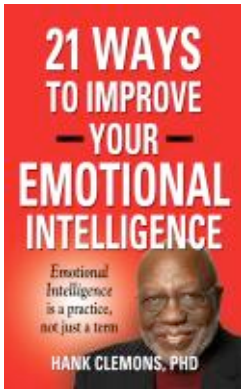


21 WAYS TO IMPROVE — YOUR — EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

*Emotional
Intelligence*
is a practice,
not just a term

HANK CLEMONS, PHD

A portrait of Hank Clemons, PhD, a Black man with glasses and a beard, wearing a dark suit jacket over a maroon turtleneck sweater. He is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera. The background behind him is a gradient of red, matching the overall cover design.



21 Ways for Improving your Emotional Intelligence offers practical, tried and true, and easy to do activities that are guaranteed to improve your emotional intelligence. However, you must do them. Reading about them gets you in the race but you must run it to have a chance to win.

21 Ways for Improving your Emotional Intelligence

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Not 1, not 2 but...

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Ways to Improve Your Emotional Intelligence

A Practical Approach

Hank Clemons, PhD

SoEI

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Ways to Improve Your Emotional Intelligence

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Practice Social Responsibility (SR)

Today there is a growing desire, even demand for more social responsibility in the workplace, especially from employees and customers. Studies are documenting that social responsibility is a recruitment and retention advantage, particularly among the younger generations. Workers reward socially responsible organizations with increased engagement, which leads to increased productivity and revenue.

But it doesn't stop there. More and more social responsibility is needed at the individual level. While not fully recognized by most, it is a key area of emotional intelligence. Social responsibility is one of the

highest levels of emotional experience. It demonstrates that you really care about others, especially those less fortunate. Being socially responsible isn't about personal gain — it's about what you can contribute to help other people.

SR means doing your part to help the environment, volunteering your time to those in need, mentoring our youth, and being conscientious and courteous in all you do.

- SR means to be internally motivated to act compassionately.
- Being socially responsible isn't about personal gain — it's about what you can contribute to help other people. Be it a community organization, team member, a co-worker with too much on their plate. Pitch in – help out.
- SR is promoting a proactive stance towards positively influencing and affecting the people and environments around you.

Social responsibility can take many forms. Consider the following: Years ago when my son was young, I asked a friend of mine if he would tutor my son in math. He agreed that

he would. We determined the cost but instead of me paying him, he asked me if I could pay the charity of his choice.

Reflect on how you spent your time last week. What activities and tasks did you spend your time on?

Tips & Exercises

- You may just start off volunteering once a month somewhere that suits your skills, abilities or interests.
- If you have the choice of two products and one product supports a good cause or was produced in a more ethical way, then purchase that product.
- In the workplace, look for opportunities to contribute to your team or work group. If you notice that a team member or a co-worker seems to be behind in their work or appear to be over loaded, rather than say, “That’s not my job”. Instead, say, “Can I help” or “Is there anything I can help you with”?
- You’re at home watching your favorite TV show, your wife is making dinner. Do you continue watching the show and let her continue with dinner preparation or do

you ask, “Can I help?” or perhaps offer your assistance without asking?

Only through a commitment to embrace and embed social responsibility into your personal value and belief system can you truly become socially responsible in all you do.

A final thought on how to think of social responsibility is: “Be a part of the solution, not a part of the problem”.

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Take Time to Reflect

To engage with emotions challenges requires inner work--personal reflection time. Time alone gives you time to reflect about your feelings and emotions so that you can better understand them. Allows you to sort out and clarify your thoughts and emotions. Life can be overwhelming. When we use reflection as a tool, we're able to stand back objectively and take a look at our lives and what we deal with. It is also the ability to reflect on the "here and now", on your feelings and thoughts. This also includes reflecting on the thoughts, emotions and the feelings of others. Reflection also helps us learn more about ourselves so that we go on to make better choices.

Without ever reflecting, we're more likely to focus on how much we've failed at, rather than see how much we've been successful at. At the end of each day, set aside 30 minutes to reflect on the different emotions you experienced during the day. Write them down. Now comes the hard part. Reflect on what generated the emotion. What behavior followed it? Was it appropriate? How can you respond more effectively the next time?

Tips & Exercises

Exercise. A favorite times to reflect (other than at the end of the day or while driving) is during one of my walks or workouts at the gym. I like to take that time to think about my life, and my work. Some of my best ideas come during "gym time". If you don't do the gym, run or have some other form of daily exercise, consider just taking a walk and using that time for reflection.

Journaling. Journaling is an insightful way to record your thoughts while they are happening. Writing your thoughts down lets you deal with issues as they arise. But the main advantage is that it gives you a time to reflect. Self-reflection is the key to changing how you feel and how you cope. Physically

writing things out forces you to focus on what is important.

Writing can be done daily or only when you feel you need to express yourself. Most people like to set aside a fixed time of day, such as before getting ready for bed. It really doesn't matter when you do it. As Nike says, "Just do it". There is no right or wrong way. Remember that expressing your emotions in your journal can be a great outlet for stress relief, so try to write about your thoughts, hopes, fears, frustrations, and any other emotions you are experiencing.

Here's a suggestions for dealing with frustration. **Stop and evaluate** – One of the best things you can do is mentally stop yourself, and reflect on the situation. Ask yourself why you feel frustrated. Write it down, and be specific. Then think of one positive thing about your current situation. For instance, if your boss is late for your meeting, then you have more time to prepare. Or, you could use this time to relax a little.

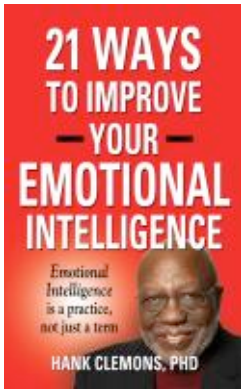
Other ways to reflect. Always set aside time for yourself on a daily basis, even if it is just a few minutes each day. I call it "Me Time". It's time to yourself and it allows you to relax,

reflect, or work on a personal hobby that you enjoy.

Here are a few more suggestions:

- Draw or paint – you don't have to be a Michelangelo. You do it to relax.
- Write – We all have a story to tell.
- Reflect on a great moment you recently experienced and why it made you feel good.
- A cup of tea outside or in your bed can be very relaxing
- Read a book that fascinates you – the one you've been putting off
- Take a walk, stretch.

The more you reflect the better you will get at it.



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