

Holding all the Pieces Together: Emotional Intelligence in these Uncharted Times

Jennifer Miller Houtz MA, LPC



In the past decade there has been a shift in focus from IQ (intelligence quotient) to EQ (emotional quotient) in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is the HOW we use WHAT we know and has become harder to find in job candidates. EQ is even more vital today with work/home environments and challenges that are literally changing by the hour. Workers are riding the learning curves of an unpredictable rollercoaster.

Resilience in this COVID-19 time means practicing EQ now more than ever. Quick reminders:

- **Stay calm.** Trust yourself and what you need right now. Identify and label your emotions as reasonable responses to an anxiety-filled time. Practice self-care to expend stressful emotions and recharge. Take a walk. Take a nap. Play with your dog. Breathe.
- **Is this a Big Deal or a Little Deal?** Many things are happening now that are frustrating and disappointing rather than life-threatening. If it isn't going to matter in 5 days (or 5 hours); it's not worth it. Your time and emotional energy is a premium commodity. Use it on the most important things that you can control.
- **Look for the positive side**--there is always one. Try to reframe this time as an adventure. We will be talking to our grandkids about this one! What lessons will be learned in this new situation? An inquisitive mind endures much better than a fearful or begrudging one.
- **Forgive generously.** Everyone is stressed right now and we all handle it differently. Assume people are doing the very best they can, just as you are. If someone has a harsh tone on your call, let it go. If the email came off a little blunt, let it go. Be kind to yourself and others.