyzing situations; solving problems; evaluating; reflecting; ethical responsibility

So, what started with Edward Thorndike's desire to improve employee performance in an increasingly diverse workplace and Thelma Hunt's attempt to measure emotional intelligence has now become what we refer to as SEL in schools. Though some may still argue against SEL's actuarial validity, its clinical validity cannot be denied: **our capacities to recognize and regulate ourselves and others—despite IQ—clearly predicts outcomes for individuals and organizations.**

Stick with me. I'll prove it.

Your Very Own IQ and EQ Test

Step into my office, where I will ask you to take a short IQ and EQ test. Bear with me as you think through the answers, and when we're done, you'll see why we went this route. I recommend grabbing a pen and paper to jot down your answers as we go.

The IQ problems are matrices that measure nonverbal reasoning, attention to detail and visual processing. These are the cognitive skills that predict how well you do things like merge into highway traffic or respond to your daughter's obscure request for a large sum of money. If you don't feel like you did particularly well after you go through them, don't worry about it. Remember, this is only measuring one particular kind of cognitive ability, and this kind might not be your strength. For example, I'm pretty good at crossword puzzles, but I hate sudoku puzzles because I'm terrible at them.

The first item is very straightforward. You have ten seconds to replace the question mark with the best of the responses offered in the second matrix. Don't read on until you have an answer. Remember: ten seconds. Ready, set, go.

IQ Test Item #1

b	b
b	?

a	b	r	m	s
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Similarity drives the pattern among the letters presented in IQ Test Item #1. It's a straightforward presentation—nothing really to overthink—and the correct answer is b. I can think of no other interpretations of the matrix that would argue that another response is better. Most people arrive at the correct answer in less than 10 seconds, but if it took you the full 10, no problem.

On to IQ Test Item #2. This one is a little more abstract, so you'll have twenty seconds to select your final answer. Again, don't read on until you have chosen your answer. Ready, set, go.

IQ Test Item #2

b	d
p	?

a	R	9	q	m
---	---	---	---	---

IQ Test Item #2 draws into relationship the letters b and d, and the letters b and p. One might reason that since the letters b and d are separated by a single letter, the correct answer would be R, because p and r are also separated by a single letter. However, two details argue against R as the correct response. First, the letters b, d and p in the first matrix are lower case, and the R presented in the second matrix is upper case. Second, the letters b, d, and p are presented in the same font, and the letter R presented in a different font. For test item #2, then, the best response is q because the q preserves the pattern of loops facing inward and stems on the outside pointing downward.

You're doing great. Here's the next one, again somewhat more abstract than the previous test item. Again, twenty seconds. Ready, set, go.

IQ Test Item #3

A	Z
E	?

R	B	F	X	V
---	---	---	---	---

The best answer to IQ Test Item #3 is V. A and Z represent the outer boundaries of the alphabet, and both E and V are four letters removed from the end. Okay, here's the last one. It's *very* abstract. Give it 30 seconds, and if you don't know the answer, don't sweat it, just go ahead and read on. Ready, set, go.

IQ Test Item #4

¥	☉
😊	?

2S	SS	{2	&I	HS
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I'll explain the correct answer to this one at the end of the chapter. Hang on—later you will understand my rationale for waiting (it has to do with how we respond to some of life's toughest problems).

Now, let's shift to our EQ problems. These will be like the IQ Test Items in that the first one will be straightforward and then they'll get more complex. Read the description below and identify how the person in the story erred, particularly in the

context of the five tenets of SEL (self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness/empathy, social/relationship skills, and responsible decision-making).

You'll have 30 seconds to determine how the subject erred, and for this question, I'd like you to use at least three components of SEL to explain your answer. Ready, set, go.

EQ Test Item #1

A male, district-level administrator expresses his frustration with a female campus-level administrator to three other district employees. He asks, "What does she bring to this district other than her (body parts)?"

Let's consider our answer with the five aspects of SEL in mind. We don't know for sure if the administrator demonstrated self-awareness, but it's not likely. We do know by his inability to express his anger appropriately, that he failed at the self-regulation of his emotion. Also, it's unlikely that he had much, if any, social awareness. If he did, he would have been able to consider the perspective of the female employee he was criticizing (and every other female, for that matter) and become aware of how hurtful and grossly inappropriate his words were. Even a modest amount of social skills would have told him that such expressions of anger would destroy any hope of a favorable team dynamic. Finally, he clearly did not engage in responsible decision-making, as evidenced by the fact that he wasn't thinking about his ethical responsibility to the district.

Let's go on to EQ Test Item #2, in which you are asked to identify at least three problems with the email a campus-level administrator sent to her faculty. You have 30 seconds. Ready, set, go.

EQ Test Item #2

Attention faculty:

It has come to my attention that some of you are not turning in lesson plans to your coordinator as we discussed during our last faculty meeting. Remember, WE AGREED THAT THIS WOULD BE THE PROCESS! It frustrates me that SOME OF YOU are making this a problem for everyone. I trust that this WON'T be an issue moving forward.

Dr. Smith

Granted, this administrator does seem to have some self-awareness, as she is able to identify that she's frustrated (that's better than the guy in EQ Test Item #1). It's pretty much downhill from there, though. First, she chose to address the entire faculty for mistakes that only a few made; she would have been much wiser to have simply addressed those few offenders in isolation. This represents a lack of responsible

decision-making. Second, SHE CHOSE TO USE CAP LOCKS, WHICH IS ALMOST NEVER A GOOD IDEA, BECAUSE IT COMES ACROSS LIKE SHE IS A SHOUTING, CONDESCENDING JERK WHO LACKS THE LINGUISTIC CAPACITY TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY USING BIG GIRL WRITING SKILLS. This represents a lack of self-regulation and social skills. Third, she offers no encouragement, no indications of what the faculty is doing well and zero positivity. Words of encouragement are often a spoonful of sugar that can help the medicine go down. This represents a lack of empathy, or understanding that her teachers have many demands placed on them, and might have simply forgotten the new requirement. Fourth, the opening and closing are rudely brief. No “Dear Faculty” or “Good morning, everyone.” Instead, she goes with “Attention faculty,” which makes it sound like she’s about to issue a military command. She offers no real closing (even something as simple as “Sincerely” would have warmed things up), and she uses her title with no first name. There is a time for titles in more formal settings (like an Individualized Education Plan meeting, for example), but my experience amongst colleagues is that “Adam” conveys more friendly and approachable tones than “Dr. Saenz.” The opening and closing indicate the lack of empathy and social skills. Those are four things I see. Can you think of anything else?

Okay, now, let’s move on to the final EQ test item. This one is much more advanced, so take as long as you’d like to think through it.

EQ Test Item #3

One of your second-grade teachers is returning from maternity leave and although you don't know for sure, you believe she is struggling with postpartum depression. Since you have known her for some years, you know that she is a highly agreeable person. How could her personality style potentially help her in this time, and how might it hinder her? How would personality style potentially help and hinder you in your role of supporting/directing her? Would your preferred stress-management style (think "fight or flight") complement or compete with hers?

Like I said, this one is more advanced. Most people aren't knowledgeable about their personality types or their stress coping styles (you'll learn a lot more about yours in the next four chapters), so let me jump in here. I'll take it question by question:

How would her personality style help and hinder her?

Since she is highly agreeable (and would score high on the Agreeableness trait on the Big Five personality theory), she is likely going to be able to connect with others easily. She is probably an ideal team player who is committed to the group dynamic and responds favorably to leadership. However, people who score high on the Agreeableness scale are often prone to be people pleasers who fear disappointing others. She is at risk,

then, for not being honest about her needs for fear of being rejected or isolated.

How would your personality style help and hinder your role in supporting/directing her?

Since I score high on the Conscientiousness scale, I would be helpful to her because I could create a list of things to do to help her find out whether she has depression and if so, how to deal with it. If she couldn't get the list done, I probably would offer to help, since nothing excites us high Conscientiousness folk more than checking things off our to-do list. However, since I also score low on the Agreeableness scale, I probably wouldn't be relationally-engaged enough to approach her with kindness, and I probably would come across as too matter-of-fact, which isn't very helpful when talking about sensitive issues. It's unlikely that I would adequately communicate my concern for her, and since she is high in Agreeableness, she probably would have sensed that right away.

Would your preferred stress-management style complement or compete with hers?

My stress-management style would probably complement hers. Generally, I am fairly balanced in my capacities to engage and

disengage in response to stress. Whether she preferred to respond to stress by engaging or disengaging, I feel confident that I would be able to help her find coping strategies.

It Takes SEL to Teach SEL

Okay, this is where we get real-life. This is where we tie it together: the ethical roadmap involving the history lesson in IQ and EQ, actuarial versus clinical validity, why SEL matters, and how I think SEL is best learned.

Since we know that IQ predicts performance, we can predict that someone who struggled to find the correct answer to IQ Test Item #1 will have an incredibly difficult, if not impossible, time managing the tasks and understanding the relationships associated with leading a classroom. Supervising a campus or district wouldn't even be a consideration. We know both intuitively and empirically that a specified amount of intelligence is necessary to function as a professional educator, and that's part of the reason we ask classroom leaders to have college degrees and campus/district leaders to have graduate degrees. In essence, we have gatekeeping processes that serve the best interest of our students by offering them leadership from adults who have demonstrated the cognitive capacity to keep them safe and to keep them learning. That seems reasonable and straightforward, right?

But here's the thing: we don't hold the same standard for emotional intelligence—there is no equivalent gatekeeper. We might argue that growth plans and eventual

terminations serve as gatekeepers to keep adults who lack emotional intelligence out of positions of influence with children, but those are *post hoc* and generally ineffective approaches; most of us know adults who beat the system by hopping from school to school and from district to district. The first two EQ test items I presented above are real cases I've personally encountered in my work in schools. The district-level administrator in EQ Test Item #1, while being placed on paid leave for a long series of ethical violations (including making that comment), secured a job leading another district, and through legal haranguing, received not only a letter of recommendation, but a payout on the balance of his contract.

Let me be clear: I didn't walk you through this chapter simply to tee-up a cynical argument suggesting that schools are filled with emotionally unintelligent adults. My point is that regardless of whether hard data shows that EQ/SEL does, in fact, hold empirical validity, the EQ test items presented here illustrate that having good awareness and regulatory skills are essential for productive outcomes, both for the individual and for the group. When those skills are not in place, students and adults are not safe (at least psychologically, if not also physically), and students don't learn what we hope they will, and probably do learn many things we hope they won't. There is clear clinical validity here.

Since SEL is clearly important, the question then becomes *how* do we empower educators and students with the SEL skill set they will need to be successful. There are three main approaches to SEL interventions. The first approach is the mental health professional as the interventionist. In this model, the counselor or school psychologist

enters a classroom to deliver a fifteen to twenty-minute SEL lesson. That model is certainly better than no intervention at all, but it tends to lack effectiveness. The second model is the classroom teacher as the interventionist. This model is more effective because it is scalable: each student has the opportunity to receive a lesson on any given day by any given teacher. The third option is the most effective, and that is every adult as the intervention. Note that the intervention in the third model is not a curriculum, per se, but every adult committed to being a living example of emotional intelligence.

As we considered the question of how, two key words that guided us were “think systemically.” The traditional leader who drives change from the top often creates change-resistant organizations by failing to tap the leadership capacities of the people at all levels within the organization. This means that effective SEL interventions cannot be understood as something only a handful of people are qualified or required to implement. Rather, effective SEL interventions are a commitment made by everyone on a campus or in a district—all leaders and all followers—to be living examples of increasing emotional intelligence. What is true of academic content is also true of SEL: I can’t teach what I don’t know.

Before I end the chapter, let me go back and address IQ Test Item #4. I left the item unanswered, and I know that will cause many of you teacher-types to lose sleep until you find resolution. Okay, here’s the deal: I don’t know that there is a right answer. I created items that were as random as I could possibly imagine, that bear no real relationship with one another. If we thought long enough about it, we could probably make arguments for any one of the five options. Maybe, if we found someone with an IQ

of a bazillion, they would find the answer immediately, but it's not likely. The only thing we can do with a problem like that is to engage our problem-solving skills and make our best guess. We may face the disappointment of not choosing correctly in the end, but we can find peace in the fact that we have done our best with what we were given.

That's probably not the most satisfying answer you'd hope for, but there is a point to it. Sometimes life throws curve balls. I mean *insane* curveballs. Like a student coming to school with loaded weapons, intent on taking lives. Like a young child living her last few days before finally succumbing to cancer. If you think having a Ph.D. in psychology somehow empowers you with the emotional intelligence to know how to solve (or at least effectively help) those kinds of life problems, I humbly suggest that you are wrong. Sometimes life presents emotional problems that either seem unsolvable or, in fact, are not solvable. When life presents those kinds of problems, our solace comes from doing our best possible-work in the approach. What more can we ask of ourselves?

- Social and emotional learning is essential to responding adaptively (or responding well) to crisis.
- Those who experience long and satisfying careers in education are individuals who are emotionally intelligent. They are known as Life Givers. Educators who don't practice emotional intelligence tend to be miserable and make those around them miserable. They are Life Suckers.
- Social and emotional learning has been validated by research as much as any other academic or behavioral intervention in education. SEL has proved to enhance both academic and behavioral growth in students.
- Educators who are emotionally intelligent are more adaptive, sustainable, and healthy, and they tend to connect more fluidly with their students.
- The most effective teachers of SEL skills are adults who regularly practice the skills themselves.

1. Consider your day today, in the context of the five elements of SEL (self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, social/relationship skills, and responsible decision making). Name a point in your day when you practiced one of these. Where might there have been a missed opportunity to practice another SEL skill?
2. Think about a recent conversation or email exchange with a colleague, friend or family member that elicited (in you) an emotional response. Can you identify what emotion was aroused, and how you managed that emotion? See, look at your well-versed-SEL-self in the works!
3. Can you think of someone (if you are a teacher, try to think of a particular student) who exhibits a noticeable amount of one of the SEL tenets? Can you think of someone who would benefit from more instruction/practice in one of the SEL skills?



Figure 11: A Broad Conceptual Model for SEL

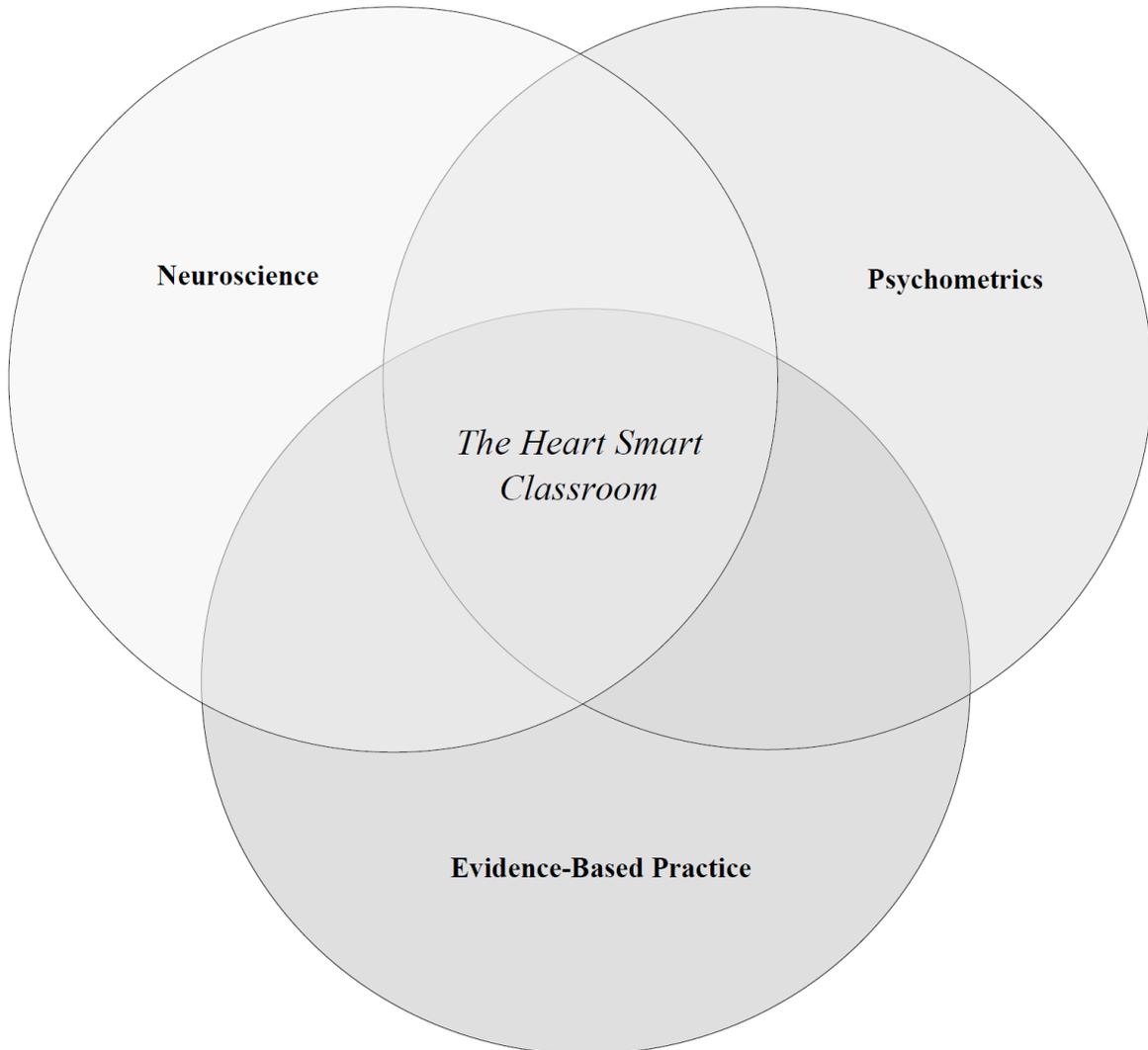


Figure 12: A Broad Conceptual Model for the Heart Smart Classroom