

Spiritual Intelligence and Why It Matters

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The Field of “Intelligence”

In 1905 Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon developed the first modern intelligence test. Since that time we have been debating what “intelligence” is, where it comes from, and how to develop it.

Our “Intelligence Quotient” or “IQ” is generally thought of as our analytical or mathematical intelligence and our linguistic intelligence (think of college entrance exams – verbal and math components). Initially it was expected that IQ would be a strong predictor of success in careers. In fact it has turned out to be a weak predictor of success. IQ appears to be related to *minimum standards* to enter a given a profession. Once you have chosen your career, what actually leads to success is far more complicated.

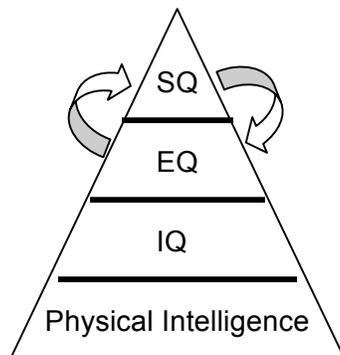
Howard Gardner opened the door to discussion of “multiple intelligences” with his book *Frames of Mind* in 1983. He listed seven different types of intelligences in that book:

1. Linguistic
2. Logical-mathematical
3. Musical
4. Bodily-kinesthetic
5. Spatial
6. Interpersonal
7. Intrapersonal

Gardner’s 6th and 7th intelligences would later be combined into the study of “emotional intelligence.” In his book *Intelligence Reframed*, 1999, Gardner offers that one might add a “philosophical intelligence” which would combine spiritual, moral, emotional, transcendental, cosmic and religious intelligences.

A Simple Model of Four Intelligences

The simplest model I use describes only four intelligences. I show them as a pyramid to demonstrate the simplest sequence of development. I always acknowledge that this is too simple a model. Yet it is a helpful visual aide.



The idea of this model is that as babies we first focus on controlling our bodies. Then our linguistic and conceptual skills develop (“IQ”)...and are a key focus of our school work. We do some early development of relationship skills, but for many of us “EQ” or emotional intelligence becomes a focus area only later when we realize we need to improve – usually based on feedback in romantic and work relationships. “SQ” or spiritual intelligence typically becomes a focus later – as we begin to search for meaning and ask “is this all there is?”

SQ and EQ are related to each other. I believe we need some basics of EQ to even successfully start our spiritual growth. Some degree of emotional self-awareness and empathy is an important foundation. Then, as our spiritual growth unfolds, there would be a strengthening of EQ skills – which would further reinforce and assist the growth of SQ skills.

Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman popularized the phrase “Emotional Intelligence” with the publication of his book by the same title in 1995. In his book, Goleman cites research at Bell Labs that examined star performers, and tried to determine what distinguished them from more average performers. It appeared that star performers had significantly stronger relationship skills and personal networks than average performers. Harvard Business Review published the results of the Bell Labs study in 1993. Business interest in the study of “Emotional Intelligence” or “EQ” began in earnest.

EQ is actually a large collection of skills. Goleman and Richard Boyatzis have recently grouped these skills into 4 quadrants as shown below¹.

¹ Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis, with Hay-McBrer, 2002

<p>SELF AWARENESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional self-awareness • Accurate self-assessment • Self-confidence 	<p>OTHER AWARENESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Organizational Awareness • Service Orientation
<p>SELF MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Self-Control • Transparency (honest/trustworthy) • Adaptability • Achievement Orientation • Initiative • Optimism 	<p>RELATIONSHIP SKILLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Others • Inspirational Leadership • Influence • Change Catalyst • Conflict Management • Teamwork & Collaboration

The research done by Goleman and Boyatzis shows that Self-Awareness skills must be developed before the others can develop. This makes sense if you consider Emotional Self-Awareness. If I don't know when I am angry how can I have Emotional Self Control? How can I have Empathy for your anger? How can I handle conflict appropriately?

The research on EQ has left no doubt that these skills are vital for personal and business success.

Defining Spirituality and Spiritual Intelligence

What is Spirituality? My definition is that "Spirituality is the innate human need to connect with something larger than ourselves."

But what is this "something larger than ourselves?" It is something beyond our ego-self or constricted sense of self. It may be defined as being connected to two components: the vertical and the horizontal.²

- Vertical component: something sacred, divine, or timeless. You may think of this as a Higher Power, Source, Ultimate Consciousness – or any other language the person prefers. Desiring to be connected to and guided by this Source.
- Horizontal component: being of service to our fellow humans and to the planet at large.

How can we be "Spiritually Intelligent?" What would a "spiritually intelligent" person look like?

Who is a "Spiritual Leader"?

I begin many of my workshops by asking people – typically working in teams - two simple questions.

² My thanks to the 2003 International Spirit at Work Award Selection Committee for this distinction.

1. Write down the spiritual leaders/teachers you have admired in your life
2. List the character traits that caused you to admire these people

I have done this now with thousands of people. What I find both reassuring and fascinating is that the lists look so similar from group to group. The list typically includes major religious figures from many traditions, global peace activists, local religious leaders, teachers, guidance counselors, family members and spiritual writers.

The traits that caused these people to be considered “spiritual leaders” typically includes descriptors such as: loving, kind, forgiving, peaceful, courageous, honest, generous, persistent, faithful, wise, and inspiring.

What the consistency of the responses tells me is that we already have a general perception of what makes someone “spiritually intelligent.” What we do not yet have is a way of describing Spiritual Intelligence that is faith-neutral and specifically focused on the skills and abilities we are trying to attain when we seek spiritual growth.

Defining Spiritual Intelligence:

I define Spiritual Intelligence as “the ability to behave with Compassion and Wisdom while maintaining inner and outer peace (equanimity) regardless of the circumstances.” Compassion and Wisdom together form the manifestation of Love. “Behave” is important because it focuses on how well we maintain our center, stay calm, and actually treat others with compassion and wisdom. The statement of “regardless of the circumstances” shows that we can maintain our peaceful center and loving behaviors even under great stress. This is what we admire in our spiritual leaders.

Based on this definition I have created a list of skills that I believe represent the skills of Spiritual Intelligence. They are:

Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) Skills

<p>Higher Self/Ego self Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of own worldview 2. Awareness of life purpose (mission) 3. Awareness of values hierarchy 4. Complexity of inner thought 5. Awareness of Ego self / Higher Self 	<p>Universal Awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Awareness of interconnectedness of all life 7. Awareness of worldviews of others 8. Breadth of time perception 9. Awareness of limitations/power of human perception 10. Awareness of Spiritual laws 11. Experience of transcendent oneness
<p>Higher Self/Ego self Mastery</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Commitment to spiritual growth 13. Keeping Higher Self in charge 14. Living your purpose and values 15. Sustaining your faith 16. Seeking guidance from Higher Power or Higher Self 	<p>Social Mastery / Spiritual Presence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. A wise and effective spiritual teacher/mentor 18. A wise and effective change agent 19. Makes compassionate and wise decisions 20. A calming, healing presence 21. Being aligned with the ebb and flow of life

Each of these skills has been described in my Spiritual Intelligence assessment (the SQi) in five levels of skill proficiency. Level 0 is implied, and means that the person has not begun to develop that skill. Level 5 is the highest level we measure with our online self-assessment. No skill or level is considered "required." And even at Level 5 a person is not considered "finished" as there is always room to grow.

Skill 5: Awareness of Higher Self/ Ego self

Level 1	Can communicate understanding of the nature of Ego self- including its origin and the purpose it serves in spiritual development
2	Demonstrates ability to observe personal Ego in operation and comment on what seems to trigger Ego eruptions
3	Demonstrates awareness of and ability to periodically "listen to" Higher Self as a separate voice from Ego self
4	Hears the voice of Higher Self clearly and understands the "multiple voices" that Ego self can have. Gives authority to voice of Higher Self in important decisions.
Highest Level 5	Higher Self voice is clear and consistent. Ego self is present and is a joyful advisor to Higher Self. There is no longer a struggle between the two voices. Rather there is a sense of only "one voice" ...the Higher Self (Authentic Self, Spirit) voice

What good is the study of SQ?

Religious beliefs have often divided our planet and caused war. My first goal is to create a language that enables us to discuss these concepts without being limited to the language of any one faith tradition. I hope to create an SQ language - with clear definitions (showing synonyms from many belief systems) -

that helps to create understanding among the peoples of our planet. Based on feedback from about 2000 people who have taken the SQi this language, these skills, synonyms and approach appear to be compatible with all the major belief systems.

My second goal is to create a competency-based language that helps people assess where they are and where they want to go in their own spiritual development. Based on our beta pilot of 549 people it seems clear the SQi assessment instrument does in fact accomplish this second goal.

Finally, the development of SQ will not only benefit individuals, it will also benefit their families, communities, and the companies they work for. My third goal is that the faith-neutral language of competencies will make SQ acceptable for discussion in the workplace...the place where most of us spend most of our time. This will hopefully lead to support for individual and group SQ growth – creating more meaningful work, improved products and services, and ensuring responsible corporate behavior. For my clients who have engaged with SQ development, the relevance has been clear.

In the end we are alike in our suffering, our hopes and our joys. We are all striving to reach the same goals: peace and love. Perhaps with a more neutral language for SQ we can see our commonality and work together towards getting there.

For further information on the SQi Assessment please go to the Deep Change website at www.deepchange.com or email Cindy at cindy@deepchange.com