



## **Developing Emotional Intelligence: Beam Me Up!**

Remember the television series Star Trek? In this series crew members of the starship “Enterprise” would transport from one area to another by changing their composition and rematerializing in a different place. We may not be able to transmute ourselves in exactly that way, but it is a useful representation of how we can transform our emotional selves by using energetic solutions to difficult emotions and bring ourselves to a new reality.

The first troubling emotion we encounter at the bottom of Dr. David Hawkins’ emotional scale is that of shame. Shame describes a range of feeling from a mild feeling of embarrassment to the deepest experience of humiliation or mortification. Shame must be distinguished from guilt if we are to have a clear way of understanding and clearing our energies to rise to higher levels of functionality.

Guilt is that feeling we encounter when we have acted in way that violates certain rules that we or society hold as the right or correct way to behave. As such guilt can be relatively easy to dispense with as we can notice our behavior, realize the consequences and make different choices in the future. Shame on the other hand speaks to the quality of our inner self versus our actions. This being the case, it is more complex to erase from our inner landscape and it requires a different set of tools than guilt.

Shame has its roots in our early life-- how we were treated, valued (or not), responded to (or not), and what we were taught to believe about ourselves, the nature of the universe, and others. It is perhaps easy to see that if a person had some major trauma to their “inner self” early in life then they would have an imprinted pattern for a shame based personality. It is generally harder to be aware of how covert and insidious messages result in the integration of shame based qualities. The types of environments that breed the latter tend to be more dysfunctional in a verbal or emotional way than the former. A great deal of what is accepted as normal interchange between people is actually quite destructive to the unformed inner self of a growing child.

In addition, just the normal experience of childhood when looked at through the eyes of a developing child helps us to understand how and why some shame based aspects form within the personality even when horrific abuse is not present. Issues of size, shape, dexterity, dependence, skill and ability are particularly relevant on the journey from infancy through young adulthood. We compare ourselves with others even when there is no outside influence doing so...but of course there is also that, as so many know!

In addition, as a society we are much more focused on the reactions to shame than on the identification of its sources and healing. Our search for more, bigger, better, winning, awards, accomplishments, record setting, being number one etc often are reactions to underlying beliefs about being fundamentally flawed, bad, wrong, dirty, or broken in some unknown but very real and intense way at an emotional level.

Of course there is nothing wrong with being the best you can be, accomplishing, and winning, achieving or having a more abundant life. The issue is the driving force, the underlying intention. If the above behaviors arise from unhealed emotional wounds they will probably lead ultimately to feelings of emptiness even when they result in outward success.

A plan to heal shame based issues includes recognizing the feelings that are related to shame, discover their tap roots and commit to a plan to defuse them from your body-mind. Depending on how deep or chronic these issues are, working with a therapist who is skilled with Inner Child work, EMDR or Interactive Guided Imagery can be most helpful. Energy based modalities are particularly powerful for symptom release as well as for deeper healing and opening to more wholeness and expansion into a larger sense of self. If you feel shame or humiliation around any area or aspect of your life, here are three exercises you can try to begin to release the feelings from your body and mind:

**Choose to Move Up the Emotional Scale ...** Regardless of how you feel, you CAN choose to feel better. If you are feeling shame, remind yourself that it is just a feeling, not the real or total YOU. It is good news that you recognize it. By recognizing it, you can choose to release it and let it go. Play a game with yourself. Begin by writing a statement about how you feel. Then write a series of statements that are an improvement over how you feel, such as:

I feel shame about how I treat other people in my life.  
The feelings began when I was humiliated as a child.  
I am embarrassed to share how I truly feel with others.  
I fear what other people might think of me.  
I blame my parents and family for my inability to move forward.  
I regret that I haven't done anything about this sooner.  
I get anxious and overwhelmed when I think about what I should do.  
I know now that things can be different and I don't have to hold this feeling in.  
I choose to forgive myself and to let it go.

It is important to work with feeling these improved states in addition to simply having the thought.

**Write About Your Feelings in a Private Journal** ... this is a fabulous way to privately release thoughts and feelings that you are holding in. Get a journal or a notebook, sit down in a quiet space and write about how you truly feel. Write for as long as you want. Then read it over and underline all of the feeling words. On a separate page, list these in a column going down the left side of the page. Now on the right side of the paper, write the opposite feeling. Read it over, going from left to right. Feel the difference. Choose how you will feel going forward. Take this one step further and script how you intend to feel going forward. Write a story. Put yourself in the story and envision it happening. Describe your new feelings in as much detail as you can. Feel the essence of them. Spend time in your *new* feeling-state by reading over your story daily.

**Meditate** ... Meditation is such a powerful technique for being in touch with your true nature. Choose a quiet and comfortable spot. Perhaps light a candle or play some soft music. Sit in a chair or on the floor. Make sure your spine is straight and that you are as comfortable as possible. Close your eyes or just soften your focus. Breathe as deeply as you can. Place your awareness on your breath. Let your mind settle into the sensation of the breath rather than thoughts about the breath. Breathe slowly and evenly. Settle into an easy place of neutrality where you release all thoughts about the outer world, your conflicts, struggles and pains. Allow yourself a respite, a time of release from worldly concerns.

If it feels comfortable for you, envision breathing in and out through your heart. Simply be with this moment. You may feel your heart opening. Release into the peaceful sensations available through the heart. Let your mind rest. Know that all you need to know will come to you in the right time and way. Trust that you are in the right place. Know that your life is on the right path.

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