

## How to Improve Your Emotional Self-Awareness

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Try to understand the root cause of why you feel the way you do</li> <li>• Keep track of certain situations, and record how you generally feel in those situations</li> <li>• Keep a journal: Record your strongest emotions and write down accompanying bodily sensations and thoughts.</li> <li>• As you walk by a mirror, notice your facial expressions and consider what emotion that is likely relaying to others</li> <li>• Learn how to relax so you are more in tune to your inner feelings</li> <li>• Increase your feeling word vocabulary so you can verbalize what you are feeling.</li> <li>• Analyze your own feelings rather than the actions or motives of other people.</li> <li>• Develop a practice of asking yourself “How do I feel about this?” with decisions and choices you face.</li> <li>• Pay attention and list what environments you feel most comfortable expressing your feelings.</li> <li>• As you walk by a mirror, look at your facial expressions. What might a person think you are feeling based on those expressions?</li> <li>• Be aware of your thoughts and feelings and the associated body language that shows those feelings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the means whereby people at work can share and discuss their feelings.</li> <li>• Ask the people you work with how they’re feeling more often.</li> <li>• If you see that someone is having a good day and looks happy, ask him/her how they feel.</li> <li>• If someone appears confused, lost or frustrated, ask what’s happening.</li> <li>• If someone looks angry, ask what’s happening with him/her.</li> <li>• Organize a group at work, or maybe a retreat in which you can discuss emotional self-awareness and how to improve it</li> <li>• If others say you look a certain way (e.g., angry, bored, tired, sad) don’t dismiss this. See if you can identify what signals triggered their comments.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Assertiveness

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn to recognize when others are making unreasonable demands of you and don't be afraid to say "no" when you have to</li> <li>• Choose your battles. Decide in advance what your position is, how you will express it and how far you will go with it</li> <li>• Take a specific situation and ask someone you trust for advice on the assertive way to handle the situation.</li> <li>• Plan ahead to be assertive. Practice your statements. Role-play when possible.</li> <li>• Communicate what you think, feel, and what you need.</li> <li>• Try doing something that you didn't do in the past because you were too embarrassed to do it.</li> <li>• The next time that you are in a group, say what you want to say and say it slowly and clearly.</li> <li>• Pick out emotions that are more difficult for you to express and then rehearse expressing them with someone you feel safe with.</li> <li>• When someone makes you feel happy, tell someone how you feel and why.</li> <li>• The next time you feel sad, tell someone close to you how you are feeling and why.</li> <li>• Be aware of your passive, assertive and aggressive responses to what life throws at you. Listen to your self-talk as to why you responded the way you did, and is that the best way to respond in that situation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage people to express themselves more at work, to say what they think and to tell others how they feel about things.</li> <li>• In meetings, encourage the more bashful and timid to contribute – tell them that you are interested in hearing what everyone has to say</li> <li>• Actively solicit and encourage the opinions of others</li> <li>• Facilitate group interaction and the sharing of ideas</li> <li>• If someone looks like they are having a bad day, ask if they want to talk about it</li> <li>• Organize a group or retreat to talk about assertiveness</li> <li>• Be aware of the assertiveness, aggressiveness and passivity of others</li> <li>• Identify what holds you back when you wish to speak up. Fight the self-talk and find it within yourself to say what you think, if appropriate</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Self-Regard

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Team/Organizational</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reevaluate the way you have been thinking about yourself up until now.</li> <li>• Avoid comparing yourself to others.</li> <li>• Think of how you can improve your negative points (if they are really negative).</li> <li>• Purposely STOP thinking negatively about yourself, and begin to think more positively about yourself.</li> <li>• List your strengths and positive attributes, and accomplishments that you are proud of, reflect on them, and make a point of celebrating these points.</li> <li>• List some of the negative thoughts you have of yourself, and then try to reverse those thoughts 180 degrees to positive ones and see how it makes you feel.</li> <li>• Have conversations with people you are close to. Ask them what they see as your personal strengths. Also, ask about your weaknesses. Take the EQi-360 to really uncover your EI strengths and weaknesses from many others' vantage points.</li> <li>• Find one thing you would like to change about yourself. How would improving this aspect of you help you at work, at home or in contact with others?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go out of your way to make subordinates and coworkers feel good about their work and themselves.</li> <li>• Make them feel appreciated.</li> <li>• Ask them to tell each other all the good things they are doing at work and at home.</li> <li>• Encourage them to discuss various ways they can change the negative thinking that they have about themselves.</li> <li>• Provide immediate positive feedback for efficient group performance and accomplishments whenever possible.</li> <li>• At a meeting, have each person write their names on a sheet of paper, and pass the paper around the table having each person say something positive and uplifting about the person whose name is on the top of the paper.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Self-Actualization

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Team/Organizational</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to understand the root cause of why you feel the way you do</li> <li>• Keep track of certain situations, and record how you generally feel in those situations</li> <li>• Keep a journal: Record your strongest emotions and write down accompanying bodily sensations and thoughts.</li> <li>• As you walk by a mirror, notice your facial expressions and consider what emotion that is likely relaying to others</li> <li>• Learn how to relax so you are more in tune to your inner feelings</li> <li>• Increase your feeling word vocabulary so you can verbalize what you are feeling.</li> <li>• Analyze your own feelings rather than the actions or motives of other people.</li> <li>• Develop a practice of asking yourself “How do I feel about this?” with decisions and choices you face.</li> <li>• Pay attention and list what environments you feel most comfortable expressing your feelings</li> <li>• Write down two ways you can improve your time in each of these areas: at work, with family, with friends, alone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the means whereby people at work can share and discuss their feelings.</li> <li>• Ask the people you work with how they’re feeling more often.</li> <li>• If you see that someone is having a good day and looks happy, ask him/her how they feel.</li> <li>• If someone appears confused, lost or frustrated, ask what’s happening.</li> <li>• If someone looks angry, ask what’s happening with him/her.</li> <li>• Organize a group at work, or maybe a retreat in which you can discuss emotional self-awareness and how to improve it</li> <li>• If others say you look a certain way (e.g., angry, bored, tired, sad) don’t dismiss this. See if you can identify what signals triggered their comments.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Independence

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to your “self talk”. If it is mired in harmful “conversations” such as “what if I make the wrong decision? I’ll look foolish and humiliated. I won’t be able to live with the embarrassment.”, write down arguments against these self talk statements.</li> <li>• When asking for help – ask yourself first, are you asking for input to make a better, more informed decision, or do you hope THEY will decide for you?</li> <li>• Make a list of situations in which you feel more independent and situations in which you are more dependent, and try to understand what that tells you about yourself.</li> <li>• Try to be more self-directed in your thinking and decision-making.</li> <li>• Make a serious attempt to be more on your own and to do things without outside help.</li> <li>• Remember that others can make suggestions, but you can make the actual decisions in your life because you know what’s best for you more than anyone else.</li> <li>• Rely on yourself. Believe in yourself. Avoid clinging to people for emotional support. Derive more support from within, from your own inner strength.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow subordinates to play a larger role in planning, decision-making, supervision, and management as much as possible.</li> <li>• Encourage an exchange of ideas.</li> <li>• Organize a group at work, or perhaps a retreat, in which you can discuss independence and ways to improve the areas that need to be improved.</li> <li>• Discuss a few easy ways to do things on their own – like dividing tasks into smaller more manageable chunks</li> <li>• Have people role play typical situations at work in which they can experiment with being more independent.</li> <li>• Encourage others to take on more responsibility and to exercise their own judgment. Create a balance between individual thinking and action and with teamwork.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Empathy

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try to see the situation from the other person's perspective.</li><li>• Make an effort to be more sensitive to others' feelings, and try to understand how other people are feeling. Tune in more to the nonverbals.</li><li>• Put yourself in the other person's shoes to try to feel what they may be feeling.</li><li>• Actively show more concern for those around you, and try to see how that affects them, how they react to it, and how it makes you feel in return.</li><li>• Pay attention to others' facial expressions and body language. Parrot back what you think others think and feel based on those.</li><li>• If you see someone who looks a bit confused or lost, try to be of assistance.</li><li>• The next time you see someone crying, try to understand what happened and ask if there is something that you can do.</li><li>• The next time you notice someone smiling, try asking why he or she is feeling so good.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set an example by asking how your coworkers and subordinates are getting along from time to time.</li><li>• Encourage others to see how they can help if they think someone is having a bad day.</li><li>• Encourage others to see how they can help if they think someone is having a bad day.</li><li>• Try "job shadowing" where you spend a day or more with someone else in order to better understand that person's work and responsibilities.</li><li>• In smaller groups, have one member try to express an emotion nonverbally (by facial expression and body language), and have the others try to understand what that person is feeling.</li></ul>

## How to Improve Your Social Responsibility

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Team/Organizational</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write down five things you could do that would be appreciated by people in need.</li> <li>• Write down 3 worthy causes, charities or non-profit organizations you can think of. Next to each, record the single most important thing, other than donating money, that you could do for each of them.</li> <li>• Do something to help people who could use a hand.</li> <li>• Do something to help a stranger in need.</li> <li>• Make an effort to cooperate more with others around the house and at work.</li> <li>• Do more at home, before being asked.</li> <li>• Take on more responsibility in your community. If you are contemplating getting involved in something you care about, decide to do it...today. Volunteer.</li> <li>• Think of something nice you can do for someone else, and do it.</li> <li>• Take on a project that others will benefit from.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage coworkers and subordinates to contribute more to the group.</li> <li>• Encourage others to take more responsibility at work and to ask what they can do to help before being asked.</li> <li>• Discuss the long-term goals of the organization and how everyone can contribute.</li> <li>• Try to build an atmosphere of togetherness, of group cause, of working towards common goals, and of creating something that is important that everyone is part of it.</li> <li>• Have them discuss various ways that they can demonstrate more responsibility at work concern for their fellow coworkers, and things that they can do for the good of the group as a whole.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Interpersonal Relationships

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to be more sociable and socialize more – people like and are attracted to sociable people. Think about ways that you can meet people, what you can do with others, and do them. Do something with other people at least once a week.</li> <li>• Try not to refuse when invited over to someone’s home. Don’t make excuses, just go. Step outside your comfort zone to talk to someone you don’t know. Have a few conversation starter questions or statements preplanned if that helps you prepare.</li> <li>• Talk more with people, even if it is a bit artificial at first.</li> <li>• Show interest in others – listen to their stories, impressions, and points of view.</li> <li>• Don’t stay at home. Make an effort of going out more and meeting people.</li> <li>• Plan something at your house – whether small or large get-together.</li> <li>• Make an effort not to let friendships get cold. Try re-connecting with old friends or acquaintances you haven’t seen in a while.</li> <li>• Think about someone you wanted to meet or get closer to, and put a plan together of how to go out it. Then, simply do it.</li> <li>• Observe others who are strong at this skill. What do they do, say? How do they start conversations? How do they keep conversations going? Model your own behavior and words after what they successfully do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage more group interaction and try to improve interpersonal communication at work.</li> <li>• Organize parties and social get-togethers. Celebrate birthday parties, and organize family days and outings.</li> <li>• Encourage employees to keep contact with coworkers who have moved to other departments or who have even left the organization altogether.</li> <li>• Think of ways that can create a nice social atmosphere at work. Help make the workplace a place where people like to be and spend much of the day.</li> <li>• Have a special meeting or retreat to talk about ways to improve interpersonal skills at work. It is THAT important to have a special time to think and share ideas on this.</li> <li>• Build teams based on people who enjoy being and working together and who complement one another with respect to emotional and social skills.</li> </ul>



## How to Improve Your Stress Tolerance

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of how you feel in stressful situations and what makes them stressful for you.</li> <li>• Remember that stressful situations do not last forever, and there is always something you can do.</li> <li>• Practice saying and feeling optimistic.</li> <li>• Doing something when you're under pressure is better than doing nothing at all, and try to do a number of things.</li> <li>• Divide larger tasks into smaller more manageable chunks, and concentrate on only those tasks that truly require your attention at the moment.</li> <li>• Prioritize by identifying activities that can be delegated to someone else or perhaps left until later. Don't procrastinate.</li> <li>• When you feel stressed, breathe deeply, relax your muscles, remain focused, speak slower.</li> <li>• Fight the situation; don't give up.</li> <li>• Exercise. Talk a walk. Do something physical. Get up, move around.</li> <li>• Change your scenery.</li> <li>• Acupressure</li> <li>• Relaxation techniques</li> <li>• Take a break.</li> <li>• Take a vacation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to load up your subordinates with excessive work. Spread out the tasks.</li> <li>• From time to time, check to see how your subordinates and coworkers are holding up under pressure to see how to lighten their loads.</li> <li>• Set an example, pitch in – especially when the going gets tough.</li> <li>• Know when to ease up on people and pull back.</li> <li>• Celebrate small wins.</li> <li>• Encourage people to slow down. Don't let the work pile up.</li> <li>• Make deadlines more flexible when possible.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Impulse Control

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Team/Organizational</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about how it feels when you are about to lose control, and how you feel when you do lose control. Ask yourself how it affects you and others when you lose control.</li> <li>• Make a list of situations and people that play a part in your losing control, and try to understand what really happens and why.</li> <li>• Eliminate or avoid those situations that make you angry, if at all possible.</li> <li>• Make a strong effort to relax more and not get upset about unimportant things.</li> <li>• Be more patient with others. Listen more, talk less.</li> <li>• Speak slower and softer.</li> <li>• Avoid conflicts with others and getting dragged into confrontations.</li> <li>• Think before you speak, act.</li> <li>• Listen to your self-talk – question what it’s saying to you, and why.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of potentially explosive situations at work, and try to defuse and neutralize them.</li> <li>• Try not to team up with employees who have impulse control problems with others at work who tend to aggravate them.</li> <li>• Encourage impulsive people to take things a bit easier at work, to wind down, not to get too excited about things or to make a big thing over nothing.</li> <li>• Encourage impulsive and impatient employees to verbalize what bothers them rather than keeping it in.</li> <li>• If you see an explosion coming on, tell the person to disengage, to back away, to leave the room, take a walk, and return later after things and they have calmed down.</li> <li>• Talk as a group how to reduce stress.</li> <li>• Talk about the consequences of impulsive behaviors and words.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Reality Testing

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the situation and the facts vs. jumping to conclusions</li> <li>• Tune into the immediate situation, and put things into perspective. In the overall scheme of life's big problems, how critical is this issue?</li> <li>• Search for objective evidence to support what you are feeling and thinking.</li> <li>• Spend more time checking out how accurate your feelings, thought, and ideas really are, rather than relying too heavily on your gut feelings.</li> <li>• Do you sweat the small stuff? Make mountains out of mole hills? Do people tell you that you avoid difficulties (ostrich approach to life, with your head in the sand)?</li> <li>• Talk about your ideas and feelings to others to get their feedback.</li> <li>• Rather than reacting, proactively stop and check to see if your actions are justified based on evidence and the situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have clear, realistic and attainable organizational goals.</li> <li>• Encourage people to talk to one another and exchange ideas. Discourage working alone.</li> <li>• Emphasize information-sharing among employees.</li> <li>• Encourage open communication, and stress the importance of giving and receiving feedback.</li> <li>• Ask your subordinates to check out their ideas with you and with coworkers.</li> <li>• Encourage people to ask questions at work and discuss various issues related to work.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Flexibility

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't be afraid of change. See change as an opportunity to learn and try new things.</li><li>• Think of different ways in which you could handle the same situation, do the same thing, and approach the same problem or challenge.</li><li>• Watch TV programs or read books you don't normally watch/read. Step outside your normal modus operandi.</li><li>• Rearrange or change the furniture in your house/apartment. Try experimenting with different colors and styles.</li><li>• Try a different hairstyle or style of clothes to wear.</li><li>• Visit a place you have never visited before.</li><li>• Relax your daily routines. Modify the "way you've always done it."</li><li>• Try making decision quicker than you usually do – simplify and speed up the process a bit, and use more gut-level guesswork.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage openness and flexibility at work, and discourage rigidity and being closed to different approaches.</li><li>• Encourage dialogue between people who typically hold very different ideas at work.</li><li>• Stress that change is natural, and can be very positive.</li><li>• Have a book club where you read a book on dealing with change and have discussions on it and how it relates to their workplaces.</li><li>• Encourage and reward creative ideas for coping with everyday problems that arise at work.</li><li>• Give a personal example by being more open and flexible.</li></ul>

## How to Improve Your Problem Solving

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Team/Organizational</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be more aware of what needs to be dealt with in your daily life.</li> <li>• Cope with problems that arise when they arise – don't avoid them or put them off.</li> <li>• Try to define and clarify what exactly is the problem at hand.</li> <li>• Get an overall picture of the problems that you deal with at home and at work. Aim for a panoramic view and an X-ray.</li> <li>• Make an effort to see how the problems developed, how it's affecting you, and others, and why.</li> <li>• When working on a problem, tell yourself that you can come up with a suitable answer.</li> <li>• Brainstorm as many solutions as you can to solve the problem at hand.</li> <li>• Weight the pros and cons of each possible solution, and then decide.</li> <li>• Try to choose the solution that's best for you and the situation at that point in time. Don't fret over what you don't know, do the best you can with what you do know.</li> <li>• When you've decided on the best way of dealing with the problem, go ahead and do it. Do all you can to make that decision a good one. If it doesn't work out, try another possible solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more opportunities at work to deal with problems together.</li> <li>• Organize "hit teams" that wrestle with problems.</li> <li>• Encourage brainstorming for potential solutions to problems.</li> <li>• Convey the importance of weighing the pros and cons before deciding.</li> <li>• Encourage and reward good decision making based on maximum information.</li> <li>• Encourage and reward information gathering – collecting as much information as possible related to the problem at hand.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Happiness

Personal	Team/Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a list of things that make you happy and that make you sad, and try to understand why.</li> <li>• How does it affect you and others when you are sad?</li> <li>• Seek to eliminate or minimize those things that make you sad, and try to avoid those people and situations that have a negative effect on you.</li> <li>• Complain less, think positive, and try to enjoy life more.</li> <li>• Do more things that make you feel good, and spend more time with people who like having fun and enjoy life.</li> <li>• Work with happy people. They rub off on you.</li> <li>• Look at having fun as a valuable goal in and of itself and as an important part of your life.</li> <li>• Determine what you find fun, and then seek it.</li> <li>• Think what you like doing for entertainment, then set aside more time for activities that make you feel good. Do them more.</li> <li>• Learn to enjoy humor and tell a good joke from time to time, but laugh with others not at others.</li> <li>• Follow the ATT rule of humor – use it when it’s Appropriate, Tasteful and Timely</li> <li>• See a good comedy from time to time, and really get into it.</li> <li>• Try to cheer up people when they are sad. If you can’t cheer them up, avoid them when it makes sense to do so.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to promote a positive and uplifting atmosphere at work.</li> <li>• Provide small awards and have lunches to celebrate good team performance.</li> <li>• Make coming to work a pleasant experience for others.</li> <li>• Think about “casual days” at the end of the week or month.</li> <li>• Form a Humor Posse (a small group of volunteers who are passionate about making the workplace fun and joyful) to seek out what others find fun, and then help implement those ideas.</li> <li>• Have social get-togethers now and then, at work and away from work.</li> <li>• Organize group vacations and trips that include employees’ significant others.</li> <li>• Discourage depressive behavior or reactions at work.</li> <li>• Make an effort to place more depressive employees with more jovial ones to “change the attitudes” from negative to positive.</li> </ul>

## How to Improve Your Optimism

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Team/Organizational</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See what feels better and why – being pessimistic, or being optimistic.</li> <li>• How does it affect you and others when you are pessimistic?</li> <li>• Make more of an effort to look at the brighter side of life.</li> <li>• Try not being so serious about things in general.</li> <li>• Make a list of positive affirmations and review them from time to time.</li> <li>• Try being more hopeful when dealing with problems and difficult people and situations.</li> <li>• Make an effort to maintain a more positive attitude, even and especially when the going gets tough.</li> <li>• Be alert to pessimistic thoughts you may have. Try to do the 180 tactic – turn pessimism into optimism on the spot.</li> <li>• Suppress pessimistic thoughts as they arise.</li> <li>• Experiment with adopting a positive outlook about things in general.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to create a more positive and optimistic atmosphere at work.</li> <li>• Set an example for others by being hopeful and upbeat.</li> <li>• Discourage pessimistic people from working together.</li> <li>• Try to deploy optimistic people in key positions at work.</li> <li>• Encourage others to give more positive feedback.</li> <li>• Give constructive and supportive feedback when goals are not met.”</li> </ul>

*From MHS and Optimizing People*