

Four Signs You Have A Low EQ (Emotional Intelligence)

By Jean Greaves, Ph.D.

At a recent training session, an IT executive asked me, “What are some specific things that I might say, feel, or think that will clue me in to the fact that I should work on my emotional intelligence (EQ)?” As it turns out, there are clues that we all can watch out for. If you’re ready to practice catching yourself in a low EQ moment, here’s the do-it-yourself approach. Look for the following four clues that your EQ needs work, and learn what you can do when they surface.

CLUE #1: You can’t explain yourself.

Your first clue is a moment when you’re stuck for words because you really don’t understand what you’re feeling or why. Typically someone else asks you about it. For example, someone might come over to you after a meeting and say, “Were you bored in there?” If you feel surprised, or didn’t even realize what you were doing, it’s time to become more self-aware, find out what’s really going on inside, or learn how you come across to others.

What to do when it happens: Take time to think about what you were feeling. You may want to mull it over for a while, or you may decide that it was nothing. Perhaps you didn’t mean to appear rude or bored. With additional understanding, you acquire a little more self-awareness, and can decide how to operate in your next meeting.



Watch Reese Witherspoon pretend she’s not upset

CLUE #2: You can’t help yourself.

If you tell someone, “I couldn’t help myself,” you’re admitting that you didn’t want to do something but did it anyway. This is a perfect moment to acknowledge that you missed an important chance to self-manage. Don’t let the phrase “I can’t help myself” become what you are known for. Those who exemplify restraint learned from their mistakes before the rest of us did, and they continue to do so. All you have to do is join in.

What to do when it happens: “I can’t help myself” is your cue to stop making excuses. Grab the moment and tell yourself that you couldn’t help yourself this time, but you will try to catch yourself early and do things differently next time. If you need help figuring out what to do differently, ask the people around you for suggestions. They might even help you by reminding you that this is the moment that you were waiting for!

Four Signs You Have A Low EQ (Emotional Intelligence)



Watch Mathew Broderick knowingly do the wrong thing.



Watch Tom Hanks as a boy in a man's body use questions to successfully change the course of a product development meeting.)

CLUE #3: You don't get it.

When you feel like a fish out of water in a room with other people, it's a good clue that your social radar needs fine-tuning. The evidence is typically a sudden feeling of being left out of something that everyone else gets. Maybe they laugh and you don't. Or maybe you expect them to laugh and they don't. There can be a sudden change in the room, or a new mood that you don't understand. You wonder if you missed something, or you feel confused about what's going on. This is your opportunity to hone your social awareness skills. People who are adept in social situations seek out the answers and use them to navigate the situation they are in.

What to do when it happens: When you wonder what's going on, quickly decide who you can ask. It should be someone who is better at this than you. When you get the answer, then you can decide what to say or do next. If the situation is too uncomfortable because it's too public or too awkward, don't let yourself off the hook. Let the moment pass, and then approach someone who can explain it to you in a place that works for them and for you.

CLUE #4: You don't care.

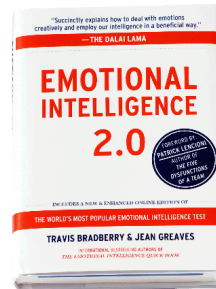
Do any of these run through your mind regularly? *I don't care. I'm not interested. Stop talking. Go away.* Whether you know it or not, those around you get the message. It stings for them every time, and eventually works against you. All comments and actions that show your lack of caring represent a low-EQ approach to relationships, and weaken your connection to other people. Don't let them become your mantras. Your health and livelihood depend on it.

What to do when it happens: Suspend your private conclusions that you aren't a people person or aren't in the mood. Tell yourself that it's time to pay attention and add to the conversation. Make your mantra "I'm curious." You just might find yourself deepening connections that you didn't even know you had.

Four Signs You Have A Low EQ (Emotional Intelligence)



Watch Willy Wonka discount each child, even Charlie, as he begins his search for his successor.



BUY IT FOR JUST \$24.99 AT
WWW.TALENTSMART.COM/BOOK

What's In It for Me?

This week, listen and watch for *I don't know*, *I can't help myself*, *I don't get it*, and *I don't care*. They offer great opportunities to make small improvements in your emotional intelligence. The bonus is that your self-awareness will quadruple. 🧠

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jean Greaves, Ph.D.

Dr. Jean Greaves is the co-author of the best selling *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, and co-founder and CEO of TalentSmart, the world's leading provider of emotional intelligence books, assessments, training and coaching. Her best-selling books are available in 25 languages and more than 150 countries. Dr. Greaves leverages her twenty-five year track record of consulting, executive coaching, speaking and applied research. She has written for, or been covered by, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *The Harvard Business Review*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*.

World's #1 Provider of Emotional Intelligence

3