

EQUIPPING AIRMEN FOR SUCCESS:
THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND A REVIEW OF THE
USAF'S EI TRAINING AND RESOURCES

BY

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DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official positions of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.



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ABSTRACT

This study begins by investigating two questions, “To what degree does emotional intelligence (EI) influence an Airman’s ability to lead and follow effectively?” and, “How can enhancing EI help Airmen overcome the challenges associated with accessions, training, and active duty as they ascend in rank and position?” To answer these questions, the study analyzes emotions, EI, leadership, and followership. Leveraging Daniel Goleman’s EI Framework, the thesis uses a cross-walk analysis to determine the degree of overlap between EI, leadership, followership, and an Airman’s ability to overcome challenges. The analysis suggests that an Airman’s emotional intelligence is foundational to his/her ability to lead well, follow effectively, and consistently overcome challenges.

With this relationship established, the thesis turns to its primary question, “Given the importance of EI, how has the USAF integrated EI into the resources, training, and education provided to its Airmen to equip them to succeed early in their careers and as they ascend in rank and position?” The curricular materials for several accessions and professional military education programs were reviewed to determine how the USAF currently teaches and trains Airmen in EI. The USAF’s guidance and resources were also reviewed to determine the presence of EI in the materials the USAF provides its Airmen. The study concluded that the USAF has considerable room to improve its delivery of EI. The analysis revealed that EI should be taught to Airmen early in their careers; be enhanced at each level of PME by presenting a comprehensive, coherent, integrated and progressive EI curricula; and that while there are resources available to Airmen in the field, they could be more effectively delivered via a revamped mentoring program.

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Introduction

Never lose your temper, except intentionally.

- Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Where in the heck is Senior Airman (SrA) Jones?”, I asked my flight line aircraft maintenance production superintendent.¹ SrA Jones was well known as the best electrician in the squadron and he was notable in his absence as we examined the broken B-1 Bomber parked before us. SrA Jones’s electrical maintenance prowess was always in high demand. He was a hard-working maintainer that had a knack for finding the source of the problem and a reputation for working tenaciously until the aircraft was fixed. Unfortunately, SrA Jones was as well known for his off-duty antics as for his aircraft maintenance abilities. But, at that moment, I was more immediately concerned with Jones’s unmatched technical abilities, specifically why he was not already working to make the ailing B-1B airworthy. Those of us present knew that if we didn’t get the non-mission capable bomber fixed and on its way to the Red Flag Exercise by mid-day Saturday, the training scheduled for the aircrew and maintenance personnel would suffer. It was already late Friday afternoon; we needed our best electrician on the job. A few minutes later, when I learned that SrA Jones was busy out-processing the installation due to his pending discharge from the USAF, I was momentarily stunned. After confirming that our best team of available maintainers were getting their tools and would soon arrive to begin working on the aircraft, I made my way back to the office, shut the door, and considered SrA Jones’s situation.

As I thought about how SrA Jones’s personal conduct had ruined his professional career, I was struck by how often I had witnessed similar situations. At that point in my career I had already encountered far too many Airmen, who were incredibly intelligent and who genuinely wanted to serve their country, that failed to manage their behaviors at the expense of their military careers. A top-performing cadet in ROTC who chose to drink and drive; a crew chief in Grand Forks that couldn’t control his impulses to drink and get into altercations; now SrA Jones, and there had been others... each a rising star

¹ The name has been changed to protect the Airman’s privacy.

with unlimited potential. Each one's career cut short by their inability to moderate their own behaviors. Not for the first time, I wondered why it happened. What was going wrong? Why were these smart, technically sound, and relatively motivated Airmen unable to manage their behaviors? Why were they failing to demonstrate basic leadership, and falling short of following effectively? Traditionally defined intelligence and technical training were clearly not the issue. At the time, I concluded that the most likely source of the problem was poor decision making and a lack of self-control; a dissatisfying diagnosis that seemed to offer scant opportunity for supervisors, or for the USAF as an organization, to find a remedy.

Two years later, while attending the Army's Command and General Staff College, I was introduced to the field of Emotional Intelligence (EI). With that introduction, I began to better understand SrA Jones's and the other Airmen's situations. I also realized that supervisors, and the USAF, may have an opportunity to positively influence Airmen's ability to overcome challenges, to lead more effectively, and to follow more dynamically.

The understanding that there are forms of intelligence other than those strictly related to cognitive processes is not new. Nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, Charles Darwin wrote, "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals," in which he explored man's deliberate actions and unintentional reactions associated with emotions coupled with his subjects' abilities to match pictures of human faces with corresponding emotions.² Darwin's early work to understand emotions and their behavioral influences ignited further research into aspects of humanity that were, up to that point, largely attributed to spiritual origins and explanations. The ideas gained traction in the 1920s as the American psychologist E. L. Thorndike wrote about what he termed "social intelligence." In his findings, Thorndike highlighted the ability of people with enhanced social intelligence to understand and manage the people and situations around them.³ Twenty years later, David Wechsler elaborated on what he termed "non-

² Information Resources Management Association, ed, *Social Issues in the Workplace: Breakthroughs in Practice* (Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2018), 208.

³ Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 42.

intellective” factors of intelligence, citing emotions and ability to influence social environments as attributes that could predict one’s ability to succeed.⁴

The field of research dedicated to better understanding emotions, associated behaviors, and their influence on an individual’s professional success continued and expanded rapidly in the early 1990’s as psychologists, sociologists, and behavioral scientists explored the linkages between cognitive function, emotions, and behaviors. Their findings have debunked the traditional idea that pure cognitive ability, commonly known and expressed as one’s intelligence quotient (IQ), is the most reliable predictor of an individual’s professional success. A recent study, conducted in over 200 companies and organizations worldwide, analyzed the productivity differences between high-level and average performers. It found that approximately one-third of the productivity difference between the two performance groups was due to technical skill and cognitive ability, while two-thirds was due to emotional competence.⁵ Their studies confirm that another set of abilities, measured as an emotional quotient (EQ) that quantifies one’s EI is at least as important for predicting one’s ability to succeed professionally.⁶ The relative importance of IQ versus EQ is not the focus of this thesis. What is important is that they are not opposing competencies, but rather complementary, and that emotional intelligence is a significant factor for predicting and improving individual professional success in fields that place importance on commitment, ethics, responsibility, and interpersonal interactions.⁷ It is also important to note that, unlike IQ, EQ is largely a learned intelligence that continues to grow as people mature.⁸ The implications of these findings for the United States Air Force (USAF), specifically in how it trains, educates, and equips its Airmen, form the foundation of this research.

⁴ Richards, Thomas. *Emotional Intelligence: How to Increase EQ, Interpersonal Skills, Communication Skills, and Achieve Success* (Thomas Richards, 2015), 16-17.

⁵ Goleman, Daniel, *Working with emotional intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1998), 76.

⁶ Richards, Thomas. *Emotional Intelligence: How to Increase EQ, Interpersonal Skills, Communication Skills, and Achieve Success* (Thomas Richards, 2015), 31.

⁷ Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 45.

⁸ According to research presented by Dr. Goleman, the limits of an individual’s IQ are relatively unchanging after the age of 20). Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ* (New York: Bantam Dell, 1998), 7.

Context and Structure

A foundational aspect of this study is that emotions, and how Airmen respond to their own and others' emotions, play a crucial role in determining how they behave. An individual's behaviors are his or her outward manifestation of what he or she thinks, how he or she feels, and how he or she manages those feelings. An Airman's behaviors determine how effective he or she is in a leadership role, how dynamically he or she follows, and how effectively he or she copes with challenges. This study aims to demonstrate the linkages between EI and these three key areas of an Airman's performance.

To investigate these three key areas, this thesis addresses four questions:

- 1) To what degree does EI influence an Airman's ability to lead effectively and follow dynamically?
- 2) Can enhancing EI help Airmen overcome the challenges associated with accessions, training, and active duty as they ascend in rank and position?
- 3) Given the importance of IE, how has the USAF integrated EI into the training and resources provided to its Airmen to equip them to succeed early in their careers and as they ascend in rank and position?
- 4) How might the USAF provide the resources and training to enhance Airmen's emotional intelligence?

To investigate these four questions, this thesis leverages a three-part approach. The first part, Chapters 1-3, examines the key topics, theories, and models. The second part, Chapter 4, offers analysis regarding EI and its influences on the other subject areas. Finally, Chapters 5 and 6 offer insights concerning the USAF's use of EI and offers recommendations for the future.

Scope and Methodology

The first section of this thesis establishes a foundation of common understanding for emotions and EI. Research in the fields of psychology, behavioral science, and revelations related to neuroscientists' ability to monitor brain activity has produced a wealth of information in the last quarter-century. Chapter 1 represents a distillation of

this information to provide the reader with the science related to how the brain generates emotions. It details the automatic physiological responses and deliberate behavioral responses associated with emotions. Chapter 1 also provides a brief history of the study of emotions and EI. Finally, it presents the key competencies and models of two well-established and thoroughly-reviewed emotional intelligence theories and corresponding models to provide the reader with a foundational understanding of the field of EI.

To examine how enhancing EI might impact an Airman's ability to lead effectively and to follow dynamically it is necessary to define what "lead effectively" and "follow dynamically" mean. For the remainder of this thesis, a leader's ability to accurately assess the competence and commitment of a subordinate in a given situation and then apply the appropriate blend of directive and supportive behaviors represents the measure of leadership effectiveness, based on the Situational Leadership II (SLII) theory and model developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard. An in-depth review of SLII theory and model is provided in Chapter 2. The potential influence that enhancing an Airman's EI may have on his or her ability to lead effectively is investigated in Chapter 4 using a cross-walk comparison between the EI competencies detailed in Dr. Daniel Goleman's EI Framework and the skills and competencies detailed in the SLII theory.

To investigate the potential relationship between EI and effective followership, this study uses Robert Kelley's dynamic followership theory and model as the definitional foundation of followership. Kelley's model identifies independent thinking, critical thinking, activity level, and positive energy as the key attributes and behaviors for dynamic followership. The influence that enhancing Airmen EI may have on their ability to develop these attributes and demonstrate these behaviors is investigated in the second part of Chapter 4 via a cross-walk comparison between the Kelley's attributes and behaviors and those detailed in the Goleman Framework.

Chapter 3 details the challenges Airmen face beyond the scope of the leadership and dynamic followership skill sets. The challenges detailed in this chapter represent a sample gleaned from the collective experiences and observations of the author and other Air Force leaders. The challenges detailed are intentionally rank-neutral to address the wide spectrum of challenges enlisted and officer recruits and Airmen encounter. While the list of challenges is not all-inclusive, it serves as a basis for investigation in the

analysis sections against the Goleman EI Framework. The cross-walk between Airman challenges and EI theory in Chapter 4 should indicate if, and how, improving EI may influence an Airman's ability to overcome the challenges associated with accessions and service in their USAF careers.

After reviewing EI and how it influences leadership, followership, and Airman challenges, Chapter 5 reviews the weight of effort the Air Force currently allocates to providing Airmen with emotional intelligence training, development, and resources. Air Force doctrine, instructions, the mentorship program, and the resources available via the Profession of Arms Center of Excellence and e-Learning website are reviewed for EI inclusion to determine the resources available to Airmen in the field.

This study also investigates Airman development and training curricula to determine the extent of emotional intelligence training and development delivered to Airmen during accessions training and later PME courses. To examine accessions training this study reviews the curricula delivered during basic training to determine EI's role in an enlisted Airman's early professional development. Similarly, this thesis investigates the early development of officer candidates by reviewing the curricula delivered via the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program and through the Officer Training School (OTS) to determine the role of EI in each. These commissioning sources provide 80 percent of the Air Force's line officers and train over 99 percent of the Air Force's chaplain, nurse and medical specialties and legal officers.⁹ Finally, this study reviews the curricula offered via the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (NCOA), the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (SNCOA), Squadron Officer College (SOC), and Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) to determine how much time and effort the USAF expends to enhance Airman emotional intelligence via professional military education. The Air War College curriculum was excluded as it is delivered late in an Airman's career and is offered to a relatively small subset of the force's Airmen.

Chapters 1 through 4 of this study investigate the first two key questions detailed at the outset of this chapter. Given the relationships established in response to the first two questions, Chapter 5 examines the weight of effort the Air Force has put into

⁹ <http://www.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/104477/jeanne-m-holm-center-for-officer-accessions-and-citizen-development/>, accessed 1 Feb 2018.

training, developing and equipping its Airmen to enhance their EI. In plain terms, the intent of investigating the first two questions is to determine, “How important is emotional intelligence for enabling Airmen to lead effectively, follow dynamically, and overcome challenges?” Having answered that question, Chapter 5 assesses weight of effort the USAF has allocated to EI. This analysis provides insights regarding the primary research question; “Given the importance of EI, how has the USAF integrated EI into the training and resources provided to its Airmen to equip them to succeed early in their careers and as they ascend in rank and position?” The thesis concludes with a list of suggestions and recommendations for how the USAF could more fully integrate EI into the training curricula and the resources available to Airmen in the field.



Chapter 1

Emotions and Emotional Intelligence

If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

- Sun Tzu

Emotions

Emotions are a part of everyday life; they are as much a part of being human as thinking and breathing. And while everyone experiences emotions, each person experiences emotion in a unique way. Despite the uniqueness of each person's emotional experience, there are consistencies in how people react emotionally to certain events or stimuli. There are also consistencies associated with how the body responds physiologically to emotions. These similarities originate from the fact that emotions are the product of a millennia of physical and psychological adaptations to help humans survive in a dangerous world. The following pages examine why we have emotions, what the different emotions are, and categorize emotions into two basic categories that are used for analysis later in this thesis.

Much like the instincts described by psychologist Dr. Daniel Kahneman in his seminal work, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, emotions evolved to help our distant ancestors preserve their relatively fragile physical bodies in a world that was rife with direct threats and competition for survival.¹⁰ According to psychologist Dr. Daniel Goleman, "All emotions are, in essence, impulses to act, the instant plans for handling life that evolution has instilled in us."¹¹ Only with the human race's relatively recent mastery of such modern conveniences such as fire, metallurgy, domestication of animals, and systemic renewable agriculture has the importance of such life-saving automatic responses been somewhat diminished. That is not to say that emotions and instincts do not still play important roles in the lives of military professionals. But even in that small subset of

¹⁰ Kahneman, Daniel. *Thinking Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), 67.

¹¹ Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 6.

society, emotions are only very rarely linked with the purpose for which they were originally formed—survival.

According to Dr. Rachel Jack, lead researcher at the Glasgow Institute of Neuroscience and Psychology, there are four basic emotions and two additional secondary emotions. The most basic emotions are fear, happiness, sadness, and anger, with the additions of surprise and disgust being related to fear and anger, respectively.¹² Her findings mirror those of Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, who identified the same six basic emotions in their 2003 book, *Unmasking the Face*.¹³ More complex emotions like nostalgia and contempt are thought to be the products of blending these basic emotions and incorporating a degree of cognition. The emotional mind combines with our cognitive thoughts (sometimes referred to as our rational mind) to form our mental life.¹⁴

One additional distinction regarding emotions is that some are automatic and thus inadvertent, while others are more deliberate and controlled. Similar to how rapid and uncontrolled thoughts comprise Kahneman's System 1 thinking, pre-cognitive emotions occur rapidly and without deliberate effort. In another parallel with Kahneman's theory, controlled emotions are the product of deliberate introspection and effort. Studies have confirmed that the amygdala nerve center of the brain governs pre-cognitive emotions that cause inadvertent physiological reactions in situations of extreme duress, whereas controlled responses originate in the neocortex.¹⁵ It is also important to note that physiological responses, reflex reactions, and the deliberate behaviors manifested in a person's actions are distinctly different. While automatic physiological responses and reflexes are largely uncontrollable without extensive training and conditioning, deliberate behaviors and controlled responses are a matter of choice. This idea is explored further in the analysis portion of this essay as it pertains to the role of EI and the role it plays in leadership, followership, and overcoming challenges.

¹² <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-26019586>, accessed 24 Jan 2018.

¹³ Ekman, Paul and Friesen, Wallace V. *Unmasking the Face: A guide to recognizing emotions from facial clues* (Los Altos, Malor Books, 2003), ix-x.

¹⁴ Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

Now that a clearer understanding of what emotions are, why humans have them, and how they manifest themselves has been established, the following pages review EI and detail two of the most widely accepted and studied models in the field.

Emotional Intelligence

There are many different definitions that try to encapsulate succinctly the complex idea of EI. Some definitions are short and simplistic, intended to define the term in a narrow set of circumstances. Others are long and convoluted, seeking to define EI to such a degree that the definition becomes too cumbersome for easy utility. In the text of *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*, Dr. Daniel Goleman, Dr. Richard E. Boyatzis, and Dr. Annie McKee define EI simply as, “How leaders handle themselves and their relationships.”¹⁶ This definition is sufficient within the narrow parameters for which it is intended, for leaders looking to leverage EI to improve their performance, but it is rather vague for an all-encompassing definition.

Another definition, offered in one of Goleman’s earlier and more broadly scoped works, defined EI as, “managing feelings so that they are expressed appropriately and effectively, enabling people to work together smoothly toward their common goals.”¹⁷ This definition has merit in that it addresses the emotions of the individual, the emotions of others, and the idea of regulating one’s emotions and reactions based on the context of the situation. One aspect that is missing from this definition is the idea of critical self-analysis. Understanding implies that one can identify one’s own and others’ emotions, but critically thinking about the source of one’s own, and others’ emotions is an important aspect for *enhancing* EI and helping others to do likewise. For this thesis, EI is defined as critically thinking about one’s own and others’ emotions and deliberately deciding how to behave based on the physical and social contexts of the situation.

In the coming pages, this thesis explores the definitions, theories, models, and competencies developed by two leading groups of EI researchers and writers. This exploration provides a basic understanding of EI and draws out some important

¹⁶ Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee. *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 6.

¹⁷ Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ* (New York: Bantam Dell, 1998), 7.

consistencies between the theories. The consistencies provide a foundation for analysis of EI's utility to the USAF in the analysis portion of this thesis.

One of the earliest of the “modern” EI theorists is former Yale psychologist Dr. Peter Salovey. As early as 1990, Dr. Salovey defined EI as, “The subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.”¹⁸ Seven years later, dissatisfied with what he viewed as the too-shallow definition he posited in 1990, Salovey and his co-author John Mayer redefined EI as involving four distinct branches, or abilities (Figure 1).¹⁹ For a fully detailed version of the Salovey-Mayer Emotional Intelligence Framework, see Appendix 1.

Salovey-Mayer Emotional Intelligence Framework
1. Perception, Appraisal and Expression of Emotion
2. Use Emotions to Influence Thinking and Behavior
3. Understanding and Analyzing Emotions; Employing Emotional Knowledge
4. Manage Emotions to Promote Emotional and Intellectual Growth

Figure 1: Salovey-Mayer EI Abilities

Source: Adapted from John Mayer and Peter Salovey, Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 11.

In the Mayer-Salovey model, the first branch, or step, is identifying emotions, one’s own as well as others, to discern what emotions are present during a specific event. Steps two and three involve processing those emotions, critically thinking about them to understand their source and importance, and predicting emotions to prepare for future potentially emotional events. The final step is managing emotions by intelligently and deliberately incorporating them into decision making and reasoning.²⁰

John Mayer, Peter Salovey, and David Caruso were also pioneers in the field of developing a way to measure EI quantitatively. They developed the *Mayer-Salovey-*

¹⁸ Salovey and Mayer. *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Baywood Publishing Company, Inc., 1990), 189-190.

¹⁹ <http://eqi.org/salovey.htm>; accessed 24 Jan 2018.

²⁰ Sewell, Gerald F. *Emotional Intelligence for Military Leaders: The Pathway to Effective Leadership* (Gerald F. Sewell, 2014), 84-85.

Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) to measure individuals' abilities in the four branches of their model. The MSCEIT has been extensively reviewed and researched, granting legitimacy to its efficacy for quantitatively measuring IE.²¹

Daniel Goleman is another contemporary leader in the EI field. Much like his previously-discussed definition for EI, Goleman's Emotional Competence Framework has evolved as his study of the field has progressed. His framework consists of a mixture of personal and social competencies and abilities used to recognize and regulate emotions and behaviors. Goleman contends that personal competencies, which include self-awareness and self-management, determine how people recognize their own emotions and regulate their emotional and physical responses. The social competencies, social awareness and relationship management, influence how people manage themselves in professional and personal settings and relationships.²² As depicted in Figure 2, Goleman identified 18 skills and abilities distributed among the four competencies.

Daniel Goleman EI Domains and Associated Competencies		
	Recognition	Regulation
Personal Competence	<u>Self-Awareness</u>	<u>Self-Management</u>
	Self-confidence	Emotional self-control
	Awareness of your emotional state	Transparency
	Accurate self-assessment	Adaptability
		Achievement
		Initiative
		Optimism
Social Competence	<u>Social Awareness</u>	<u>Relationship Management</u>
	Empathy	Inspirational leadership
	Organizational awareness	Influence
	Service	Developing others
		Change catalyst
		Building bonds
	Teamwork and collaboration	

Figure 2: Daniel Goleman's EI Framework

Source: Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee. Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 37-38.

²¹ <https://www.mhs.com/MHS-Talent?prodname=msceit>; accessed 13 May 2018.

²² Goleman, Daniel, Boyatzis, Richard, and McKee, Annie. *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 39.

For an individual to have strong self-awareness, Goleman asserts that a person first must be able to read his or her own emotions and recognize their impact. Self-awareness requires knowing one's strengths and susceptibilities, correctly identifying emotions and triggers, as well as understanding one's degree of confidence based on context, experience, and sense of self-worth. Strong self-awareness takes deliberate effort and practice.²³

Emotional self-awareness is not a subject most professionals, or Airmen, spend much of their day contemplating. But when faced with a situation that triggers strong emotions, the amygdala involuntarily triggers emotions and physiological responses.²⁴ Individuals' abilities to understand themselves, their emotions, and to recognize their emotions and behaviors as being theirs to manipulate as soon as the involuntary response has run its course is a critical early step to improving emotional intelligence.²⁵

Social awareness is another integral skill that forms the groundwork for solid self-management and relationship management. Organizational awareness is one aspect of this competency that helps people understand the politics and decision networks of the systems they interact with. The service capability is the ability to recognize and meet a client's, customer's, or follower's needs; it extends to understanding the needs of one's boss, peers, and subordinates. Perhaps the most important ability in the social awareness competency is empathy. Empathy is the ability to sense others' emotions, their perspectives, and then being able and willing to take an active interest in their concerns.²⁶

Once an individual has established a degree of social and self-awareness and has navigated the brain's and body's initial involuntary response, self-management and relationship management begin and are on-going. Self-management begins with emotional self-awareness as it feeds into self-control. Self-control is an important ability that, with practice and conditioning, can improve the involuntary, deliberate emotional, physiological, and behavioral responses people experience with strong emotions.²⁷ Self-

²³ Ibid., 6.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Sewell, Gerald F. *Emotional Intelligence for Military Leaders: The Pathway to Effective Leadership* (Gerald F. Sewell, 2014), 123.

²⁶ Goleman, Daniel, Boyatzis, Richard, and McKee, Annie. *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 255.

²⁷ Ibid., 45.

management also includes the ability to self-regulate motivation, desire for achievement, and overall optimism. Adaptability, the flexibility to overcome obstacles and tailor responses to act appropriately in a given situation is an important aspect that links self-management with relationship management.²⁸

In Goleman's framework, relationship management is a complex competency that includes the ability to inspire, influence, develop others, be a change catalyst, exercise conflict management, build bonds, and leverage teamwork and collaboration. This competency is where self-awareness, self-management, and social-awareness combine to give individuals the chance to influence their organizations positively, benefit the people in it, and to help others manage their emotions. Goleman describes this competency as, "...friendliness with a purpose: moving people in the right direction..."²⁹

Following the lead of earlier researchers, Daniel Goleman collaborated with Richard Boyatzis, professor in the Weatherhead School of Business, and with the Hay Group, a global management consulting firm, to develop the *Emotional and Social Competence Inventory* (ESCI) to measure individuals' EI quantitatively.³⁰ The ESCI specifically aims to measure EI in leaders and professionals; it leverages diverse feedback and critical introspection to identify strengths and areas for improvement.³¹

A side-by-side comparison of the Salovey-Mayer and Goleman models reveals that the Goleman Framework incorporates the majority of the concepts of the Salovey-Mayer model. One significant strength of the Salovey-Mayer model that is not as pronounced in the Goleman Framework is the foresight to predict emotions, which can help mitigate undesirable automatic responses. When comparing the two models, the Goleman Framework offers a higher degree of simplicity and the important links it establishes to the leadership and followership skills detailed within the Relationship Management competency. Given this advantage, the Goleman Framework is used for this thesis's analysis of EI, with foresight to predict and help manage emotions incorporated into the Self-Awareness competency. These competencies and skills are analyzed to determine how they might influence an Airman's ability to overcome

²⁸ Ibid., 255.

²⁹ Ibid., 51.

³⁰ <http://www.danielgoleman.info/ei-assessments/>, accessed 27 Jan 2018.

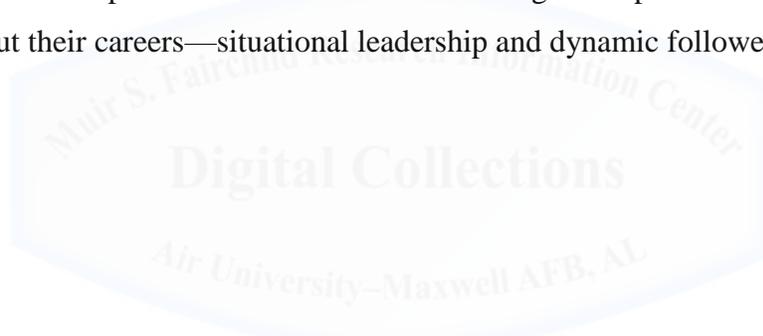
³¹ http://www.eiconsortium.org/measures/eci_360.html, accessed 27 Jan 2018.

challenges they face and how they overlap with the skillsets require for effective leadership and followership in the USAF.

Conclusion

The research and writings of Daniel Goleman and his teams, combined with the field work and rigorous analysis led by Mayer et al., provide a better understanding of EI than that which was available only twenty years ago. Their well-developed theories provide a foundation for understanding and the models they have constructed help conceptualize an abstract subject. Ultimately, the work of Goleman, Salovey, Mayer, and a host of other researchers sheds light on a previously overlooked aspect of people's interpersonal and professional lives.

Given the new-found understanding of EI, this thesis explores two important interpersonal and professional skill sets that are taught and practiced by Airmen throughout their careers—situational leadership and dynamic followership.



Chapter 2

Situational Leadership II and Dynamic Followership Theories

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds...

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The following pages discuss the skills and abilities that comprise the Situational Leadership II (SLII) and the Dynamic Followership theories. The intent is to establish a basic understanding of the skill sets required to leverage these theories and models as they are widely taught to, and used by, commissioned and enlisted Airmen in the USAF. Establishing an understanding of the skills and abilities identified by these theories serve as the basis for cross-examination with the skills and abilities associated with EI in the analysis section of this thesis.

Situational Leadership II

Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard originally developed the Situational Leadership Theory in the 1970s. Through the 1970s and early 1980s, Blanchard worked to improve critical aspects of the initial theory. He leveraged feedback from corporate clients and working managers and incorporated important insights from newly-completed research into leadership and group development. Blanchard teamed with Patricia and Drea Zigarmi to synthesize the wealth of data and, armed with this valuable information, made significant contributions to the field of leadership, work group dynamics, and team performance. Their work was detailed in the 1985 publication, *Leadership and the One-Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness Through Situational Leadership*.¹ In this seminal work, Blanchard et al. describe situational leadership, detail four leadership styles and four follower development levels, and articulate how leaders can maximize their followers' abilities by adjusting their leadership style according to the task,

¹ Blanchard, Kenneth H., Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (New York, Morrow, 1985).

environment, and the follower's level of development.² Adding to the original Situational Leadership Model, Blanchard incorporated the follower's maturity level, among other minor revisions, to construct the Situational Leadership II Model.³

Four basic leadership styles are foundational to the SLII theory and model: Directing (S1), Coaching (S2), Supporting (S3), and Delegating (S4). Each style consists of degrees of directive and supportive behaviors by the leader.⁴ The four styles are depicted in Figure 3.

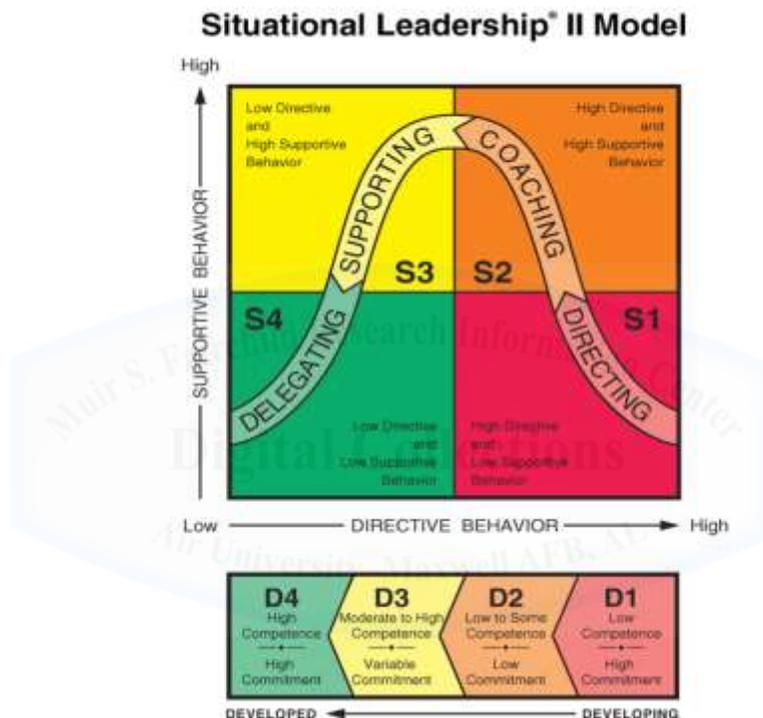


Figure 3: Situational Leadership II Model

Source: Blanchard et al., *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (New York: Morrow, 1985), 74.

Directing is labeled S1 in the SLII theory and, as the name implies, is the most directive of the four leadership styles. In the directing style, the leader details which specific tasks to do, when to do them, and provides direction and guidance regarding how

² Blanchard, Kenneth H., Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (New York, Morrow, 1985), 46-50.

³ The Center for Leadership Studies, <https://situational.com/situational-leadership-and-slii-points-of-distinction/>, accessed 13 May 2018.

⁴ Blanchard, Kenneth H., Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (New York, Morrow, 1985), 46.

to do them. While followers complete the tasks, the S1 leader supervises to ensure followers complete tasks properly and provides solutions should any difficulties arise during execution.⁵

Coaching (S2) is the second leadership style and consists of decreased directive behavior and increased supportive behavior from the leader. In this style, the leader still directs which tasks to do and gives instructions for how, where, and when as needed. S2 differs from S1 as the S2 leader takes time to explain his or her decisions to the followers, asks for input and suggestions, and offers support for progress made by the team members.⁶

Supporting (S3) continues the trend that began in the transition from S1 to S2 with the leader's directive behaviors decreasing and his or her supportive behaviors increasing. The leader's role is less authoritarian and tends more toward supporting subordinate's efforts as needed. In this leadership style, the leader allows the follower latitude for decision making without oversight. Authority for task accomplishment is shared between the leader and follower.⁷

The final SLII leadership style is Delegating (S4). In this form, the follower has authority for decision making and problem solving. The leader retains overall responsibility for ensuring tasks are complete but has placed trust in the subordinate for accomplishing the task with minimal (or without) direction or support from the leader.⁸

Learning SLII's four leadership styles is the first step to understanding the theory. The second key aspect of the theory centers on the follower's developmental level. The developmental level consists of two basic elements, the subordinate's competence and his or her commitment. Competence, in this instance, specifically refers to the subordinate's knowledge and skill, or his or her learned abilities associated with the task. Commitment is a combination of confidence and motivation, or how self-assured and enthusiastic an individual is.⁹ Based on the competence and commitment criteria, SLII categorizes followers into four developmental levels.

⁵ Blanchard, Kenneth H., and Spencer Johnson, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (New York, Morrow, 1985), 57.

⁶ Ibid, 57.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid, 47.

⁹ Ibid, 49.

Someone new to an organization or team frequently falls within the D1 level of follower development. These subordinates are typically excited, enthusiastic, and eager to prove their worth to their new group or team; their commitment level is high. Being new to the group or team though, the D1 follower has not had the time or experience to develop the skills or abilities associated with the group's tasks, and so has low technical and organizational competence.

Subordinates in the D2 level have grown their skills and abilities to the point where they have some competence for completing the group's tasks, but still require supervision as they continue to develop. The commitment level of D2 subordinates typically tapers off as they realize how much more they need to learn and as the excitement of being new to the group and for learning new things about the tasks begins to wear off.¹⁰ Their commitment level can be improved through supportive behaviors and as they reach the competency levels required to begin granting some autonomy and responsibility.

Followers in the D3 development level demonstrate high competence, but variable commitment. These followers have developed the requisite knowledge and skills to complete tasks effectively and efficiently, but for some reason are experiencing variable levels of either confidence or motivation. Once the D3 follower and their leadership team address the concerns that led to decreased confidence or motivation they can rise to the highest level depicted on the follower's development model.¹¹

The SLII model describes followers in the D4 category as "Developed." These followers continue to expand their skill sets and abilities but have developed a high degree of competence in the tasks they are required to accomplish. Similarly, they are self-motivated and confident in their ability to accomplish the tasks at hand. Given the overall goals, D4 subordinates need minimal direction or support from the leader and derive satisfaction from their ability to operate effectively with a degree of autonomy.¹²

To review, a leader should first establish a solid understanding of the four leadership styles and associated directive and supportive behaviors. Second, he or she

¹⁰ Ibid, 50.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, 52.

should develop an understanding of the four levels of follower development based on competence and commitment. Next, the leader should turn his or her attention to determining which leadership style to use, and when. The key to selecting and leveraging the appropriate leadership style is accurately assessing the follower's developmental level for a given task and a given situation.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the SLII theory in execution is accurately assessing a follower's developmental level for a given task and situation. This assessment is tenuous because the level changes as a function of time, situation, the task at hand, and the follower's competence related to that task. Further, the follower's level of confidence and motivation are not constant and may push the follower to higher or lower developmental levels based on the context of the situation.¹³ It is incumbent on the leader to know the subordinates well enough to gauge their competence and commitment accurately and to tailor his or her leadership style appropriately.

Based on the leader's assessment of the follower's development level, the SLII model matches a corresponding leadership style from those described earlier in this chapter. The Directing (S1) and Coaching (S2) leadership styles are matched with the D1 and D2 follower developmental levels, indicating that the leader should provide highly directive leadership combined with increasingly supportive behavior as subordinate competence improves but as commitment may wane. The Supporting (S3) leadership style correlates best with the D3 follower development level. If the D3 follower is lacking confidence, a leader can provide the support and encouragement needed to bolster their self-assuredness. If the subordinate has an issue with motivation, it is up to the leader to listen and to assist the subordinate with finding a way to solve whatever problem is deterring their motivation. Finally, for the highly competent and committed D4 follower, the Delegating(S4) leadership style is most appropriate.¹⁴

Dynamic Followership Theory

The following section discusses distinct followership skills, abilities, and categories as described by Robert Kelley's Dynamic Followership Theory. The intent is

¹³ Ibid, 54.

¹⁴ Ibid, 75.

to develop an understanding of this important followership theory as it is taught and used in the USAF during officer and enlisted Airman accession and PME. Developing an understanding of the followership skills and abilities identified by Kelley serves as the basis for cross-examination later in this thesis with the skills and abilities associated with Goleman's EI framework.

In the mid-1980s, researchers and authors expended vast amounts of funds and cognitive effort to study leadership and its impacts on management and team building. Ultimately, they were interested in how leadership could be leveraged to improve corporate bottom lines by enhancing worker performance, organizational effectiveness, and efficiency. Robert Kelley appreciated the importance of the leader and understood the drive to understand leadership more fully, but felt there was an increasingly large gap between the importance of the followers in an organization and the effort being expended to understand their roles and behaviors. Bucking the trends of the time and the advice of his associates, Kelley decided to study followership as a distinct field of research.¹⁵ Kelley's work ignited a firestorm of discussion that spread rapidly into the distinct branch of research and development he hoped to create.

To understand followership, Kelley leverages two distinct and important evaluation factors. The first is related to the follower's ability and tendency to practice (or not practice) independent and critical thinking. The second factor examines whether the follower is actively engaged in creating positive energy, spreading negative energy, or simply existing in a passively involved-but-detached manner. Kelley uses these factors to delineate between five basic follower types, assigning typical traits and behaviors to each. The follower types include the sheep, yes-people, the alienated, the pragmatics (survivors), and the effective followers.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ronald E. Riggio, Ira Chaleff, Jean Lipman-Blumen, *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 7.

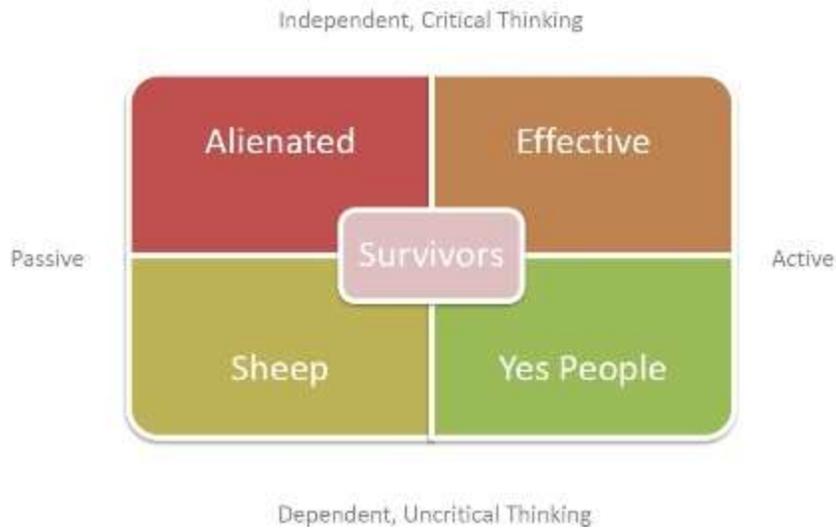


Figure 4: Robert Kelley’s Dynamic Followership Model

Source: <http://www.leaderwholeads.com/types-of-followers.html>

The sheep demonstrate low levels of critical or independent thinking and are only passively involved in the group, displaying little positive nor negative energy. They rely on others or the leader for motivation and direction and will comply with instructions, but with just enough effort to avoid repercussions or unwanted attention. They follow the crowd, wherever it may lead.¹⁷

The yes-people are full of positive energy and consistently support the leader’s decisions, thinking, and vision. Their detriment is that they often do so without the requisite independent critical thinking that is valuable in an organization. The yes-people complete tasks enthusiastically and come back to the leader looking for more, but often overlook their own ability to determine what to do. Yes-people prefer to let others do the critical thinking rather than developing their own useful inputs and lack the independence to question the leader if they disagree with a selected course of action.¹⁸

The alienated follower exhibits higher levels of critical and independent thinking than those in the yes-people or sheep categories but have and spread a great deal of negative energy. Rather than forging ahead, alienated followers look for and highlight reasons why the current course of action is doomed to fail. Cynicism and sarcasm are

¹⁷ Kelley, Robert, “In Praise of Followers”, <https://hbr.org/1988/11/in-praise-of-followers>, accessed 29 Jan 2018.

¹⁸ Ibid.

common tools that the alienated follower uses to disparage the mission, vision, decisions, and efforts of both the leader and his or her fellow followers.¹⁹ While the negative energy of the alienated follower is certainly unhelpful, their critical thinking and independent perspective can be leveraged to benefit of the group and improve its ability to be effective and efficient.

The pragmatics form the fourth of Kelley's followership groups. People in this category typically demonstrate some critical and independent thinking and ability to spread positive energy. Most pragmatics, however, choose to contribute positively only after they have determined which direction the leadership has decided to take the team and if they are certain that they will be held accountable for failing to act. The pragmatics prefer to preserve the status quo and may attempt to lay low or avoid new or uncomfortable initiatives if they think they can do so without suffering repercussions. Pragmatics do what they must to survive but little more, and so are often referred to as Survivors.²⁰

The fifth and final category consists of what Kelley defines as star followers or sometimes referred to simply as effective followers. These are the subordinates who think critically and independently and who actively spread positive energy throughout the team. When considering the leader's vision, decisions, and thinking, the effective follower engages via his or her independent critical assessment. If the follower agrees, he or she puts the full weight of his or her support behind the leader and uses the follower's considerable skill and positive energy to enact the leader's ends. If the effective follower disagrees or has reservations, he or she addresses the concerns with the leader, either challenging the leader's thinking or seeking additional information and clarification. Rather than simply criticizing, the effective follower provides suggestions and ideas for how the leader and the organization can achieve their vision, complete their mission, or attain whatever measure of success the team is pursuing.²¹

Finally, it is important to point out that there are interesting parallels between the SLII's followership development scale and Kelley's effective follower criteria. In both

¹⁹ Ronald E. Riggio, Ira Chaleff, Jean Lipman-Blumen, *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 7.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid, 8.

models, effective followers demonstrate high levels of confidence and motivation to engage positively. They also demonstrate high levels of task-related skills and abilities bolstered by critical thinking and commitment to the organization. Follower development is anything but static; not every follower begins, nor remains in the effective follower domain.²² The leader and the follower must determine and maximize the factors that enhance the subordinate's progress toward being an effective follower, and work to maintain the conditions that keep them operating in that domain.

Conclusion

Kenneth Blanchard's Situational Leadership II and Robert Kelley's Dynamic Followership theories and models provide insights to the skill sets that are important for Airmen to develop as they navigate the situations and challenges of their Air Force careers. It is more than a platitude to say that every Airman is both a leader and a follower. This chapter provided an overview of two well-reviewed theories to provide a foundation of understanding for the important leadership and followership skills sets from which the analysis section of this thesis builds. In the analysis, the consistencies between SLII and Goleman's EI framework are examined to determine to what degree the two concepts are related. Kelley's Dynamic Followership theory will also be compared against Goleman's EI framework to determine if there is significant overlap or commonality. Together, the analysis indicates the degree to which EI influences Airmen and their ability to be successful, as indicated by the consistencies found between EI and these important leadership and followership skill sets.

²² Robert Kelley; *In Praise of Followers*, Harvard Business Review, <https://hbr.org/1988/11/in-praise-of-followers>, accessed 29 Jan 2018.

Chapter 3

The Unique Challenges Airmen Face

The older I grow, the more I distrust the familiar doctrine that age brings wisdom.

- H.L. Mencken

Enlisted and commissioned Airmen face unique challenges as they transform from civilians into Airmen. The path from civilian to professional Airman is dynamic and difficult; in addition, some of the toughest challenges faced by Airmen are consistent across both the enlisted and commissioned officer candidate tracks. The author's personal experiences as an officer candidate, observations made while training thousands of officer candidates, and experiences accumulated while leading large groups of Airmen at the flight and squadron levels in aircraft maintenance organizations form the basis of the challenges identified. Observations from additional enlisted and commissioned Air Force leaders supplement those of the author. Finally, while the challenges listed are not all-inclusive, they represent widely and repeatedly encountered challenges Airmen must overcome while entering and serving in the USAF.

Once a civilian has successfully transitioned to being a professional Airman the challenges continue, and in many instances increase in complexity and breadth of impact. As Airmen ascend in rank and position, their actions, decisions, and emotions have increasingly greater potential to help or hinder an ever-increasingly large group of peers and subordinates. The second part of this chapter details the nature of the challenges Airmen of advanced rank and position may encounter. The challenges described are consistent, in varying degrees, across a wide spectrum of Airmen and organizational leadership positions in the USAF. By identifying some of the common challenges that both aspiring and experienced Airmen face, this chapter builds the foundation for later analysis regarding the role emotional intelligence might have in improving Airmen's ability to navigate the challenges they face early and throughout their military careers.

Accessions and Training Challenges

One of the greatest challenges for military professionals, and one that may be particularly difficult for new Airmen transitioning from civilian life, is the ability to cope with change. During the early years of an aspiring Airman's development, he or she experiences multiple dramatic changes to his or her social and professional networks. Not only will the people around the Airman routinely change, but the rules that govern his or her behaviors and the physical environment around them are repeatedly altered as they advance through the accessions and training pipelines. Within the new environments and their accompanying rule sets, the USAF establishes a level of personal accountability that may also be new to the recruit.¹ These changes represent significant challenges enlisted and officer candidates must adapt to during their journey towards becoming a professional Airman.

As young enlisted Airmen make their way through their initial indoctrination and training, they are effectively removed from their social support network and thrust into a new environment governed by a rule set that may be very unfamiliar to them. The training environment and physical distance sever communications between Airmen and their social networks. For a time, the support framework that consists of their friends and family is at least temporarily unavailable to them. In the span of a few hours, they find themselves in a new, foreign environment with people they do not know and in situations designed to induce moderate levels of stress. If the Airman fails a task, he or she is held accountable to a level the Airman may not have previously encountered, with his or her choices limited to accepting responsibility and improving or failing in his or her endeavor to become an Airman. The Airmen are expected to adapt to their new environment, quickly learn and master new rules and skills, and develop the ability to rapidly integrate and leverage social and professional networks to accomplish duties that would be impossible for any individual to complete alone.

The initial challenges encountered by cadets in the Reserve Officer Training Corps and Air Force Academy programs share numerous similarities. Most of these cadets begin their officer candidacy at the same time as they embark on their collegiate

¹ Thielke, SMSgt Jennifer R. (First Sergeant, Air Force Personnel Center) in discussion with author, January 30, 2018.

academic career. In addition to the normal rigors of postsecondary education, officer candidates quite suddenly find themselves in a military organization, surrounded by a group of fellow new cadets (many of whom will not last through the first few months) and under the watchful eye of more senior cadets and a professional military cadre. Over the course of four (or more) years, these cadets regularly face new stress-inducing situations and environments. They are asked to adapt to a new rule set that is at the heart of military ethics and standards and are held personally accountable for their performance (or lack of) and behavior. At regular intervals, their training thrusts them into situations comprised of entirely new social and professional networks. Within these new networks, Airmen are expected to integrate quickly and operate seamlessly as a team.

Having completed basic training, or having earned their commissions as officers, new Airmen again experience dramatic changes. As they begin their initial career field specific training, the USAF once again places them into new and unfamiliar environments. With the new environment comes a new set of rules they must abide by and a new set of performance expectations they must strive to meet and exceed. Once again, these changes to environments and expectations occur as young Airmen enter into new and unfamiliar social and professional networks.

These same challenges occur again at the Airman's first base of assignment, and in fact during each new assignment, temporary duty, and deployment. Deployments may be particularly challenging as they introduce a new level of foreign environment, enhanced risks, and the aspect of unlimited liability. Coupled with potentially sporadic communications; increased levels of duty-related stress; and the potential for serving with inter-service, international, and inter-agency partners, deployments can amplify the traditional challenges previously identified.

Additional Challenges of Advanced Rank and Position

As Airmen become more professionally skilled and gain experience, they soon discover that the USAF is fairly quick to reward their efforts with increasing levels of rank and positions of greater influence, authority, and autonomy. They are assigned duties that give them greater influence on the people that serve within their units and that allow them more influence within their organization. This advancement in rank and

position entails a much-welcomed pay increase but also includes increased expectations, the potential for greater demands within their personal lives, challenges associated with leading increasingly large groups of subordinates, and the pressures associated with taking on an organizational leadership role.

As Airmen ascend in rank and position, their peers begin to make assumptions about the Airman's professional skills and abilities, particularly when the Airman is new to a unit or group. Experienced Airmen placed in leadership positions are expected to have mastered the previously-discussed challenges associated with new environments, rule sets, and interpersonal networks. The new Airman's peers expect that he or she possesses considerable professional expertise and leadership abilities. Developing and maintaining the required level of professional competency and confidence presents a daunting challenge as Airmen attain new leadership positions that may stretch their professional capacity.

Furthermore, as Airmen progress through their careers, the challenges they face may need to be tackled while balancing the needs and desires of their families. Each challenge an Airman faces, their family faces and endures with them. As Airmen mature, their immediate families may grow with the addition of a spouse and children. Simultaneously, an Airman's aging parents may require greater consideration and attention. Family can be the bedrock of support that helps an Airman during difficult times. Conversely, family needs, desires, and separation can be an additional stressor that challenges an Airman's ability to maintain professional competence and motivation.

Only after an Airman has achieved some proficiency in managing their own lives and careers can they effectively take on the role of leading subordinates. One of the difficult challenges associated with leading people is discerning how to help them with their personal and professional development. This level of personal involvement requires open communication that is predicated by a necessary level of trust between the subordinate and the leader. Given the busy nature of military operations and the fact that Airmen in leadership positions may be rotated or reassigned every year or two, fostering the professional relationships needed to develop subordinates effectively requires considerable deliberate effort.

Another significant challenge associated with advanced rank and position is leading people and organizations through crises and conflict. In times of crisis, many people turn to the group leader for emotional guidance. Based on their positional authority and any referent influence they have built, leaders have a unique ability to give meaning to crises, provide context, and guide their group's actions after the crisis has abated.² Airmen of advanced rank and position should be ready to accept this role, however daunting it may seem.

Finally, Airmen of advanced rank and position are expected to lead their organizations by setting a long-term vision and the associated goals for pursuing that vision while simultaneously executing daily mission requirements. Airmen in organizational leadership positions regularly find themselves challenged by the need to make investments in long-term development while facing the near-term costs of those investments on the unit's ability to perform the daily mission. Compounding the challenge is the increased degree of autonomy that often accompanies organizational leadership roles. The leader is responsible for the overall performance of the unit and often has wide latitude to steer the organization as he or she sees fit. These Airmen must continually evaluate the dynamic and changing environment their organization operates within, monitor it for changes, and assess how those changes impact their organization.³ In response, organizational leaders may need to lead their organizations through difficult internal changes. An Airman's effectiveness in his or her organizational leadership role impacts the organization's odds of success and simultaneously impacts, either positively or negatively, the people within and around the organization.

Conclusion

Airmen face numerous challenges as they enter the USAF and begin their military careers. Some of those challenges are associated with dissolution of their pre-military social and professional networks and the frequently changing nature of those same networks once they have entered military service. Additional challenges manifest as

² Goleman, Daniel, Boyatzis, Richard, and McKee, Annie. *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), xvi.

³ Ibid, ix.

Airmen navigate the challenges of the accession and training pipelines in which they must operate across multiple diverse environments, conform to various rule sets, and work to meet varying expectations. While they learn to navigate these challenges, Airmen are held to a level of personal accountability that may be new to them, challenging them yet again to adapt.

As Airmen advance in rank and position, a host of new challenges joins those already discussed as Airmen manage their professional development while assuming positions of personal and organizational leadership. In these leadership positions, Airmen face pressure to continue improving their professional skills while also working to develop their subordinates. They are challenged to resolve conflicts and to lead their teams through crises. Finally, they are expected to lead their organizations toward a brighter vision of the future while ensuring the mission gets accomplished every day.

The challenges detailed in this chapter are neither enlisted- nor officer-specific issues. Articulating common challenges faced by all Airmen sets the foundation for analysis against the Goleman EI framework to discern the role and importance of emotional intelligence as it pertains to the overcoming those challenges.

Accessions & Training Challenges	Challenges of Advanced Rank/Position
Dynamic social network	Dynamic social network
Dynamic professional network	Dynamic professional network
Dynamic & demanding environments	Dynamic & demanding environments
Learning rules & expectations	Learning rules & expectations
Strict accountability for actions/performance	Strict accountability for actions/performance
	Elevated professional expectations
	Increasing instances of family concerns
	Developing subordinates
	Subordinate crisis resolution & conflict management
	Organizational leadership & balance
	Leading organizational change/increased autonomy

Figure 5: Challenges Faced by Airmen

Source: Author's Original Work

Chapter 4

Cross-Walk Analysis

This chapter compares Daniel Goleman's EI theory and framework with the Situational Leadership II (SLII) theory and Kelley's Dynamic Followership theory. By examining the degree to which the theories overlap, this chapter provides insight into how enhancing EI could positively influence an Airman's ability to lead effectively, follow dynamically, and successfully overcome challenges. Specifically, this chapter addresses the questions; "To what degree does EI influence an Airman's ability to lead effectively and follow dynamically?" and, "Can enhancing EI help Airmen overcome the challenges associated with accessions, training, and active duty as they ascend in rank and position?" Each section begins with a visual aid and a brief review of the key theoretical points.

Goleman's Framework and SLII

The Goleman EI framework consists of two major competencies, personal and social. Within each competency, the emotionally intelligent individual exercises his or her ability to recognize and regulate emotions and behaviors. The intersections between the two competencies, recognition (via social and self-awareness) and regulation (using relationship and self-management) result in the following four capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Each capability comprises a variety of skills and attributes, as detailed in Figure 6.

The SLII model is a two-step approach that begins with a leader assessing the follower's developmental level based on the follower's competence and commitment (a product of confidence and motivation) as they pertain to a specific task or situation. The second step entails the leader enacting the appropriate blend of the directive and supporting behaviors, based on the follower's developmental level within a given situation, to accomplish the task at hand. So, if an Airman wants to lead effectively, he or she must be able to assess the follower's developmental level accurately and then regulate his or her leadership behaviors appropriately.

Goleman's EI Framework

Daniel Goleman EI Domains and Associated Competencies		
	Recognition	Regulation
Personal Competence	Self-Awareness	Self-Management
	Self-confidence	Emotional self-control
	Awareness of your emotional state	Transparency
	Accurate self-assessment	Adaptability
Social Competence	Social Awareness	Relationship Management
	Organizational awareness	Influence
	Service	Developing others
		Change catalyst
		Building bonds
	Teamwork and collaboration	

Situational Leadership II

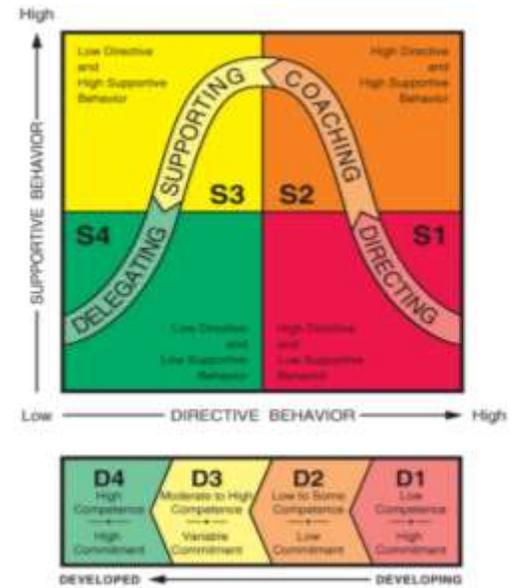


Figure 6: Goleman's EI Framework and SLII Crosswalk Comparison

Source: Goleman, Boyatzis, McKee, *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 37-38.

Source: Blanchard, et al., *Leadership and The One Minute Manager*.

Goleman's social competency, particularly the social awareness capability, directly correlates to a leader's ability to assess a follower's developmental level accurately. The primary skill within the social awareness capability is empathy, defined as the ability to sense another's emotions, his or her perspective, and being able and willing to take an active interest in the other's concerns. Understanding and working to enhance EI may improve a leader's ability to assess his or her followers. The service attribute within the social awareness capability refers to one's ability to recognize and meet a client's, customer's, or follower's needs.¹ The service attribute leverages the information gained by exercising both empathy and social-awareness. After the leader ascertains the follower's developmental level, the leader can shift his or her focus to the second step of the model.

The second step for a leader using the SLII model is to tailor his or her directive and supportive behaviors appropriately, as dictated by the developmental level of the followers. For a leader to appropriately regulate his or her behaviors, he or she requires a

¹ <http://www.danielgoleman.info/daniel-goleman-how-emotionally-intelligent-are-you/>, accessed 30 Mar 18.

significant degree of self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management. The leader must have the self-awareness to be confident in his or her ability to lead and to recognize their emotions quickly enough to enable effective regulation. Leaders with enhanced self-awareness know their weaknesses and potential emotional triggers and are prepared to regulate their responses appropriately. Enhanced self-awareness enables better self-management, which allows the leader to overcome adversity, improves adaptability, and gives the leader the ability to increase their level of optimism.² Finally, the leader's self-awareness and self-management influence his or her relationship management. The degree to which a leader chooses to blend inspiration or bond building into his or her leadership manifests in how he or she regulates interpersonal interactions with the follower(s). Enhancing an Airman's relationship management capability provides him or her with a better understanding of how to inspire others, leverage influence, build stronger interpersonal bonds, and enhances his or her overall ability to lead and develop others.

The SLII theory's two basic steps, follower assessment and tailored leadership behaviors, rely on a leader's ability to exercise social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management. Absent these abilities, leaders may struggle to assess their followers' developmental levels accurately, may ineffectively recognize and regulate their own emotions, and will be ill-equipped to tailor their leadership behaviors appropriately. When examined side by side, these two models collectively show that effective leaders leverage EI to manage their own emotions and behaviors, to enhance their toolkit for understanding situations, and to effectively manage their interpersonal relationships. Given the definition for effective leadership established in Chapter 4, a crosswalk comparison between the SLII model and Goleman's framework indicates that EI is a foundational skill set for Airmen to lead effectively.³

² <http://www.danielgoleman.info/daniel-goleman-how-emotionally-intelligent-are-you/>, accessed 30 Mar 18.

³ From page 28, "For the remainder of this thesis, a leader's ability to accurately assess the competence and commitment of his or her subordinate in a given situation and then apply the appropriate blend of directive and supportive behaviors represents the measure of leadership effectiveness."

Goleman's Framework and Dynamic Followership

Robert Kelley's Dynamic Followership Model consists of two primary factors. The first is the follower's ability and tendency to practice independent and critical thinking. The second factor is the follower's tendency to actively engage with positive energy versus their tendency to only passively engage with minimal or negative energy. The following discussion focuses on discerning the linkages between EI; critical and independent thinking; and positive, active engagement.

Goleman's EI Framework

Daniel Goleman EI Domains and Associated Competencies			
		Recognition	Regulation
Personal Competence		<u>Self-Awareness</u>	<u>Self-Management</u>
		Self-confidence	Emotional self-control
		Awareness of your emotional state	Transparency
Social Competence		<u>Social Awareness</u>	<u>Relationship Management</u>
		Empathy	Inspirational leadership
		Organizational awareness	Influence
	Service	Developing others	
		Change catalyst	
		Building bonds	
		Teamwork and collaboration	

Dynamic Followership Model



Figure 7: Goleman's EI Framework and SLII Crosswalk Comparison

Source: Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, *Primal Leadership*.

Source: <http://www.leaderwholeads.com/types-of-followers.htm>.

An Airman's ability to practice and effectively communicate his or her independent and critical thinking depends on his or her ability to be self-aware, to manage emotions, and to leverage social-awareness. Airmen with high levels of self-awareness continually monitor their emotions and strive to understand their sources. They can listen to their internal dialogue and have the self-confidence to understand that their independent and critical thoughts have value. High levels of social awareness allow a follower to perceive the organizational and interpersonal context of situations. Improving their social awareness capability would enhance Airmen's abilities to discern when, and to whom they should express their critical and independent thoughts for maximal effect. Enhancing an Airman's EI not only improves his or her ability to think

independently and critically, but it can also improve the Airman's ability to deliver insights in an effective and constructive manner, and at the appropriate time and place.

Enhanced EI may also influence an Airman's tendency for positive and active engagement. Airmen with high levels of self-awareness actively and accurately assess their abilities and understand that they will likely experience anxiety when confronted with unfamiliar situations or tasks. Airmen with advanced EI are armed with the ability and tendency for forethought and are familiar with their emotional triggers. With enhanced self-awareness, they are better prepared to manage their emotions, can express emotions more accurately, and can actively engage within themselves and with others to bolster their levels of optimism, initiative, and desire to achieve. Furthermore, enhanced social awareness enables Airmen to empathize with their peers and gives them the relationship tools to build the bonds and exert influence to help their fellow Airmen engage more positively and actively as well.

Another aspect of Kelley's Dynamic Followership Model that demonstrates considerable reliance on EI is in its assertion that followers can progress from the low end of the effective followership spectrum (sheep) to the high end (effective followers). As a follower's independent and critical thinking improves, and as his or her positive and active engagement increases, the follower moves ever-closer to be an effective follower.

Collective analysis of the two models suggests that for an Airman to understand Kelley's Dynamic Followership model and to accurately assess where they fall within it requires advanced EI. An Airman's ability to accurately self-assess, to understand the situation, and to deliberately adjust their followership behaviors relies on their EI. The Goleman Framework is built on the foundational capabilities of continual and accurate self-awareness, which in turn enables effective self-management. These same capabilities form the foundation for followers to improve their independent and critical thinking and their positive and active engagement.

Goleman's Framework and Airmen Challenges

The challenges Airmen face are diverse and often evoke strong emotions. The following analysis details the challenges identified in Chapter 3 and indicates how enhancing an Airman's EI might improve his or her ability to assess, understand, and

work through the challenges and the emotions associated with them. Figure 8 lists the eleven challenges from Chapter 3 vertically on the left side. The first five challenges listed are challenges that younger Airmen may be more likely to encounter. The next six challenges are issues that are more likely to be encountered by Airmen of advanced rank or position. The EI capabilities, highlighted by the orange cells, are aligned horizontally across the top. Each intersection between an Airman challenge and an EI capability articulates how enhancing an Airman's EI skills in that capability might help them to overcome the challenge. Based on the collective analysis of the challenges and the capabilities that comprise Goleman's EI Framework, Figure 8 depicts the potential positive results of enhancing EI within Airmen.



Goleman's EI Competencies				
	Personal Competence		Social Competence	
	Recognition	Regulation	Recognition	Regulation
Challenges Airmen Face	Self-awareness	Self-management	Social Awareness	Relationship Management
Dynamic social network	Self-confidence, recognize self-worth	Emotional self-control, adaptability and transparency	Empathy to understand others' perspectives	Bond building
Dynamic professional network	Recognize self-worth, understand emotional strengths and vulnerabilities	Regulate disruptive emotions, self-motivate, mx optimism	Social awareness to understand viewpoints and emotions of others	Bond building and teamwork
Dynamic & demanding environments	Recognize emotions and signs of durrress, to accurately self-assess and bolster confidence	Regulate emotions and counterproductive impulses, maintain motivation, optimism, and initiative	Understand the organization, peoples' roles, empathy for fellow Amn and civilians	Build bonds, foster cooperation and teamwork, conflict management
Learning rules & expectations	Recognize emotions, assess source, bolster confidence and self-worth	Emotional self-control, to maintain desire for achievement, bolster optimism	Learn decision and organization networks, recognize needs of self and others	Developing others, build bonds, influence others to learn rules and achieve
Strict accountability	Read, recognize, and predict emotions to facilitate regulation	Control disruptive impulses, maintain integrity, remain flexible and adaptive, mx initiative and optimism	Understand rules, decision networks, and need for accountability	To help guide, motivate, and influence others; help others develop accountability
Elevated professional expectations	Self-confidence, know strengths and vulnerabilities, accurate self-assessment	Regulate emotions, maintain motivation, initiative, and professionalism, remain flexible	Organizational awareness and Service	Build bonds, teamwork and collaboration
Increasing instances of family concerns	Know strengths/vulnerabilities, accurate self-assessment to facilitate regulation	Regulate emotions, act deliberately, control counterproductive impulses	Empathy, Service	Influence, teamwork, developing others, building/maintaining bonds
Developing subordinates	Self-confidence, maximize strengths, accurate self-assessment to facilitate regulation	Emotional self-control, optimism, adaptability to needs of subordinate	Empathy, organizational awareness, service	Inspirational leadership, developing others, building bonds, collaboration
Subordinate crisis resolution & conflict management	Self-confidence, awareness of emotional state, accurate self-assessment	Emotional self-control, adaptability, optimism	Empathy, organizational awareness, service	Inspirational leadership, influence, building bonds
Organizational leadership and balance	Self-confidence, accurate self-assessment	Emotional self-control, adaptability to needs of organization, achievement, initiative	Empathy, organizational awareness, service	Inspirational leadership, influence, developing others, change catalyst, teamwork, collaboration
Leading organizational change/increased autonomy	Self-confidence, know emotional strengths and vulnerabilities, accurate self-assessment	Emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, initiative, optimism	Empathy, organizational awareness, service	Inspirational leadership, influence, developing others, change catalyst, building bonds, teamwork, collaboration

Figure 8: Emotional Intelligence and Airman Challenges

Source: Author's Original Work

Conclusion

Based on the side-by-side analysis of the models, there appears to be a useful relationship between EI and leadership, EI and followership, and how EI can enhance an Airman's ability to overcome challenges. The SLII and Kelley's Dynamic Followership

theories rely on Airmen regularly practicing strong self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management to lead and follow effectively. Given the foundational nature of EI to effective leadership and dynamic followership, this chapter suggests that Airmen can improve both by enhancing their EI. Additionally, the analysis indicates that improving an Airman's EI has great potential for helping him or her to assess accurately, understand, and ultimately overcome the many and diverse challenges he or she will face while entering and serving in the USAF.



Chapter 5

Emotional Intelligence in the USAF

Only as you do know yourself can your brain serve you as a sharp and efficient tool. Know your own failings, passions, and prejudices so you can separate them from what you see.

- Bernard Baruch

The intent of the discussion to this point has been to determine, “How important is emotional intelligence for enabling Airmen to lead effectively, follow dynamically, and overcome challenges?” Having discerned the foundational nature of emotional intelligence as it pertains to leadership, followership, and overcoming challenges, this chapter assesses the weight of effort the USAF has allocated to EI. This analysis provides insights regarding the primary research question, “Given the importance of EI, how has the USAF integrated EI into its resources, training, and education to equip Airmen for success early in their careers and as they ascend in rank and position?”

To ascertain the amount of effort the USAF directs toward EI, the following pages investigate the service’s written directives and guidance to determine EI’s prevalence. Attention is then given to the USAF’s mentorship program, the Profession of Arms Center of Excellence (PACE), and e-Learning programs to discern what EI resources the USAF provides to its Airmen in the field. The rest of this chapter’s discussion reviews the weight of effort devoted to EI training for the USAF’s new accessions and its Airmen as they ascend in rank and position. For this effort, this chapter reviews the curricula offered to basic military trainees, non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and to senior non-commissioned officers (SNCOs). Similarly, it reviews the curricula delivered to cadets in the Reserve Officer Training Corps and officer candidates in the Officer Training School, as well as the Squadron Officer College and Air Command and Staff College.

Resources Available to Airmen in the Field: Directives and Guidance

The USAF delivers broad service-wide guidance via doctrine. The purpose of doctrine is to record and pass on what a service believes is the best way to conduct military affairs.¹ It is a collection of living documents intended to serve as a guide and requires continual review and revision as circumstances and understanding evolve. Turning to the topic of EI, USAF Basic Doctrine Volume I acknowledges that war is a phenomenon involving the full range of human emotions, but that is its only reference to emotions or emotional intelligence.² Basic Doctrine Volume II is devoted to the foundations of leadership and details the necessary leadership components. USAF Basic Doctrine Volume II mentions emotional stability in a historical context, citing that emotional stability was identified as a key leadership attribute in the 1948 version of AFMAN 35-15, *Air Force Leadership*. Volume II continues to explain that as time passed and guidance has changed, emotional stability has been incorporated under the umbrella of the “Excellence in all we do” core value. A thorough review of the other thirty doctrine annexes revealed only a few isolated incidents in which emotions were mentioned, and in those cases the doctrine used emotions to define another mission set or targeted area rather than focusing on the importance of emotions to Airmen and their performance.³

Given the broad nature of the doctrine, any mention of emotions is significant. But as it is written, emotions are only mentioned in passing and doctrine does not provide any concrete guidance or direction for the role of emotions or EI in the USAF. A review of the next-lower level of detailed guidance and directives, Air Force Instructions (AFIs), similarly returned scant mention of emotions or EI.

Emotions are mentioned in USAF service manuals, specifically within Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development and Management*. Therein, the USAF lists the key competencies and sub-competencies for Airmen to acquire and develop by the time they reach experiential milestones in their careers. The

¹ Dennis Drew and Don Snow, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/readings/drew1.htm>, accessed 26 Mar 2018.

² USAF Basic Doctrine, Volume I, http://www.doctrine.af.mil/Portals/61/documents/Volume_1/Volume-1-Basic-Doctrine.pdf?ver=2017-09-13-150324-650, page 38, accessed 26 Mar 18.

³ U.S. Air Force Doctrine, Doctrine Annexes, <http://www.doctrine.af.mil/Doctrine-Annexes/>, accessed 26 Mar 2018.

manual directs that these competencies should be taught to Airmen via Professional Military Education (PME), the commissioning sources, Basic Military Training (BMT), and via supervisory training in the field.⁴ One of the competencies, “Leading People,” entails the sub-competencies, “Develops and Inspires Others,” and, “Takes Care of People.”⁵ Without using EI-specific terms, and disaggregated across different ability levels and two sub-competencies, the AFMAN directs that Airmen should be able to emotionally self-assess, self-manage, develop social awareness, and demonstrate effective relationship management behavior, but does not specifically identify EI as the form of intelligence that enables those competencies.⁶ This AFMAN is important in that it establishes the skills that EI consist of as important competencies the USAF should train to, and develop within, its Airmen. It is also one example of how the USAF has disaggregated EI between multiple skills sets and across an Airman’s developmental timeline. Disaggregating EI separates into parts a skill set that relies on each of its pieces working together to be effective and ignores the continual internal emotional process that occurs within each of us. Unfortunately, disaggregation of EI is a theme that is shown to be widespread in the following pages that review the other EI resources available to Airmen in the field and EI within the PME curricula.

Resources for Airmen in the Field: Mentoring Program, PACE, and e-Learning

A document one might expect to contain EI principles is the Air Force’s official guidance for leaders developing subordinates, Air Force Manual 36-2643, *Air Force Mentoring Program*. This guidance acknowledges the importance of the mentor-mentee relationship but does not mention self-awareness, self-management, empathy, or social awareness. The manual instructs mentors to develop Airmen through technical task-specific coaching, goal setting, and by using the mentoring resources attached to the manual and additional resources on MyVECTOR.⁷ The additional resources do not contain any EI-related materials and directs Airmen to take the AF Institutional

⁴ AFMAN 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development and Management*, 25 March 2014, 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ http://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/af_a1/publication/afman36-2643/afman36-2643.pdf, 5-6, accessed 26 March 2018.

Competency Assessment via the AF Portal. Multiple attempts to complete the assessment ended in a 404 ‘Page Not Found’ error. A review of the MyVECTOR-hosted mentoring program revealed a mentee-driven program that relies on the mentee to identify the type of mentor they prefer as well as to select the topics about which they desire to receive information. In this construct, the onus for action and direction is placed on the subordinate, rather than the mentor. The mentoring program does not offer EI-related materials to Airmen in the field, nor does it point Airmen to robust sources of additional guidance.

In stark contrast, the Profession of Arms Center for Excellence (PACE) is an outstanding USAF initiative that offers resources that address professionalism, trust, human behavior, biases, misperceptions, and a host of other topics.⁸ The PACE website has a wealth of videos and information about USAF values, heritage, traditions, and contains numerous links to other service’s leadership websites. In addition to online resources, the organization sponsors an Enhancing Human Capital (EHC) road course to deliver the course’s message to Airmen and civilians in the field. The curriculum is centered around professionalism and intends to help Airmen and USAF civilians improve themselves, their leadership, and ability to accomplish the mission. The EHC road course indirectly highlights the importance of EI, acknowledging that professionalism begins with, “the art of leading oneself.”⁹ The EHC course goes on to assert that a leader’s number one job is, “to bring out the best version of (his/her) people intellectually, physically, and emotionally...”.¹⁰ The EHC course emphasizes that the key to improving leadership and professionalism is to understand the “human phenomenon” and identifies mechanisms by which human behavior is influenced, such as the need to belong, peer pressure, and the key perceptions of trust, loyalty and shared commitment.¹¹ At that point in the course, the discussion turns to the topics of systematic thinking, consequences of biases, and communication. These are certainly important leadership

⁸ Ricker, Alan, *PACE: Providing the Tools to Shape a Professional Workplace*, 5 Feb 2018, <http://www.airman.af.mil/pacenews/Article/1439157/pace-providing-the-tools-to-shape-a-professional-workplace/>, accessed 27 March 2018.

⁹ PACE Products, EHC Slides, <http://www.airman.af.mil/Products/Courses-Lessons/EHC-course/>, 8, accessed 27 March 2018.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

topics, but there is no direct mention of emotional self-assessment, self-management, social awareness, empathy, nor of EI as a topic for further study.

The last available resource for Airmen in the field included in this research is the USAF's e-Learning website. The e-Learning resource is a web-based application that hosts free training and education resources for USAF civilians, officers, and enlisted Airmen. It intends to provide "information technology and business skills resources to enhance personal and professional knowledge."¹² A simple search of the site contents reveals dozens of links to a multitude of topics, including leadership, followership, and emotional intelligence. The strength of this resource is that it is provided at no cost, offers education and resources that can be selected to match the desired time investment, and that it offers a vast body of knowledge for any Airman with the initiative and time to leverage it. But, therein lies the issue.

For all of its beneficial aspects, the e-Learning content is set up to be a "pull" system that requires an Airman to determine the competency they want (or need) to improve within themselves. After they identify the need, they must go in search of the resources required and invest their time to improve themselves. Given the foundational importance of EI, leaving it to chance that Airmen will go out of their way to pull the information on their time may not be the best way for the USAF to equip Airmen to succeed. Instead, the USAF should push a consolidated and coherent EI approach and individual EI development to Airmen via initial accession training and PME. The USAF's integration of EI into its accessions training and PME is the subject of the next section of this thesis.

Enlisted Airman Training and Education

Basic Military Training (BMT)

Enlisted Airmen start their USAF careers at BMT where a dedicated staff of professional trainers work to "Transform civilians into motivated, disciplined warrior Airmen with the foundation to serve in the world's greatest Air Force."¹³ Reviewing the

¹² AF e-Learning Home Page, <https://usafprod.skillport.com/skillportfe/main.action#whatshappening>, accessed 12 April 2018.

¹³ <http://www.basictraining.af.mil/>, accessed 27 March 2018.

BMT Study Guide reveals that during that transformation, Airmen receive instruction on a broad range of topics concerning leadership, followership, professionalism, and how to handle adversity.¹⁴ While the curriculum does not directly teach EI to Airmen, it does incorporate certain pieces of EI theory in its professionalism and leadership training.

The BMT Study Guide addresses professionalism and leadership in great depth and detail and touches on some important EI-related concepts. The study guide acknowledges the importance of demonstrating emotional self-control and offers relaxation and rehearsal as techniques to assist Airmen in that regard.¹⁵ Similarly, the guide discusses the importance of building relationships, accurately evaluating situations, understanding roles, and understanding one's motivations, strengths, and weaknesses.¹⁶ The BMT Study Guide also hints at emotional self-management as it relates to dealing with combat stress.¹⁷ Each of these important teaching points represents a skill or attribute contained within one of the four capabilities in Goleman's EI Framework, but the teaching points are dispersed throughout separate sections of the study guide. Nowhere in the BMT curricula is EI specifically instructed as a coherent and consolidated means to link the teaching points together where they occur, within the Airmen themselves.

While the BMT curriculum instructs Airmen on a few specific aspects of EI, it has room for improvement. For example, in the study guide section that addresses interpersonal conflict, Airmen are instructed to "Try to stay calm and not get emotional."¹⁸ While the study guide is most likely asking Airmen not to act out aggressively or irrationally based on their involuntary emotions, it seems instead to ask them to dismiss, suppress, or ignore them. Currently, EI-related teaching points are most prevalent in the BMT leadership lesson. This is unfortunate because EI should not be presented as something useful only for those serving in leadership positions, but rather a competency from which everyone should regularly practice and benefit. Finally, based on the persistent, pervasive, and often automatic nature of emotions, EI is best understood

¹⁴ BMT Study Guide, BMT: LMABM9T000 00AC, 29 Jan 2018: CHG 02, viii.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 252.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 227-229.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 178.

as a coherent and complete theory. Disaggregating EI separates into parts a skill set that relies on each of its pieces working together to be effective and ignores the continual internal emotional process that occurs within each of us.

Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA)

The NCOA is the USAF's second-level enlisted PME course that teaches technical sergeants to be professional Airmen who can manage and lead Air Force units.¹⁹ A review of the NCOA lesson plans and accompanying required readings reveal a topically organized course that includes studies in full range leadership, leadership and followership, leader influence, interpersonal communication, team building, and change management, among others. The *Full Range Leadership* course directly covers Daniel Goleman's framework and highlights emotional intelligence and its importance to leadership.²⁰ Similarly, the required reading for the *Leadership and Followership* lesson mentions Goleman's version of EI and its competencies.²¹ These two lessons demonstrate how the USAF could present EI as a consolidated, coherent, and recurring foundational element to help Airmen to internalize the Leading People competency. Unfortunately, the rest of the NCOA curriculum does not leverage this EI-based approach despite there being multiple topics that would benefit by including EI.

The remaining lessons and required readings for NCOA disaggregate the competencies associated with EI. Rather than building from a foundation of EI, the *Team Building* and *Leader Influence* lessons do not address EI or empathy at all. The *Self-Improvement Through Feedback* and *Interpersonal Communications* lessons address EI, but indirectly and in a disaggregated manner. Finally, the *Change Management* lesson addresses emotions but seems to muddy the water by introducing a separate approach dubbed, "emotional flexibility", that seems to combine self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness to assist with relationship management. Rather than leveraging a

¹⁹ <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Barnes/NCO-Academy/>, accessed 4 April 2018.

²⁰ Department of the Air Force Thomas N. Barnes Center for Enlisted Education (AETC), Noncommissioned Officer Academy Lesson Plan and Required Readings, 1 October 2016, Full Range Leadership, 5.

²¹ Department of the Air Force Thomas N. Barnes Center for Enlisted Education (AETC), Noncommissioned Officer Academy Lesson Plan and Required Readings, 1 October 2016, Leadership and Followership, 18.

consolidated and consistent EI approach throughout, the NCOA curriculum exhibits strong EI teachings in certain areas, but EI is notably absent in other parts of the curriculum.

Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy (SNCOA)

The third level of enlisted Airman PME is the SNCO Academy (SNCOA). The SNCOA intends to refine Airmen's abilities to lead the enlisted force in the employment of airpower to support national security objectives.²² Review of the SNCOA lesson plan reveals a topically organized curriculum that bears similarities to the NCOA in how it incorporates EI.

The SNCOA at first glance appears on-track to leverage EI as it proffers an 18-hour self-awareness course early in the program. The intent is for the Airmen to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and emotional triggers to help them control and redirect disruptive emotions and impulses.²³ This course is early in the program and receives a large block of time, which demonstrates a degree of recognition of EI's foundational and critical nature. But, even within the self-awareness lesson, neither EI nor Daniel Goleman's framework is specifically mentioned. This is problematic because self-awareness, by itself, does not enable one to consider and enact the appropriate behaviors in a given situation. Only when self-awareness is combined with social awareness, self-management, and relationship management does it offer one the ability to appropriately control and tailor one's behaviors. While the SNCOA lesson plan discusses self-management and mentions the need to control emotions to foster positive relationships, the competencies and skills are not presented in a consolidated and coherent manner that links them together as parts of a single internal process.

The same disaggregation of EI competencies and skills that was apparent in most of the NCOA courses recurs throughout the SNCOA courses as well. Throughout the *Comprehensive Fitness*, *Team Dynamics*, *Mediation*, *Visionary Leadership*, *Diversity*, and *Emergent Leadership Issues* courses, aspects of EI are sprinkled in without being

²² <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Barnes/Heritage/>, accessed 5 April 2017.

²³ Department of the Air Force Thomas N. Barnes Center for Enlisted Education (AETC), Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy Lesson Plan, Module SA02, 66.

linked to an overarching concept. Again, the idea of emotional flexibility is offered as part of the *Visionary Leader* lesson, blending self-assessment, self-management, and relationship management without significant depth or detail into “how” Airman can develop the ability. Like the second-level PME course, EI is incorporated into the SNCOA curriculum but is dispersed throughout and presented as disaggregated bits and pieces rather than as a consolidated and coherent approach for Airmen to internalize.

Having reviewed the USAF’s enlisted accessions training and most of the enlisted PME, the commissioned officer accessions training, Squadron Officer College (SOC), and Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) curricula are reviewed next to determine EI’s prevalence and coherence.

Commissioned Officer Training and Education

Reserve Officer Training Corps/Officer Training School (ROTC/OTS)

Most of the commissioned officers in the USAF earn their commissions through the Air Force’s ROTC or OTS programs. Given that the output of both programs is to produce serviceable officers who are ready to lead while maintaining the core values, it is reasonable that the curricula bear many similarities.²⁴ In fact, the curricula for both programs is centrally managed through the Holm Center at Maxwell AFB. As might be expected, the program’s similarities include their approaches to teaching officer candidates about EI.

In both the AFROTC and OTS programs, candidates are instructed and given an opportunity to learn about themselves during self-awareness lessons and assessments. The lessons represent a solid first step toward learning about and enhancing EI. Both programs also discuss the important and emotionally-significant topics of conflict management, Kelley’s followership model, team building, leadership fundamentals, and change management.²⁵ While teaching these topics, the lessons discuss power and influence, promote critical thinking, and even address the need for candidates to

²⁴ <https://www.afrotc.com/about/mission>, accessed 5 April 2017.

²⁵ Course Outlines: AFROTC 2018-2019 Academic Courses, Jeanne M. Holm Center for Officer Accessions and Citizen Development.

frequently self-assess to enhance professional development.²⁶ But neither program addresses EI directly, nor presents a consolidated and coherent model for the candidates to leverage to enhance their EI. As in the majority of the enlisted PME courses, the AFROTC and OTS programs do not comprehensively identify the EI competencies, capabilities, or skills as part of a consolidated whole.

Squadron Officer College (SOC)

The stated purpose of six-week SOC in-residence program is to, “develop solution-minded, bold and courageous Airmen ready to overcome today's and tomorrow's challenges.” The training is specifically tailored for Airmen in the rank of Captain and civilian employees in the GS-9 to GS-12 range.²⁷ In that vein, the resident program identifies leadership and team building as two of its primary focus areas.²⁸ The curriculum also includes instruction about Kelley’s followership model, acknowledges the importance of building and sustaining relationships of trust, and expects its graduates to be able to apply leadership competencies in a variety of situations.

Two areas within the SOC curriculum address EI-related competencies or skill-sets. The program addresses the importance of having EI while receiving and administering feedback as a minor part of a lesson that encompasses the types of feedback, the importance of feedback, and leadership behaviors during feedback sessions.²⁹ Similarly, the *Team Building* lesson highlights the importance of introspection and self-awareness for effective team building.³⁰ In other SOC lessons, knowing the audience is discussed during an *Effective Communications* lesson, and EI-related skills are covered during various leadership lessons.

The direct and indirect inclusion of parts of EI throughout the SOC curriculum indicates an appreciation for the importance of EI competencies and skills. But once again, rather than being presented as consolidated competencies consisting of several

²⁶ Pre-Commissioning Training: Officer Training School, April 2017 Course Syllabus, Jeanne M. Holm Center for Officer Accessions and Citizen Development.

²⁷ Eligibility Requirements, Squadron Officer School, <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/SOS/Display/Article/1043031/eligibility-requirements/>, accessed 16 May 2018.

²⁸ <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/SOS/>, accessed 6 April 2018.

²⁹ Squadron Officer School (SOS) In-Resident Course Catalog, MSOS001, 11 December 2017, 20.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

inter-related capabilities, skills, and abilities, EI is disaggregated across a broad range of topics and situations.

Air Command and Staff College (ACSC)

The ACSC resident course presents a rigorous masters-level curriculum focused on expanding officers' understanding of air and space power.³¹ The student body consists of approximately 500 resident attendees from the US military services, officers from partner nations, as well as civilians from various federal agencies. Most of the students are Airmen in the rank of major. The 10-month course consists of advanced study and training in leadership, war and airpower theory, international security, and joint warfighting.³²

Within the 17-day leadership block of instruction, ACSC teaches advanced leadership principles, tactics, and techniques. Part of that instruction includes a lesson devoted to understanding EI, recognizing its importance, and learning how to enhance it. The training introduces Daniel Goleman's EI framework, includes a one-hour lecture, and discusses EI during a two-hour seminar.³³ Prior to the EI lesson, students are required to complete the Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP) to begin their self-assessment and to start to work toward being more socially aware, empathetic, and better equipped to exert a positive influence.³⁴ Overall, the EI lesson within the leadership course acknowledges the pervasive nature of emotions in the students' personal and professional lives and offers a good introduction to the primary EI competencies and skills.

Having reviewed several of the USAF's accessions training and PME programs, and having examined the EI resources provided to Airmen in the field; the next chapter suggests how the USAF might improve how it trains and equips its Airmen to enhance their EI.

³¹ <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/ACSC/Display/Article/922353/>, 5 October 2017, accessed 7 April 2018.

³² Ibid.

³³ Air Command and Staff College Leadership Course (LD) AY18 Course Syllabus, 1 August 2017, 6.

³⁴ Ibid., 15.

Chapter 6

Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations for Resources Available to the Field

As early as 1948, USAF senior leaders acknowledged that EI is a critical aspect of leadership and followership. Despite this early start to recognizing that emotions are important, current USAF guidance struggles to comprehensively or coherently address the critical role emotions play in an Airman's service to his or her country. AFMAN 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development and Management*, directs the accessions and PME institutions to teach and develop the skills and attributes that make up each of the EI competencies but does not direct that EI be taught as a complete and coherent framework that is persistent throughout an Airman's development. Chapter 5 of this essay illustrates the foundational nature of EI for leadership, followership, and in helping Airmen to overcome adversity. Based on the analysis presented, no other single skill set can serve Airmen better in these critical areas.

Specifically highlighting AFMAN 36-2647 to include EI as a necessary competency that requires development throughout an Airman's career is one way EI could be effectively integrated. Alternatively, as an enduring sub-competency that is consistently developed throughout the "Leading People" competency would be a natural fit and a good beginning to integrate EI into accessions training and Airmen development.¹ Similarly, revising AFMAN 36-2643, *Air Force Mentoring Program* to direct mentors and mentees to the e-Learning resources represents another low-hanging target of opportunity to provide EI resources to Airmen in the field.

Finally, the e-Learning web resource should continue to advertise its availability and content as broadly and pervasively as possible. The resources available offer Airmen the ability to pull training and resources for a vast breadth of subjects to benefit their personal and professional lives.

¹ The "Leading People" competency, and its associated skills and behaviors, can be found on pages 17-18 of AFMAN 36-2647.

Recommendations for Enlisted Training and Education

BMT represents an early opportunity to begin educating young Airmen about EI and its foundational role in leadership, followership, and for overcoming challenges. While the current BMT curriculum incorporates aspects of EI in the leadership, professionalism, and combat stress management sections, there is no overt and coherent instruction concerning EI. Incorporating the Goleman framework early in the program may provide a solid foundation from which the rest of the program could build. The impact of an Airman's emotions pervades their every perception and directly influences their behaviors. As such, EI should be incorporated early in the program and referred to frequently as it pertains to the other areas of the BMT curricula.

The NCOA and SNCOA curricula educate Airmen on certain aspects of EI, with the NCOA offering the most complete EI education during its *Full Spectrum Leadership* and *Leadership and Followership* lessons. Throughout the rest of the NCOA and SNCOA curricula bits and pieces of EI theory and competencies are sprinkled in as parts of lessons topically focus on aspects of leadership, followership, or other aspects of Airmanship. The enlisted PME programs could improve the coherence of delivery and subsequent utility of EI lessons by teaching it as a consolidated theory, continuing to develop Airman self-awareness, and by integrating EI into multiple lessons. Integrating EI into the lessons covering aspects of leadership, followership, group dynamics, and influence would help Airmen develop the competencies and skills needed to exercise EI.

Recommendations for Officer Training and Education

The USAF's ROTC and OTS curricula are continually combed for areas to update and improve. A conversation with Dr. Kevin T. O'Meara, Chief of Commissioned Education at the Academic Affairs Directorate of the USAF's Holm Center, indicated that EI inclusion is on the horizon.² Like the BMT curriculum, the ROTC and OTS curricula do not overtly or comprehensively address EI, but do indirectly incorporate many of its key capabilities, skills, and attributes. Dr. O'Meara indicated that in the coming years he and his colleagues intend to amend the curricula, most likely to include integrating basic EI theory. While the lesson plan specifics and a timetable for the

² Interview and discussion with Dr. Kevin O'Meara, 6 March 2018.

change are still in coordination, the intent signals an important step that perhaps will influence other PME curricula to follow.

If the program directors include EI in the ROTC and OTS curricula, perhaps it will achieve the degree of visibility required to be introduced into the SOC curricula as well. Ideally, students at SOC would receive a refresher lesson to reiterate what the lessons proffered in ROTC or OTS, along with more in-depth theoretical lessons, self-study, guided discussions, and coaching. To help officers develop their EI to its fullest potential, the trend of increasing depth of study, self-assessment, self-management, and relationship management should continue through ACSC.

At ACSC, an entire day is devoted to the lesson that introduces EI and explores how it impacts each Airman's personal and professional well-being. But, given the pervasive and persistent nature of emotions and the benefits that accompany enhancing EI, devoting one day near the beginning of the 10-month curriculum seems inadequate for enhancing an Airman's EI. The competencies and skills that Airmen need for EI could be revisited for reinforcement during many of the other blocks and lessons at ACSC. For example, how enhanced EI may help Airmen serve better in a joint environment, or how enhanced EI may help Airmen build better relationships with civilian and international partners are just two opportunities for EI to be integrated more completely. Finally, the training delivered to Airmen at ACSC occurs more than ten years into their careers, meaning that they could conceivably serve one-half of their AF career without being taught a consolidated and coherent theory of EI.

Conclusion

One might argue that it is not important for the USAF to present EI as a consolidated, coherent topic and that its current disaggregation across curricula, training, and resources is not a problem worthy of concern. That argument does not fully consider where EI occurs, nor does it consider the constant and pervasive role EI has in a person's thoughts and actions. Teaching Airmen to use bits and pieces of EI in some situations, and other bits and pieces in different situations does not reflect the reality of emotional processing being internal to an Airman and continually connected to his or her perceptions and behaviors. Every Airman experiences emotions and has some level of

emotional intelligence. But, after an initial automatic emotional response occurs, it takes deliberate, conscious effort, and a decision to make that effort, to control emotions, perceptions, and behaviors. This cycle repeats itself with every emotion felt and as often as the Airman decides to engage the more deliberate level of thinking and self-control. Self-assessing, assessing the social situation, and then managing one's behaviors and relationships is an internal process that relies on internal competencies, skills, and abilities. Once an Airman understands and becomes proficient with EI, and grows accustomed to deliberately exercising it, he or she can leverage the EI whenever and wherever the need arises, regardless of the specific situation or role the Airman is called upon to fulfill.

Chapter 5 of this thesis shows the degree to which EI influences an Airman's ability to lead effectively and follow dynamically, and gives some strong indications that enhancing EI can help Airmen overcome the challenges associated with accessions, training, and active duty. Despite the importance of EI in the three areas investigated, the USAF has not yet fully integrated EI into its resources, training, and education to equip Airmen for success. To remedy the situation, this thesis recommends:

- 1) AFMAN 36-2647 be revised to direct the accessions and PME-delivering institutions to teach and develop Airman EI as a complete and coherent framework.
- 2) AFMAN 36-2643 *Air Force Mentoring Program* be revised to direct mentors to the e-Learning website for resources concerning EI and other topics.
- 3) That Airmen be taught EI as foundational skill set that is deliberately enhanced via a coordinated PME continuum of learning throughout an Airman's career.
- 4) That Airman EI be integrated into PME lessons as a foundational aspect required for effective leadership, followership, and overcoming challenges.

A concerted effort to improve EI could help promising Airmen to lead and follow more effectively, and to better manage the challenges they'll encounter. Such an initiative would begin to balance the Air Force's weight of effort devoted to enhancing Airmen's EQ with its effort to improve their IQ, and in doing so help Airmen manage

their emotions and their behaviors. Currently, the USAF loses too many intellectually gifted Airmen due to some Airmen's inability to moderate their emotions and associated behaviors. This study's recommended actions represent a few of the ways that the USAF could begin to improve its resources, training, and education to enhance its Airmen's EI. By taking these steps, the USAF can make great progress toward enhancing how it trains and equips its Airmen to be successful as they enter the service and as they progress into positions of increasing rank and responsibility, and could help the USAF's rising stars continue their ascent.



Appendix A

Salovey-Mayer Emotional Intelligence Framework

1. Perception, Appraisal, and Expression of Emotion
2. Emotional Facilitation of Thinking
3. Understanding and Analyzing Emotions; Employing Emotional Knowledge
4. Reflective Regulation of Emotions to Promote Emotional and Intellectual Growth

1. Perception, Appraisal, and Expression of Emotion

Ability to identify emotion in one's physical states, feelings, and thoughts.	Ability to identify emotions in other people, designs, artwork, etc. through language, sound, appearance, and behavior.	Ability to express emotions accurately, and to express needs related to those feelings.	Ability to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate, or honest vs. dishonest expressions of feeling.
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2. Emotional Facilitation of Thinking

Emotions prioritize thinking by directing attention to important information.	Emotions are sufficiently vivid and available that they can be generated as aids to judgment and memory concerning feelings.	Emotional mood swings change the individual's perspective from optimistic to pessimistic, encouraging consideration of multiple points of view.	Emotional states differentially encourage specific problem-solving approaches such as when happiness facilitates inductive reasoning and creativity.
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3. Understanding and Analyzing Emotions; Employing Emotional Knowledge

Ability to label emotions and recognize relations among the words and the emotions themselves, such as the relation between liking and loving.	Ability to interpret the meanings that emotions convey regarding relationships, such as that sadness often accompanies a loss.	Ability to understand complex feelings: simultaneous feelings of love and hate or blends such as awe as a combination of fear and surprise.	Ability to recognize likely transitions among emotions, such as the transition from anger to satisfaction or from anger to shame.
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4. Reflective Regulation of Emotion to Promote Emotional and Intellectual Growth

Ability to stay open to feelings, both those that are pleasant and those that are unpleasant.	Ability to reflectively engage or detach from an emotion depending upon its judged informativeness or utility.	Ability to reflectively monitor emotions in relation to oneself and others, such as recognizing how clear, typical, influential or reasonable they are.	Ability to manage emotion in oneself and others by moderating negative emotions and enhancing pleasant ones, without repressing or exaggerating information they may convey.
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