

# Developing an Emotionally Intelligent Public Service

Managing the Impact of Your Emotions



## Job Aid Series 2 of 4

### Purpose

This job aid is designed to support learners in improving their emotional intelligence by helping them develop emotional self-awareness and manage their emotions. This information is especially beneficial for those taking [Navigating Your Own Emotions \(TRN457\)](#), [Navigation Other People's Emotions \(TRN458\)](#) and [Emotional Intelligence for Successful Leadership \(TRN151\)](#).

## Why does developing emotional intelligence in the public service matter?

Enhances emotional understanding and awareness (of self and of others)

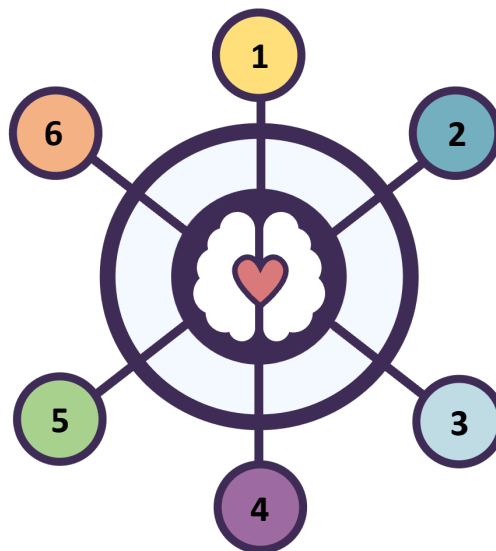
Motivates teams to work effectively toward a common goal

Supports others by recognizing their emotions and working to reduce stress

Helps to resolve conflicts between team members as they arise

Encourages healthy communication

Builds flexibility and resilience in response to change



## Why is self-awareness important?



Self-awareness is the foundation of emotional intelligence. Recognizing and understanding our emotions helps us sustain positive efforts over time.

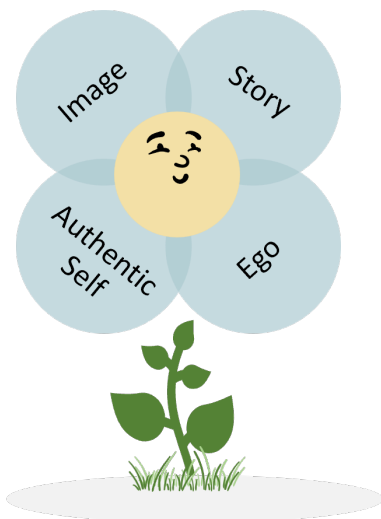
Using an [emotional vocabulary tool](#) can help you label emotions associated with certain thoughts, feelings and sensations and take the edge off their intensity. Most people struggle to distinguish between what they feel (body) and what they think (mind), which can be a source of ongoing stress.

- Acknowledging and labelling an emotion can help me better manage my stress.
- Helping my team members recognize and identify their emotions can help them better manage their stress.

**“Labelling emotions accurately increases self-awareness and helps us to communicate emotions effectively, reducing misunderstanding in social interactions.”**

Marc Brackett, Ph.D.,  
author of *Permission to Feel:  
Unlocking the Power of Emotions to Help Our Kids,  
Ourselves, and Our Society Thrive*

## What are the four levels of self?



**Image:** How others perceive me

**Story:** How I want others to see me

**Ego:** What I think of myself

**Authentic Self:** Who I really am

Being more self-aware can give you a deeper understanding of your emotions and where they come from.

You can more easily validate and accept your unique characteristics. You can make conscious choices about the role you want to play in any situation and move forward with intention. Inner confidence and humility can help you get your ego to work for you. (C. McHugh 2015)

## Reflection in Action

### How well do you know yourself?

Develop a weekly habit of writing down your thoughts and reactions in a journal to help you understand your levels of self and your emotions. Here are a few questions to get started:

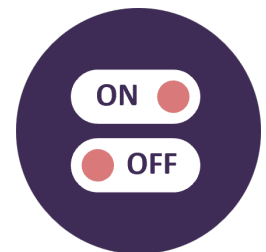
- What are you noticing and becoming aware of when it comes to your moods, reactions and responses?
- How do these moods and emotional reactions affect how you think, and vice versa?
- What have you noticed about how you interact with others?
- What are your strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes?
- What are your core values?
- What is one belief you have about yourself that serves you and one that does not serve you? (For example, a belief that prevents you from doing something that you want to accomplish.)



Workplace Strategies for Mental Health and Canada Life have a helpful online [orientation tool for navigating psychological health and safety in the workplace](#) that is designed to help employees explore how they can contribute to and benefit from a [psychologically safe work environment](#).

### What are some of the benefits of self-management?

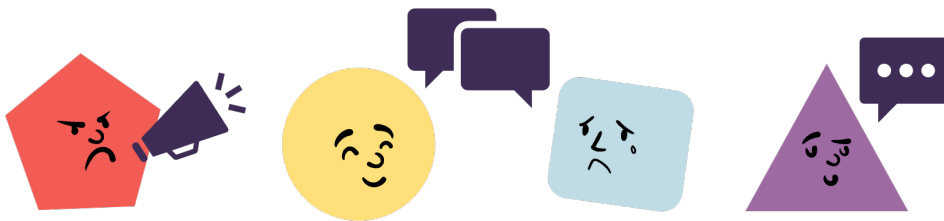
- Self-management, or self-regulation, involves recognizing and managing emotions, thoughts and behaviours.
- Self-management helps us learn to understand and regulate our feelings and emotions, even in more challenging or stressful situations. Making conscious choices allows us to move forward in new ways.
- You can manage your emotions by breaking free from autopilot responses and being flexible to changing circumstances. Autopilot responses are habits formed over time to keep us safe without us having to think about it; they are instinctive behaviours.
- Autopilot responses are usually triggered by past experiences and emotions that may have nothing to do with the current situation.



## Reflection in Action

### How can I improve how I communicate my feelings with others?

- What do others know about your emotions based on your words and actions?
- How can you find opportunities to share your inner world with others and have deeper conversations and relationships?
- What can you do to reflect on a situation that triggered strong emotions and step back to examine the issue from another perspective?
- What happens when you look at the issue more broadly?
- How important is your immediate emotion and reaction to the overall issue?



Please note that you should reach out to a health professional if you are experiencing any mental health issues, high anxiety or depression.

## Additional Reference Tools

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health and Canada Life offer a free, online [Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment](#) that is widely used in workplaces across Canada for personal and professional development. The goal is not to get all the correct answers. The path to self-discovery is a lifelong journey filled with ongoing self-reflection and data collection. Completing this emotional intelligence self-assessment will help identify knowledge gaps and support individual learning needs.

This self-assessment can be completed at the beginning of an emotional intelligence journey, and then again, a few months after completing the three online, self-paced emotional intelligence courses available in the Canada School of Public Service's learning catalogue.



### Books

- ***Emotional Agility: Get Unstuck, Embrace Change, and Thrive in Work and Life*, by Susan David, Ph.D.**

This book explains how anyone can thrive in an uncertain world by becoming emotionally agile by using four key concepts that can help us acknowledge uncomfortable experiences while simultaneously detaching from them, thereby allowing us to embrace core values and align our actions with what we truly want.

- ***Working with Emotional Intelligence*, by Daniel Goleman.**

This book demystifies emotional intelligence as a set of skills that anyone can learn and offers practical insights into their importance and how best to develop these skills.



### Canada School of Public Service

#### Job Aids:

- Exploring Your Emotions (TRN4-J45)
- Managing the Impact of Other Peoples' Emotions (TRN4-J47)
- Leading with Emotional Intelligence (TRN-J48)

#### Courses:

- [Navigating Your Own Emotions \(TRN457\)](#)
- [Navigating Other People's Emotions \(TRN458\)](#)
- [Emotional Intelligence for Successful Leadership \(TRN151\)](#)



### Other

- If you want to learn more about psychological safety and cultural differences, Workplace Strategies for Mental Health and Canada Life has created a helpful online [orientation tool for navigating psychological health and safety in the workplace](#) that is designed to help employees delve deeper into the topic.