

EXPLORING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A LINE OF DEVELOPMENT

An Integral Stage Development Model

Kirk Leslie

ABSTRACT This article explores emotional intelligence and its relationship to the integral psychograph as a line of development. Emotional intelligence will be examined using a proposed stage development model to analyze the abilities or skills an individual attains as emotions are held in a more complex fashion. Focus will be primarily on the Upper-Left quadrant. Definitions of emotional intelligence will be examined as well as relationships to other lines of development in the Integral model. Methods to measure the various aspects of emotional intelligence (abilities, traits, skills, and competencies) and comparisons of different emotional intelligence models will be explored.

KEY WORDS emotion; emotional intelligence; human development; psychograph; stages

The theoretical concept of an integral psychograph serves as an assessment tool to estimate one's developmental progress. On the Integral Institute website, Ken Wilber (2007a) posits:

In the Integral model, the psychograph measures the degree of growth an individual has achieved in various lines of development—cognitive, moral, aesthetic, kinaesthetic, values, affect [emotions], etc.—as awareness expands from egocentric (me), to ethnocentric (us), to worldcentric (all of us), to Kosmocentric (all sentient beings) modes of being. The purpose of such a tool is twofold: 1) by knowing one's own strengths and weaknesses, one can navigate life much more effectively, compassionately, and wisely; and 2) the psychograph shows *how close your consciousness is to being one with everything*.

Wilber explains that by using a psychograph to help predict an individual's center of gravity, many developmental aspects of the individual can be studied using the Integral approach. Wilber (2007a) suggests that "developmental stages are more like 'probability clouds' than rigid rungs in a ladder." Kurt Fischer and Zheng Yan (2002) agree, stating, "People's capacities are not fixed but vary across a broad range of levels from moment to moment" (p. 15). Psychometric tests of different lines of development are used to determine levels of development and plot the growth in skills and abilities on a graph. Although other uses for the psychograph exist, the realm being examined in this article will be its use as a map to help one navigate life in an effective, wise manner.

Correspondence: Kirk Leslie, 7111 Independence Square Point #207, Colorado Springs, CO 80915. *E-mail:* cklelie@msn.com.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

The term *emotional intelligence* has been in use since the 1950s (Mayer et al., 2007, p. 509), but in 1990, Peter Salovey and John Mayer coined the now accepted use of the term and went on to define it as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). Daniel Goleman, in *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ* (1995), describes emotional intelligence as “abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope” (p. 34).

Emotion and Cognition

Emotion, as defined by the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (2009), is “the affective aspect of consciousness: a state of feeling: a conscious mental reaction (as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body.” Lisa Barrett, Paula Niedenthal, and Piotr Winkielman (2005), using their affect-induction model, conceive emotion as “foundational processes of attention, arousal, valenced affect, and motivation. These very basic processes can include both conscious and unconscious components and are critical in guiding an individual’s moment-to-moment decision making and behavior” (p. 186). For the purposes of this article, emotions are understood as how we register what is happening in the world around us and how they complement cognition.

The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (2009) defines *intelligence* as “the ability to learn or understand or to deal with new or trying situations: the skilled use of reason: the ability to apply knowledge to manipulate one’s environment or to think abstractly as measured by objective criteria (as tests).” Howard Gardner, in his 1999 book, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*, refers to emotional intelligence as a skill or a subset of two of his own intelligences, interpersonal and intrapersonal. Gardner makes a clear distinction between what an intelligence capacity entails versus what an emotional behavior describes (p. 206). He explains that the core constructs of interpersonal intelligence include the “capacities to discern and respond appropriately to the moods, temperaments, motivations, and desires of other people” (1989, p. 7). In intrapersonal intelligences, his key to self-knowledge through self-assessment, he includes “access to one’s own feelings and the ability to discriminate among them and draw upon them to guide behavior” (p. 7).

Robert Kegan (1982) summarizes the relationship between emotions and cognition, and their effect on personal growth, by suggesting:

In this sense, evolutionary activity is intrinsically cognitive, but it is not less affective; we *are* this activity and we experience it. Affect is essentially phenomenological, the felt experience of a motions (hence, “e-motion”). In identifying evolutionary activity as the fundamental ground of personality I am suggesting that the source of our emotions is the phenomenological experience of evolving, of defending, surrendering, and reconstructing a center. (p. 81)

Emotions and emotional intelligences interact or intersect with most other lines of development. Therefore, emotional intelligence is likely to impact other abilities. For example, the sub-skill of emotional regulation, when lacking, can render one impulsive, overwhelmed with feeling, and cloud the ability to think clearly. On the other hand, balance between moderate emotional regulation and emotional awareness can add to the understanding of what is happening at any given time. In fact, artistic talent involves a lot of emotional understanding and expression, both in the artist and the audience. So it is important for us to figure out the role

of emotions in our best functioning, to clarify what makes a person seem to be high or low in emotional intelligence, and to map out intermediate steps to give us some direction when assessing emotional intelligence.

Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence

According to Kurt Fischer and colleagues (1990), “Emotions develop, and as they do, they help structure and direct other aspects of development. A theory of emotional development needs to explicate both of these distinct sets of phenomena—the development of emotions and the ways that emotions shape development” (p. 82). Fischer’s dynamic skill theory uses the concept of a skill, as it looks at specific tasks and the context they are based in. This differentiates a skill from a competence, ability, or capacity (Fischer & Yan, 2002). For the most part, emotional maturity involves increasing emotional skill sets in acumen and awareness, allowing one to hold emotions with greater insight.

Methods of Measuring Emotional Intelligence

Generally speaking, there are three ways to measure emotional intelligence: self-report, other-report (sometimes referred to as mixed), and ability measurements (Caruso et al., 2008). Notice how these three ways of measuring correlate with first-, second-, and third-person approaches. It is important to remember that all three methods have their strengths and weaknesses:

1. *Self-report* is the most common emotional intelligence measurement and provides information about how subjects perceive themselves. If you want to know how a person “feels” about their emotional skills and abilities, this is the measuring device to use. One major drawback to this method is that a person might not know how they feel about a specific skill or trait, or they could fake how they feel, hoping to score higher on the test.
2. *Other-report* (or mixed) consists of asking friends, family, and colleagues about emotional skills or abilities. These tests help one understand how others perceive emotional abilities, traits, and skills. The problem with this type of testing is how well does the “other” person know the subject? What is their emotional mindset when they are taking the test and can they be fair and non-judgmental?
3. *Ability* measures one’s emotional skills or abilities: emotional skill (a person’s ability to perceive, identify, understand, and work with emotion) is tested and evaluated against the emotional skills of other people. The primary drawbacks are that a large sample is needed and many responders alter their responses to “please” the researcher or because they feel intimidated by the data-gathering method(s).

Models of Emotional Intelligence

Several models of emotional intelligence exist. For our purposes, I focus on three models: the Trait Model, the Emotional Competencies model, and Ability-Based model. The trait-based (or “trait emotional self-efficacy”) model, as proposed by Petrides and colleagues (2004, 2007), refers to “a constellation of behavioral dispositions and self-perceptions” concerning a person’s ability to recognize, process, and utilize emotional information (2007, p. 6). This definition of emotional intelligence encompasses behavioral dispositions and self-perceived abilities; it is measured by self-report and should be investigated within a personality framework.

According to Konstantine Petrides (2007), the concept of emotional intelligence is “a personality trait

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Facet	High Scorers Perceive Themselves as...
Adaptability	Flexible and willing to adapt to new conditions
Assertiveness	Forthright, frank, and willing to stand up for their rights
Emotion perception (self and others)	Clear about their own and other people's feelings
Emotion expression	Capable of communicating their feelings to others
Emotion management (others)	Capable of influencing other people's feelings
Emotion regulation	Capable of controlling their emotions
Impulsiveness (low)	Reflective and less likely to give in to their urges
Relationships	Capable of having fulfilling personal relationships
Self-esteem	Successful and self-confident
Self-motivation	Driven and unlikely to give up in the face of adversity
Social awareness	Accomplished networkers with excellent social skills
Stress management	Capable of withstanding pressure and regulating stress
Trait empathy	Capable of taking someone else's perspective
Trait happiness	Cheerful and satisfied with their lives
Trait optimism	Confident and likely to "look on the bright side" of life

Table 1. Examples of traits within an adult sampling that Petrides and colleagues deem important. Adapted from London Psychometric Laboratory (n.d.).

[that] leads to a construct that lies outside the taxonomy of human cognitive ability” (p. 156) (Table 1). This is an important distinction in trait emotional intelligence. To this end, the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) was developed by Petrides and his colleagues to test emotional intelligence in terms of personality constructs. The four areas of personality tested are: self-control, emotionality, well-being, and sociability. In addition to the problems discussed earlier concerning self-report tests, one drawback I see in trait emotional intelligence is the lack of distinction between emotions and the self-line of development.

The Emotional Competencies model introduced by Goleman is a mixed model that focuses on emotional intelligence as competencies and skills that drive achievement. Goleman goes so far as to posit emotional intelligence to be a stronger predictor of success than IQ (1995). Some of the main EI constructs outlined by Goleman’s model are: initiative, relationship management, adaptability, persuasiveness, and self-awareness. Goleman believes that competencies are learned capabilities that must be worked on and developed to achieve outstanding performance. These abilities can then be used to help one become a more emotionally capable individual or leader. Measurement tools based on Goleman’s model of emotional intelligence include the Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI) and the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal (EIA), which can be used as a self-report or 360-degree assessment.

For years, Mayer and Salovey worked on an ability-based model of emotional intelligence, and in 1990 they proposed three broad areas of research. In their book, *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligences: Educational Implications* (1997), they revised their model to include a fourth ability (p. 11). The four-branch model includes:

1. *Perceiving emotion.* Considered the most basic of the four areas, perceiving emotion includes nonverbal reception and expression of emotion. Social communication has evolved out of abilities to read facial expressions like anger, fear, and happiness. The capacity to accurately perceive emotions in the face or voice of other humans is the beginning of understanding emotions.

2. *Using emotions to facilitate thought.* Emotions can help prioritize thinking by directing attention to important information. When we respond to something emotional, it usually captures our attention; therefore, it is important to have a good emotional input system. Vivid emotions can help aid memory and judgment when feelings are involved. Emotional mood swings can change a person's perspective, encouraging consideration of multiple points of view.
3. *Understanding emotions.* This includes the ability to interpret the meanings that emotions convey regarding relationships and understanding complex feelings as well as emotional blends. Understanding the actions associated with emotional messages is an important aspect of this area.
4. *Managing emotions.* This includes the ability to stay open to feelings, both pleasant and unpleasant, and to be able to detach from an emotion when necessary; the ability to monitor one's own emotions as well as those around you; and the ability to moderate negative emotions while enhancing pleasant ones.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is based on a series of emotional problem-solving items. By testing an individual's abilities in each of the four branches of emotional intelligence, it generates scores for each of the branches as well as a total score. Although Mayer and his associates have scrutinized trait emotional intelligence and mixed model emotional intelligence in the past, opponents of the MSCEIT have stated: "The operationalization of ability EI is problematic because the subjectivity of emotional experience undermines the development of valid maximum-performance (IQ-like) tests" (Petrides et al., 2007, p. 151). In a harsher assessment, Nathan Brody (2004) states:

Three conclusions may be derived from my analysis of the MSCEIT. First, the items used to assess EI are fundamentally different from items used to assess cognitive intelligence. Second, measures of cognitive intelligence may be construed as measures of a latent trait. Psychometric tests of intelligence may have variable and complex relations to the latent trait of which they are a manifestation. Mayer et al. (this issue) have not provided us with clear evidence that establishes a clear conceptual and empirical distinction between their measure and a latent trait of EI. Third, there is no convincing evidence that the MSCEIT provides incremental predictive validity over and above standard measures of intelligence and personality for important socially relevant outcomes. Thus, there is no foundation for the use of the test in applied settings, nor is there evidence indicating that the test measures an important dimension of individual differences. (p. 236)

Although I agree that the MSCEIT needs further refinement, it appears to test for a much broader range of emotional concepts and does a better job of fleshing out the differences between emotions, emotional traits, and the self line of development. A truly helpful emotional assessment would include depth and span of where these emotional skills, traits, and abilities begin to unfold in a natural growth hierarchy.

Emotional Intelligence and the AQAL Model

Taking into account the examples above of the three main groups studying emotional intelligence, one begins to see the complexity associated with trying to tease apart the different facets of emotional intelligence. Is it an intelligence as defined by Gardner, or is it traits, abilities, or possibly all? Maybe emotional

intelligence is just a subset of the cognitive or self line? To help shed some light on these and other questions concerning emotional intelligence, it is propitious to view the subject from as many perspectives as possible. When one uses an Integral approach or the AQAL model as a lens, a much deeper clarity arises (i.e., the problem is viewed through the four major dimensions of being with support from the levels, lines, states, and types of the framework). According to Wilber (2006), human life develops through six to seven developmental levels of consciousness and along two axes of enlightenment, structures and states. The Integral map uses four fundamental perspectives or dimensions of life, referred to as the quadrants, to help explain an event or problem. They are the: Upper-Left (I) quadrant, Upper-Right (It) quadrant, Lower-Right (Its) quadrant, and the Lower-Left (We) quadrant (see Fig. 1 for an overview of emotional intelligence in the quadrants). For more information on the AQAL model, see Wilber (2007b).

The following scenario will show how one can hold these four fundamental perspectives of emotions by using the four quadrants to gain greater clarity and a deeper understanding of an event:

Looking at an emotion as it tetra-arises through the four dimensions of being, one might first examine the psychological influences the emotion is placing on the individual's interior self or consciousness (I quadrant). We would be looking at how this emotion makes the person feel: is he happy, sad, angry, or depressed, and why? Is this emotion arising from the guilt of a broken value held so closely to his soul for so long or did his best friend just get hurt in a car accident? In the next dimension or quadrant, we would be examining the objective, external reality (It quadrant) of the individual and what behavioral aspects are playing a role in his reaction to the emotion. Maybe his best friend is his girlfriend and he was in a car accident with her, receiving cuts and bruises to his body and a concussion to his brain. His body is pumped so full of adrenaline from the surprise and shock of the accident that he can't think how to help his girlfriend who is unconscious and bleeding from the head. Moving on to the third dimension of being (Its quadrant), we begin to see why the emotion the young man is feeling might not only be guilt but panic, too. He and his girlfriend are underage and stole some liquor from their parent's liquor cabinets and were drinking heavily as they drove down the highway. His girlfriend is badly hurt and needs to get to a hospital, but his actions will be scrutinized by two of our social systems (the police force and the court systems). Using the last fundamental perspective (We quadrant), we see what cultural influences come into play and the effect they will have on the boy's emotional state. Has he broken the trust of both his parents and his girlfriend's parents? Will he become an outcast from her family and friends for stepping over cultural boundaries? These questions and many more are racing through the young man's mind and have created not just one emotion, but a combination of many emotions (guilt, sorrow, confusion, panic, shame, etc.) for him to try to make meaning of right now.

Watching events unfold in this young man's body-mind through the four quadrants gives us insight into what is happening. To delve deeper into emotions and emotional intelligence, we must look through the different levels and lines of development using Integral Theory. As we look back at Gardner's definition of intelligences, I agree with him that emotions are not "contents," like his other intelligences, but I would suggest that emotional intelligence is a line of development on an integral psychograph that moves through stages of development. Wilber (2006) would seem to agree, as emotional intelligence is listed as a developmental line (p. 23) and again is part of Table 2.1 (p. 60). According to Wilber, the life question asked by the emotional line is, "How do I feel about this?" Wilber (2006) gives a keen example of the interrelatedness of lines and levels when he posits:

The great developmentalists simply watched those questions and their answer, noticed the structure of the answers, and followed those over time. Doing so (as we saw with Gilligan) allowed them to see that each of these developmental lines possesses levels (that unfold in stages or waves). Even referring to "highly developed" or "poorly developed" implies levels of development, and indeed, each of the devel-

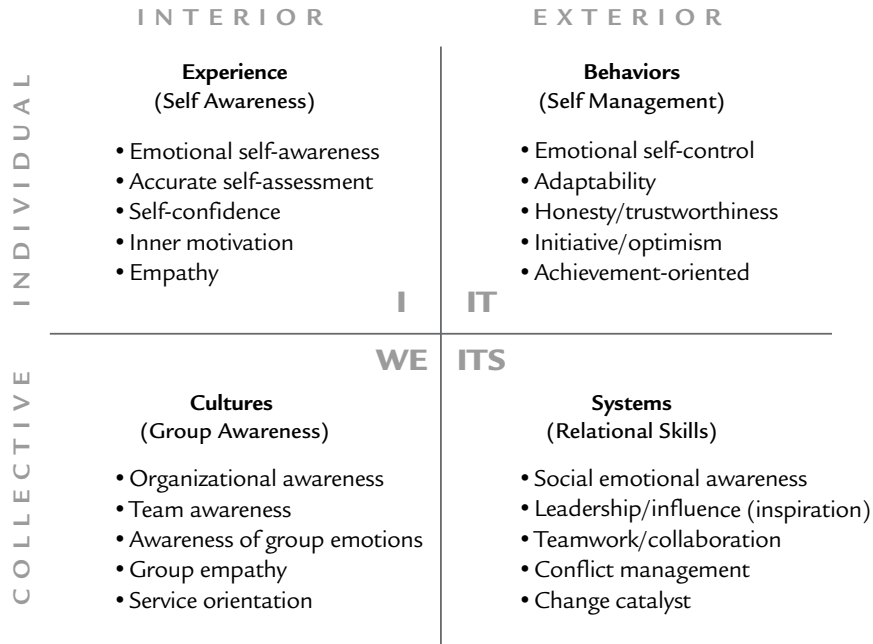


Figure 1. Some of the essential considerations of emotional intelligence mapped to the four quadrants. Adapted from Goleman et al. (2002, p. 39).

opmental lines has been shown to have its own levels of accomplishment (and hence, stages of unfolding)—low to medium to high to very high (with no indication of an upper limit so far...). A “level of development” is always a “level in a particular line.” We earlier noted an example of three general stages in the moral line: egocentric to ethnocentric to worldcentric. (pp. 60-61)

With this interconnection between lines and levels of development, it becomes easier to understand why emotional intelligence is hard to plot on an integral psychograph. If I want to plot the altitude of a Conformist in the values line, and see what is important to their meaning-making at that stage of life, I would go to Clare Graves’ or Don Beck’s developmental stage models and read what is generally important to a person at that altitude or stage. The same would go for morals and Lawrence Kohlberg, cognitive development and Robert Kegan/Jean Piaget, the self and Jane Loevinger, and even needs and Abraham Maslow. If we had an emotional intelligence stage of development we could work with skills, traits, or abilities, and simply look to see where that aspect of emotion would be located on the stage-like development and plot it there. This in turn would help us determine a level of emotional intelligence for that skill and what the person would experience next in a natural progression. Consider this scenario: even though a 3-year-old, a 7-year-old, and a 25-year-old would all be emotionally apprehensive when breaking their mother’s favorite piece of china, each would respond according to their emotional level of development. The 3-year-old might begin crying and pleading not to be punished, the 7-year-old might claim it was an accident and he is not sure how it happened, and the 25-year-old would probably go give his mother a hug, tell her how sorry he was, and promise to buy her a new piece of china just like the broken one. Each would use his level of emotional meaning-making or emotional stage of development to solve the mishap. But what are those stages of emotional development? Wilber (1996) describes several lines of the self in his developmental stages, but I list only the affective atmospheres and elements after each stage. The following is the closest structure I could find to a stage sequence for emotional intelligence (pp. 8-85):

- *Pleromatic Self*: total oceanic, unconditional omnipotence, pleromatic paradise
- *The Uroboric Self*: oceanic-euphoria, primordial fear
- *The Axial and Pranic Self*: elementary emotions (fear, appetite, rage, pleasure); pranic level
- *The Image-Body Self*: sustained emotions, wishes, anxiety, rudimentary desire
- *The Verbal Membership Self*: temporal desires, extended and specific likes and dislikes
- *The Mental-Egoic Self*: concept affects, dialogue emotions, esp. guilt, desire, pride, love, hatred
- *The Centauric Self*: prehension, spontaneity, impulse expression, supersensory, heartfelt
- *The Low-Subtle Self*: transpersonally sensitive, suprasensory (the stage beyond the supersensory centaur)
- *The High-Subtle Self*: rapture, bliss, ecstatic release into superconsciousness.
- *The Low-Causal Self*: radiant bliss/ananda
- *The High-Causal Self*: primal or formless Radiance, perfect Ecstatic

This model of stage development for the affective line gives one a “felt” sense of what is occurring at each stage but does not include much of the emotional intelligences constructs. To this end, I propose a simple seven stage developmental model for emotional intelligence that synthesizes Wilber’s levels with those of Mayer and Salovey (1997), Mayer and colleagues (2004), and Goleman (1995). The stages are as follows:

1. *Perceiving/Sensational*: capacity for recognizing emotions in others through facial expressions, soft-soothing voices, and the beginning of relational touching.
2. *Imaginative*: attributing imaginary feelings and emotions to inanimate objects as well as animate objects.
3. *Impulsive/Egoical*: considers their emotional wants and emotional needs to be top priority in life. Follows own urges without much hesitation. Others’ emotional needs are only considered if they will help me get what I want.
4. *Control/Facilitation*: person is learning to control their emotions (being happy, sad, or depressed). Also can “identify the emotions that would best facilitate a type of thinking” (Mayer et al., 2004, p. 200).
5. *Analyzing/Transforming*: ability to analyze and understand complex feelings. Can understand “simultaneous feelings of love and hate, or blends such as awe as a combination of fear and surprise” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 11). Can recognize transitions of emotions like anger to shame.
6. *Conscious Regulation*: goals, self-knowledge and social awareness are managed in an emotional context. Understanding how to manage others’ feelings to achieve a desirable outcome. Emotions are consciously regulated to enhance intellectual and emotional growth. Thoughts are “conscious reflections on emotional responses, as opposed to simple perceptions of feelings” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 11). Beginning ability to tolerate and even welcome emotional reactions from previous emotional levels.
7. *Holistic/Integral*: views emotions as a part of the whole of “being.” Does not minimize or exaggerate the importance of emotions but understands how and when to integrate emotions into everyday existence.

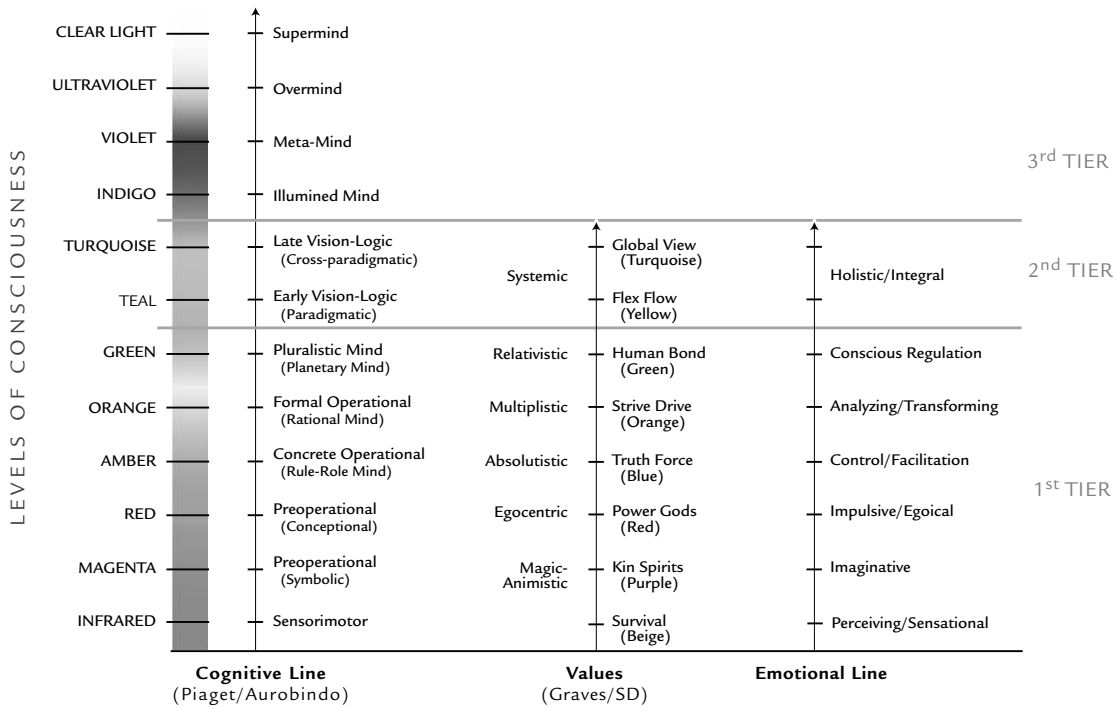


Figure 2. Where emotional levels reside on an integral psychograph. Adapted from Wilber (2006).

Emotional intelligence researchers have described traits, skills, and abilities that are all important aspects of emotional being. Rather than trying to decipher the “best” way to describe and test for emotional intelligence, using the AQAL model to determine at what stage of development the skill, trait, or ability is residing at will allow for a deeper understanding of the individual and their emotional skills. It is vital to keep in mind that any measure of emotional intelligence is just a “snapshot” of a person’s ability level in that instant of time in the relative world.

In stage 1, perception and sensations are the initial connections a newborn baby has with the world. Loving support and affection are two components necessary to build a basic trust of its new environment. Sensations of touch, sound, and sight are the infant’s first perceptions. Emotional learning begins when the baby starts to form images in its conscious mind and puts perceptions with those images. Loving nurturance at these early stages of emotional intelligence is crucial for natural emotional development. Goleman (1995) concurs: “Such emotional learning begins in life’s earliest moments, and continues throughout childhood. All the small exchanges between parent and child have an emotional subtext, and in the repetition of these messages over the years children form the core of their emotional outlook and capabilities” (p. 195). These perceptions and sensations are stored in the child’s memory but he cannot distinguish the difference between inanimate and animate objects and therefore imagines all objects to have feelings. This imaginative, stage 2 level of emotional development “may help the child generalize from himself to others” (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 12).

Once a child has distinguished himself, he is ready to move into a “me” stage of emotional development, stage 3. He becomes emotionally reactive and impulsive as the world now seems to revolve around him. Wants and needs become the focus of life, with little or no consideration given to others’ feelings. Intense mood swings are often experienced as successes feed the emotional ego or failures begin to challenge the emotional ego. Moving beyond the egoical stage of emotional development and into stage 4, one begins to facilitate thinking by using emotional cues to signal an important change in life: emotional events begin to as-

sist intellectual processing. Emotional control can help one to take different perspectives on how others might “feel” or react when they encounter similar life conditions. As social relationships become more important, empathy emerges.

At stage 5, which includes the analysis and transformation of emotions, concerns the ability of an individual to not only understand emotions, but also how to properly use this knowledge in emotional relationships with others and with their own self. Natural emotional growth in this stage allows a person to analyze what emotion is arising in them and then to understand how that emotion might transform into a different emotion (i.e., anger intensifies to rage and rage later transforms into guilt). According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), “Reasoning about the progression of feelings in interpersonal relationships is central to emotional intelligence” (p. 14). Our ability to understand how we “feel” and then the ability to think about how we “feel” surfaces at this emotional intelligence stage of development.

At stage 6, conscious regulation involves the ability to reason and reflect on what emotion is being felt and why we are having those feelings. A strictly emotional response is avoided, as a person at this emotional stage of development will apply critical thinking skills before developing an integrated response. Emotional reactions by others are not only tolerated, but insights gained during these interactions are used to help assess the situation and develop a lasting solution to the problem. Moods at stage 6 are evaluated and regulated, internally. Not much information is available on stage 7, although we can say that a person at this level of emotional development, under favorable conditions in the other quadrants, has all the emotional skills, abilities, perceptions, and understanding of the previous six stages and is set to find new depth and breadth of emotional intelligence.

Different types of people go through each of these seven stages of development with their own unique twist on emotional intelligence. This especially includes masculine and feminine types (Wilber, 2000a, pp. 1-8). It is essential to remember that in any natural stage developmental hierarchy, vertical growth depends on one’s ability to transcend and include the previous stage in a healthy manner (Wilber, 2006, p. 131).

Shadow and Emotional Intelligence

When dysfunctional emotional responses—positive or negative—become disowned by a person, “shadow” can be created. Shadow is part of the unconscious mind and endocepts, a zone between the felt-body and thought-mind, are the link to the gateway of emotional shadow (Wilber, 2000b, p. 244). The term *shadow* is used to describe repressed or disowned fears, weaknesses, and anxieties. According to Wilber (2007b), “Denying this material doesn’t make it go away; on the contrary, it returns to plague us with painful neurotic symptoms, obsessions, fears, and anxieties. Uncovering, befriending, and re-owning this material is necessary not only for removing the painful symptoms, but for forming an accurate and healthy self-image” (p. 187). Emotional intelligence levels of development could be helpful in determining the structural stage that shadow appears at and possibly give therapists (or other counseling professionals) an idea of what method of treatment might be necessary to help unravel the shadow element (K. Wilber, personal communication, May 11, 2010).

Conclusion

If we can help people attain a higher level of emotional intelligence, it may help them lead healthier, more productive lives, and make their interactions with themselves and others easier. Mayer and colleagues (2007, p. 525) have identified seven positive general trends of having higher emotional intelligence:

1. Better social relations for children
2. Better social relations for adults

3. High emotional intelligence individuals are perceived more positively by others
4. Better family and intimate relationships
5. Better academic achievement
6. Better social relations during work performance and in negotiations
7. Better psychological well-being

Although most of the above trends point to better relationships in various social settings, emotional intelligence can also help predict workplace performance, leadership abilities, and mental and physical well-being.

As we look back at Gardner's definition of an intelligence, it is clear by his strictly scientific definition that emotional intelligence is *not* one of his multiple intelligences. It is also clear by Wilber's definition that emotional intelligence is a line of development and could be used on an integral psychograph to help get a "snapshot" of a person's emotional developmental stage for that moment in time. If one could get several of these snapshots over a period of years, one might be able to determine a person's emotional altitude and help them become horizontally healthy at that developmental stage. They could then begin a new way of emotional meaning-making and possibly move to the next stage of emotional development.

Gardner has cautioned more than once about how testing for emotional intelligence is lacking and new measures are needed. However, if testing helps expose individuals to higher emotional thinking and in the future leads to more appropriate tests, then we must keep pushing emotional boundaries. Because research in the emotional intelligence field lags behind other intelligences and because emotions and emotional responses are so intertwined with thought and the cognitive process in contemporary society, it is harder to put all the pieces together at this time. As humans continue to grow into higher stages of development, we may find that cognition is wisdom and emotion is experience and it will become easier to separate cognition (perspectives) and emotion (feelings), realigning them to better serve ourselves and others.

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KIRK LESLIE, M.A., is a graduate student at John F. Kennedy University. He has a master's degree from the education department at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, in Curriculum and Instruction. He did volunteer and contract work for Integral Institute and Integral Life in 2007 and 2008. Leslie has been a teacher, a small business owner for over ten years, a district manager for a major corporation (CellularOne), a registered investment advisor with FINRA, and an educational advisor/consultant for the past six years.