

YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

# How to practice 'emotional intelligence,' Part 1

In our last feature we discussed “mindfulness”, the ability to focus on the present moment to achieve greater happiness in our daily lives. Well, there is more to this subject. Are you familiar with the term: “emotional intelligence”? We know about general intelligence – which basically is our ability to learn and use knowledge to solve problems. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to understand and manage our emotions. People possessing this trait may be better able to understand and even have a positive influence on the emotions and behavior of others, including family, friends, and colleagues.

Is emotional intelligence something we can learn, or are we born with it? Experts who study human behavior agree we are not born with emotional intelligence. Rather, emotional intelligence is an ability each of us can learn — and refine. By putting your heart and your mind into it, you can begin to develop skills that will enable you to achieve a high level of emotional

intelligence. And the reasons to do so are compelling.

By honing this “skill” you can have a positive effect on your life and that of others, from basic relationships with friends — to romantic interests and spouses. In short, our emotional intelligence can be a determining factor in our success in life — from making important life choices, to schooling, to pursuing meaningful work that gives us a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Consider this: Over the course of a day, we experience a range of emotions. It could be a sense of happiness, frustration, anxiety, and even sadness. The way we react to these experiences — and how we express ourselves — impacts us and those around us. Our reactions can be due in

part to our nature, how we were raised, and our life experiences since birth. You may be one who shows your emotions, or maybe you hide your feelings. Either way, your reactions (facial expressions) and your subsequent behavior — words and actions — can determine how well you navigate through the opportunities and challenges of your day-to-day life.

The more adept we become at recognizing our emotional responses — as well as the emotional responses of others — the more we can use this ability to identify and regulate our emotions, to recognize the emotions of others and empathize with them to build healthier, more productive relationships. And healthy, productive relationships are building blocks of our mental well-being and vital to our physical health.

Next time, in Part 2, we will discuss the habits and skills you can practice to improve your relationships by cultivating greater emotional intelligence. If you have

questions, or would just like to talk, feel free to call. We are here to help you. Think of us as your hometown resource for guidance and support.

*Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick is the owner of Grand Oaks Dental, located at 3905 Liberty Highway in Anderson. A strong believer that dental fear and anxiety should not prevent any patient from receiving the highest quality dental care, Dr. Cannick has received extensive training in Sedation Dentistry and is a certified member of the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation. She is also a member of the South Carolina Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine.*

*For more information about Grand Oaks Dental and the services provided, please call 864-224-0809 or visit [grandoaksdental.com](http://grandoaksdental.com) or [facebook.com/GrandOaksDental](https://facebook.com/GrandOaksDental).*



**Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick**

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