EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE SELF-REGULATION OF AFFECT

DAISY GREWAL, MARC BRACKETT, AND PETER SALOVEY

Western psychology places enormous value on the ability to control one's emotions. Stacks of self-help books published each year offer tips and strategies on how to manage one's emotional reactions and accompanying behaviors in a variety of situations. People clearly believe that managing emotions has direct implications for the quality of their lives, especially through the impact that emotion regulation has on relationships with others. Emotions researchers ask many questions regarding the ability of individuals to regulate emotion and how it affects important life outcomes. Are there "better" and "worse" ways of handling one's emotions? And if so, can we teach people about better ways to handle their own emotions? These are the questions we attempt to answer in this chapter with the aid of empirical work within the framework of emotional intelligence.

To explore these questions, we first trace the historical trends that led to changing views about the role of emotions and the development of the

Preparation of this chapter was supported by grants to Peter Salovey from the National Cancer Institute (R01-CA66427), the National Institute of Mental Health (F30-MH66506), the National Institute of Drug Abuse (F30-DA13334), and the John M. Olin Health Investigator Program at Yale. We wish to thank Eric Ulmann for his helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.
concept of emotional intelligence. We then discuss how the ability to regulate one's emotions effectively fits in with the profile of an emotionally intelligent person. We then report on current knowledge regarding the measurement of emotional intelligence and how findings thus far support the idea that the skills linked to emotional intelligence are directly associated with positive social interaction and well-being. We also discuss how, conversely, the absence of such skills can result in negative outcomes. Finally, we discuss the social implications of these findings and offer ideas for programs that may help increase emotional intelligence in both children and adults, and within families.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES

The concept of emotional intelligence represents the convergence of two historical trends in psychology: changing views about the functional "rationality" of emotions, including their role in cognitive processes, and changing definitions of what abilities constitute "intelligence." A dichotomy between emotion and reason can be traced back to ancient Greece, where Stoic philosophers espoused the idea that emotions interfere with rational thought. Such a view continued to exert an influence in psychology as evidenced by early researchers who believed that emotions have the potential to interfere with desirable thought processes (Shaffer, 1936; Young, 1940). In recent decades, particularly in the last 10 years, this view has been changing as modern cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists have begun to incorporate in their research measures that reflect the important influence of emotions on activities such as decision making (Damasio, 1994; Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001; Mellers, Schwartz, & Ritov, 1999), stereotyping and prejudice (Bodenhausen, Kramer, & Stüsser, 1994), problem solving (Isen & Daubman, 1984; Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987), and creativity (Getz & Lubart, 1998, 2000). Furthermore, views of human intelligence have greatly expanded in recent years because of the efforts of Gardner (1983), Sternberg (1985), and other investigators who have argued for broader definitions of what it means to be smart. These two converging trends set the stage for the introduction of a new kind of intelligence—one that would recognize the functional utility of emotions in everyday life and people's differing abilities in harnessing them.

What Is Emotional Intelligence?

Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 189) proposed an initial scientific definition of emotional intelligence as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action." Their model outlined the following components:
EXHIBIT 2.1
The Four-Branch Model of Emotional Intelligence

Branch 1: Emotional Perception and Expression (Perceiving Emotions)
• Ability to identify emotion in one's physical and psychological states.
• Ability to identify emotion in other people.
• Ability to express emotions accurately, and to express needs related to those feelings.
• Ability to discriminate between accurate/honest and inaccurate/dis-honest feelings.

Branch 2: Emotional Facilitation of Thought (Using Emotions)
• Ability to redirect and prioritize one's thinking on the basis of associated feelings.
• Ability to generate emotions to facilitate judgment and memory.
• Ability to capitalize on mood changes to appreciate multiple points of view.
• Ability to use emotional states to facilitate problem solving and creativity.

Branch 3: Emotional Understanding (Understanding Emotions)
• Ability to understand relationships among various emotions.
• Ability to perceive the causes and consequences of emotions.
• Ability to understand complex feelings, emotional blends, and contradictory states.
• Ability to understand transitions among emotions.

Branch 4: Emotional Management (Managing Emotions)
• Ability to be open to feelings, both pleasant and unpleasant.
• Ability to monitor and reflect on emotions.
• Ability to engage, prolong, or detach from an emotional state.
• Ability to manage emotions in oneself.
• Ability to manage emotions in others.


appraising emotions in the self and in others; regulating emotions in the self and in others; and using emotions to facilitate thinking, reasoning, problem solving, and creativity, as well as to motivate behavior. The model stimulated research attempting to find out more about how emotion can facilitate cognitive processes such as perceiving and reasoning (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990; Mayer, Gaschke, Braverman, & Evans, 1992) and how individual differences in emotional intelligence might be captured empirically (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1998, 1999). After a few years of such exploratory research, the original model of emotional intelligence was refined so that four distinct but separate abilities are now thought to fall under the framework of emotional intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997): (a) perceiving emotions, (b) using emotions to facilitate thought and language, (c) understanding emotions, and (d) managing emotions in the self and in others. These four abilities make up the four domains of emotional intelligence (see Exhibit 2.1). We now discuss each of these components with a special focus on the fourth branch, managing emotions, as it fits within the overarching model of emotional intelligence.
The first domain of emotional intelligence, perceiving emotions, involves the ability to detect and accurately perceive emotions in faces, voices, art, music, and stories. Perhaps the most basic skill involved in emotional intelligence, perceiving emotions in both the self and others, makes all other processing of emotional information possible. A severe deficit in the ability to perceive emotions in the self may be associated with alexithymia (Apfel & Sifneos, 1979) as well as increased ambivalence over emotional expression (King, 1998; King & Emmons, 1990). Furthermore, perceiving emotions accurately in others may have important implications for creating and sustaining important social relationships (Lopes, Salovey, Côté, & Beers, 2005).

The second domain of emotional intelligence, the ability to use emotions to facilitate both thought and language, is demonstrated by findings that have shown how emotions can play an adaptive role in many important cognitive processes (Palfai & Salovey, 1993; Schwartz, 1990). For example, emotions can help people focus on important information when trying to solve problems (Easterbrook, 1959; Mandler, 1975; Simon, 1982) and come up with creative ideas and solutions (Ison & D'Amore, 1984; Ison et al., 1987). The emotionally intelligent person might more easily recognize how a slightly depressed mood can help deductive reasoning (Schwartz, 1990) and use this information to better accomplish certain tasks.

Understanding emotions, the third domain of emotional intelligence, is the ability to label emotions linguistically as well as understand complex relationships among emotions. For example, it entails the ability to recognize blends of different emotions as well as temporal and progressive associations among emotions, such as that between irritation and rage. The third branch is therefore linked to an individual’s knowledge of emotion and use of emotion terminology.

The fourth domain of emotional intelligence, managing emotions, is the component of emotional intelligence most relevant to the themes of this chapter. It entails the adaptive ability to regulate emotions optimally both in the self and in others. However, it is important to note that an optimal outcome of emotion regulation involves more than the simple goal of decreasing negative emotions and increasing positive ones. Although this might seem counterintuitive, eliminating negative emotions may not always serve adaptive purposes (Bonanno, 2001; Parrott, 2002). For example, in some circumstances we may need to experience grief to show support for a friend’s loss or use angry feelings to take necessary steps toward fighting injustice. Therefore, managing emotions also includes the ability to increase negative emotions or decrease positive emotions, depending on the context. Its definition may also be seen as very similar to the concept of response modulation developed by James Gross and his colleagues (see chap. 1, this volume).

Emotion management has received particular attention in the field of psychology because of its wide-reaching implications for many subfields such as
clinical, developmental, and health psychology. For example, those individuals interested in solving mental health problems increasingly have focused on how problems with managing emotions result in various psychological disorders (Gross & Munoz, 1995). Furthermore, as we shall see, this domain plays an important role in maintaining good interpersonal relationships.

Managing Emotions

Before we discuss findings supporting the importance of managing emotions in real-world contexts, we need first to try to specify what this ability entails and the best ways to measure it. We believe that managing emotions involves several skills, including the ability to monitor and label one’s own feelings effectively and self-efficacy about the ability to modify these feelings, as well as the knowledge and motivation to use effective strategies to alter emotions. Managing emotions can be distinguished from coping in that the regulation attempt involves attention to one’s own subjective state rather than to the specific life events that may be causing the unpleasant emotions (Larsen, 2000). Therefore, the study of emotion management seems especially important in contexts in which rearranging circumstances may not be feasible; close interpersonal relationships, especially with one’s children, represent one such context. For instance, a child’s poor performance in a sports game requires encouragement and emotional support rather than direct intervention by the parent.

What types of behavior constitute managing emotions? Under the framework of emotional intelligence, we consider any action an attempt at management if the specific goal when committing the action is the desire to manipulate one’s own or others’ emotions. People use an enormously broad range of strategies to regulate their emotions, ranging from listening to music to drinking caffeinated beverages to withdrawing from social interaction. Parkinson and Tottendell (1999) classified various emotion regulation strategies on the basis of conceptual similarities and produced the following four categories: avoidance, distraction, confrontation, and acceptance. Creating a taxonomy of strategies based on functionality, rather than similarity, seems an important first step in trying to assess the different goals people seek to gain relief from emotions. For example, two people might seek social support for two very different reasons: One person may desire emotional support, whereas the other may be seeking problem-solving information. Classification schemes based on the purpose behind the action will help us better understand the complicated processes that accompany such regulation.

Although classification of strategies remains an important first step in understanding emotion regulation, the emotional intelligence framework is more concerned with questions of effectiveness than with typologies. What emotion regulation strategies work better than others? We believe that for most emotion regulation researchers, this is the question of ultimate interest.
Given the great number of strategies that people use to regulate emotions, this question is a challenging one. However, whereas labeling specific emotion regulation strategies as better than others may be premature, some research has demonstrated that there are clearly different consequences linked to different types of strategies (Gross & John, 2002). For example, people who engage in rumination following an upsetting situation may find themselves more depressed than those who use distraction as a strategy (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1993). Thayer, Newman, and McClain (1994) found that active techniques combining relaxation, stress management, reappraisal, and exercise may reap the most benefits for people experiencing a bad mood. Pennebaker (1989, 1993, 1997) has conducted numerous studies demonstrating how emotional disclosure through writing can promote both mental and physical health. Nevertheless, at times intuition fails to capture the truth: Other researchers have shown that what sometimes seems to be a maladaptive regulation strategy can later have little to no negative effect on an individual’s functioning. For example, Bonanno (2001) has demonstrated that repressing emotions after traumatic abuse or a personal loss does not necessarily lead to poor adjustment later. Therefore, though we hesitate to draw firm conclusions about which strategies seem best, we adhere to the position that we can make rough generalizations about what kinds of regulation techniques are more likely to lead to adaptive outcomes. Identifying the absolute best strategies for regulating emotions would be impossible because each situation requires attention to the specific circumstances at hand.

For the purposes of defining emotional intelligence, we make no special distinction between emotions and moods, although we adhere to the generally accepted definitions that emotions are more specific responses to particular events, whereas moods can be seen as more diffuse. The skills pertinent to emotional intelligence may be relevant to both emotions and moods; for example, strategies for changing either an unwanted emotion or an unwanted mood both fall under the fourth branch of emotional intelligence, emotional management.

We must also carefully make a distinction between intra- and interpersonal forms of managing emotions, both of which are included in the fourth domain of our model of emotional intelligence. In contrast to intrapersonal regulation, which focuses on one’s own subjective state, interpersonal regulation represents a far more complex set of dynamic processes because it involves interaction with and subsequent feedback from another person. The field of emotion regulation thus far has been overwhelmingly focused on intrapersonal management, although some research, mostly conducted by developmental psychologists, has argued for the important role of the social context in managing both one’s own and others’ emotions (Fox & Calkins, 2003; Thompson, 1994, 1998). We believe that interpersonal regulation is more likely to depend on the harnessing rather than the suppressing of emo-
tion in others as a means for persuasion (Salovey, Mayer, & Caruso, 2002). Individuals successful at interpersonal management may also possess skills necessary for soothing distressed others. Such skills might involve the ability to remain calm themselves, offer strategies for help, and provide comfort while remaining empathetic to their partner’s situation.

For the sake of simplicity, we define *intra-* and *interpersonal* regulation as forming two separate but related components of the fourth domain of emotional intelligence. One can easily imagine an individual who is quite skilled at regulating her own emotions but fumbling and inadequate in cheering up a friend or handling conflicts between team members. In a similar way, an individual might successfully influence and regulate the emotions of others while failing miserably in managing his own depression or impulsivity (certain eminent politicians, such as Winston Churchill, may serve as examples of this latter condition).

Researchers have found individual differences in the ability to manage emotions (Cantanaro & Greenwood, 1994; Gross & John, 2002; Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995); therefore, our current model of emotional intelligence predicts that individuals will vary significantly in their abilities to manage their own emotions, which in turn has an important impact on life outcomes. Although most research has focused on differences in intrapersonal regulation, we think that research focusing on interpersonal regulation will reveal such differences as well. It is also worth mentioning that the studies previously cited used self-report rather than ability-based measures. There is a difference between people’s beliefs about their emotion abilities and their actual knowledge of emotions or ability to deal effectively with emotions. We also believe there is a significant difference between people’s knowledge of emotion regulation strategies and their actual ability to apply those strategies to real-world situations. For example, one might recognize that exercising will more effectively change a bad mood than drinking alcohol but for a variety of reasons choose to head to a local bar, rather than the gym, after an upsetting situation. Before we discuss our evidence demonstrating that individual differences in emotional intelligence significantly impact life outcomes, we first explain the pros and cons of measuring emotional intelligence through self-report inventories and task-based performance tests.

**METHODOLOGICAL AND EMPIRICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Measuring emotional intelligence reliably and accurately is vital to understanding its application to important life outcomes. In this section, we discuss how emotional intelligence is measured as an ability and how scores on such measures can predict the quality of social interaction.
How Do We Measure Emotional Intelligence?

Research on emotional intelligence has proliferated mainly because of the use of self-report measures that are relatively easy to design, test, and implement as compared with ability-based measures. Examples of the more frequently used self-report tests of emotional intelligence are the Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1997) and the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Schutte et al., 1998). Although ease of administration poses a huge advantage over ability-based tests, self-report tests of emotional intelligence suffer from lack of construct validity, with research showing that they cannot be properly differentiated from well-established measures of personality such as the Big Five (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). Furthermore, self-report tests based on the four-part model of emotional intelligence suffer from the limitation that people may not have the capacity or willingness to provide accurate information about their own emotional skills (Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Mayer et al., 1999). For example, in a recent study, the correlation between a self-report test of emotion regulation and an ability test was quite small (Rivera, Brackett, & Salovey, 2004). Because of these limitations associated with self-report tests, we favor the use of ability-based or performance measures of emotional intelligence.

The first ability-based test of our model of emotional intelligence was called the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Test (MEIT; Mayer et al., 1999), which eventually led to the development of the Mayer-Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCET; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002). The MSCET offers a number of advantages over its predecessor. Problematic items were eliminated, and the test itself was made shorter and easier to use by way of computer-based administration. The MSCET assesses the four domains of Mayer and Salovey’s (1997) emotional intelligence model (perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions) through eight separate tasks, two for each of the domains. A researcher can, therefore, easily compare an individual’s scores on each of these abilities and isolate particular sets of skills when examining associations with different outcomes.

The MSCET has good discriminant validity. It is distinct from common measures of personality, correlates only slightly with analytical intelligence, and shows only modest overlap with self-report tests of emotional intelligence (Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Brackett, Mayer, & Warner, 2004; Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003). Scores on the MSCET are not associated with the Big Five traits of conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism and seem to be only moderately associated with the traits of agreeableness and openness (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). Furthermore, with respect to verbal intelligence, only Branch 3, understanding emotions, produces a significant correlation, usually around $r = .30$ (Grewal, Ivecic, Lopes, Brackett, & Salovey, 2004; Lopes et al., 2003). This association seems reasonable and expected, considering the conceptualization of Branch 3 as measuring...
knowledge and use of emotion terminology. A lack of overlap with self-report tests, which tend to correlate highly with personality measures (Brackett & Mayer, 2003), also distinguishes the MSCEIT from common measures of personality.

Confirmatory factor analyses of the MSCEIT have demonstrated that the four branches load onto four distinct factors. Notably, the fourth branch, managing emotions, combines intra- and interpersonal management into one factor. However, a self-report test of emotional intelligence based on the four-branch model (developed by Brackett) revealed factor analyses that distinguished the intra- and interpersonal dimensions of the fourth branch (managing emotions). We believe that although the two dimensions can be successfully combined as a single factor on ability-based tests, people's self-knowledge of emotion regulation may be more compartmentalized, leading them to make an important distinction between the two.

Although we believe that ability-based measures of emotional intelligence pose distinct advantages over self-report measures, we would like to add a cautionary note against always interpreting ability-based findings as more indicative of true emotional skill. In some particular instances, people's self-knowledge of their own emotional skills may provide better predictions for various life outcomes. This may be especially true for the Managing Emotions subscale of the MSCEIT, because this skill is presumably the most difficult, complex, and context dependent. Ability measures may not capture the intricacies of emotion regulation in terms of time, place, event, and specific emotions. In some cases, especially when provided with specific questions about particular contexts, we might expect participants to be able to provide a better idea of their tendency to regulate poorly because they, in fact, do know themselves best.

**Emotional Intelligence and Social Interaction**

Managing emotions, as defined under the framework of emotional intelligence, entails the optimal regulation of emotions in both intra- and interpersonal situations. The latter, in particular, suggests that the emotionally intelligent individual who excels at this particular domain of emotional intelligence ought to experience greater levels of success and satisfaction in the domain of social interaction. Research conducted thus far, which has used the fourth subscale of the MSCEIT to measure the ability to manage emotions, appears to support this assumption.

Several positive findings using the MSCEIT directly link the fourth domain of emotional intelligence, managing emotions, with positive social outcomes. The fourth subscale of the MSCEIT measures people's ability to manage emotions in both the intra- and interpersonal domains. Lopes, Salovey, and Straus (2003) found that higher scores on the Managing Emotions subscale were positively related to self-reported positive interaction with
friends and negatively related to self-reported negative interaction with friends. Furthermore, individuals who scored higher on the fourth subscale reported a greater level of perceived parental support, a finding with significant implications for how such skills impact the emotional development of families.

The skills involved in managing emotions may be especially relevant to maintaining high-quality relationships with peers. MSCET Managing Emotions scores correlated positively with friendship quality (Lopes, Brackett, et al., 2004). Specifically, individuals who scored higher on managing emotions were rated as more supportive and caring friends in reports provided by two friends. Higher scores were also related to self-rated quality of the friendships with those two same friends. In a second study, Managing Emotions scores correlated positively with the self-perceived quality of interaction with individuals of the opposite sex.

One of the more significant social challenges for most college students is learning to live with roommates peacefully—a task that undoubtedly requires a great deal of emotion regulation, particularly when circumstances include relative strangers in tight quarters. A study conducted in a large undergraduate class looked at whether MSCET scores were related to interaction among roommates and close friends (Lerner & Brackett, 2004). Higher scores on the Managing Emotions subscale were related to participants’ self-reported tendency to provide emotional support to their roommates. Furthermore, such scores were also negatively related to participants’ self-reported tendency to leave in response to their roommates’ behavior.

In the Lerner and Brackett (2004) investigation, relationships with close friends were analyzed for those students not currently living with a roommate. Higher Managing Emotions scores were positively related to self-reports of providing emotional support and promoting conflict resolution. Higher scores were negatively related to self-reported “exit” behavior (i.e., physically leaving at signs of trouble in the relationship), as well as neglecting and mistreating the friend. These results are especially interesting because they point to potential mediators of the relationship between emotional skills and the quality of relationships.

In addition, residential college students who scored higher on Managing Emotions were viewed more favorably by other students in their college (Lopes, Salovey, Côté, & Beers, 2005). For example, students with higher Managing Emotions scores received more friendship nominations from others, signifying that these individuals seemed to be more popular than their lower-scoring peers. Furthermore, these individuals received more positive than negative peer ratings overall. Both of these results remained significant after controlling for Big Five personality traits.

Another important and interesting domain for analyzing how emotion regulation impacts social interaction is the workplace. Early emotional intelligence research using the MEIS indicated that customer satisfaction related
positively to the level of emotional skill possessed by individual employees (Rice, 1999). Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall, and Salovey (in press) administered the MSCEIT to the employees of a Fortune 400 insurance company, who were also asked to rate their peers and supervisees on a number of social and emotional skills such as stress tolerance, conflict management, and leadership ability. Employees scoring high on the Managing Emotions subscale experienced fewer negative interactions with others, as reported by their peers. They were also rated highly by their peers for contributing to a positive work environment and for being in a cheerful mood much of the time while at work. Higher scores on the Managing Emotions subscale were positively related to supervisor ratings of interpersonal sensitivity, sociability, contributing to a positive work environment, stress tolerance, and leadership potential. Of note, the Managing Emotions subscale was also positively related to salary and rank within the company. This suggests that the ability to manage emotions well contributes to both professional and personal success at work. These results are particularly compelling because Lopes et al. (in press) used a naturalistic sample of working men and women, in contrast to the college student samples used in the other studies reviewed here.

The ability to manage emotions may also have a significant impact on romantic relationships. Brackett, Warner, and Bocco (2005) examined how scores on the MSCEIT related to the quality of young adults' romantic relationships. Couples in which both partners were low on emotional intelligence (MSCEIT total score) self-reported the least amount of emotional depth, partner support, and overall relationship quality. They also appeared to experience the greatest amount of relationship conflict and, overall, rated their relationships more negatively than couples with higher emotional intelligence.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The field of emotional intelligence requires a great deal of additional research to develop better and more refined measures of the construct and to use such tests to determine how, when, and where these skills are important. Although the MSCEIT has demonstrated appropriate reliability and predictive validity, improvements still need to be made to capture the complicated and context-based processes involved in emotional intelligence. The development of emotion-specific measures may be helpful, as there is good reason to suspect that individuals differ not only in their general abilities with regard to emotion regulation but also in the extent to which they can regulate particular emotions (Rivers et al., 2004). An individual may successfully deal with anger but fall apart at the slightest twinge of sadness or guilt, for example.

Furthermore, the possibility remains that certain mediators may contribute to the exhibition of emotional skills, and such mediators may even...
interact with particular contexts. The Lerner and Brackett (2004) investigation that was discussed previously demonstrates how a search for mediators between the possession of certain emotional skills and specific outcomes might shed new light on how and when these skills operate. Future research might investigate the importance of other mediators that may contribute to relationship quality, such as the status of the relationship partners (e.g., as defined by gender or professional position) combined with the environmental setting in which the social interaction is taking place. For example, a person might be particularly good at reading the facial expressions of those superior to him or her at work while being less successful at attending to the feelings of coworkers.

Another important avenue for further research, touched on earlier in this chapter, is the important distinction between one's knowledge of how to manage emotional situations and one's ability to apply that knowledge successfully in real-world settings. Although the Managing Emotions subscale of the MSCEIT goes beyond the typical content of self-report tests of emotional intelligence, the extent to which it taps directly into ability requires further attention. Even if the material covered on the test does successfully measure people's ability to manage their emotions in situations similar to the hypothetical ones given, the test is still limited in terms of its content. Of course, it is doubtful that any measure could successfully capture all of the complex processes people engage in when confronted with unexpected emotional situations. Such situations involve a myriad of complicated stimuli including, but not limited to, facial expressions, tone of voice, familiar and unfamiliar others, and, most important, a heightened sense of personal relevance. As Shields (2002, p. 6) has summarized: "Emotion is 'taking it personally,'" and we cannot, therefore, expect to achieve in the laboratory the sense of urgency and impact that go along with most emotional events. We can only hope to approximate such processes.

However, therein lies a challenging yet exciting task for emotions researchers: to find ways both inside and outside the laboratory to capture the processes of emotion regulation as accurately as possible. If emotion is indeed "taking it personally," then many regulation attempts most likely revolve around some of the most important aspects of people's lives, including family—and particularly, children. Therefore, the development of new measures of emotional intelligence that will successfully provide us with the type of information we need to understand emotion regulation carries with it the added bonus of studying some of the more important issues that directly affect people's everyday lives.

Additional studies are also needed to examine the development of emotional intelligence over the life span, a topic of particular interest to psychologists who study children and adolescents. As with analytical intelligence, a number of factors most likely contribute to the development of emotional intelligence, and identifying such factors has important implica-
tions for those who want to increase the emotional skills of vulnerable children. Prospective studies might consider the use of longitudinal designs to assess how children of differing backgrounds and family environments develop emotional skills over time. Such studies would help illuminate the role of significant others, including teachers and parents, in a child’s development of emotional competencies.

We would also like to offer some suggestions for areas in which the application of emotional intelligence research may prove especially fruitful. The first domain is in the field of clinical psychology, in which a growing number of researchers have begun to recognize the important role that emotional skills play in a number of different pathologies (Cicchetti, Ackerman, & Izard, 1995; Gross & Munoz, 1995). Berenbaum, Raghavan, Le, Vernon, and Gomez (2003) have even proposed a new taxonomy of mental disorders using problems with emotion as a central feature of diagnosis. We believe that emotional intelligence may have much to contribute in the assessment of mental health by pinpointing specific deficits in emotional skills that clients may possess. Furthermore, emotional intelligence tests such as the MSCEIT may serve as a treatment outcome measure in longitudinal studies of therapies aimed at helping people manage their emotions better. The development of new tests of emotional intelligence may help clinicians distinguish how people who suffer from certain disorders differ from controls in the way they appraise and handle emotion, which may even lead to diagnosing certain vulnerabilities in emotion regulation before they become severely problematic.

Another domain of particular interest for the application of emotional intelligence is in the schools, where children spend a great deal of their time, not only acquiring knowledge but also learning how to negotiate with and handle their emotions with those outside of their families. Although families themselves clearly have an impact on how children interact with strangers, we also believe that an integration of social and emotional programs offers the potential for great benefit to numerous children (Lopes & Salovey, 2004). This is not a new idea, and there has already been some research demonstrating that teaching social and emotional competencies can induce significant and important changes in pupils (Aber, Brown, & Hentrich, 1999; Aber, Jones, Brown, Chaudry, & Samples, 1998).

Educational interventions aimed at promoting social and emotional learning have incorporated findings from psychology to build curriculums that attempt to both reduce and prevent behavioral and emotional problems in students. One important program, the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) curriculum, draws on psychoanalytic, social-cognitive, and neurocognitive theories in the formulation of its lessons. Topics for such lessons include the development of self-control, emotional and interpersonal understanding, and problem solving. There is also a focus on building positive self-esteem in children and building peer relationships within the class-
rooms. Randomized trials involving extensive data collection have demonstrated that the PATHS curriculum successfully improves problem-solving ability, cognitive planning abilities, self-reported conduct problems, and self-reported anxiety and depression in both normal and at-risk populations of students (Greenberg, Kusché, & Riggs, 2004).

Other programs aimed at increasing emotional intelligence in the classroom that have also demonstrated encouraging results include the Child Development Program (Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 2004), the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (Brown, Roderick, Lantieri, & Aber, 2004), the Social Decision Making and Social Problem Solving program (Elias, 2004), and the Seattle Social Development Project (Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004). Each of these programs offers detailed methods for classroom-based interventions that attempt to improve the emotional abilities of school-age children. Our contribution to such efforts is to offer the four-branch emotional intelligence model, with a special focus on learning to regulate emotion, as an important guideline in designing future programs.

One such program currently undergoing testing is Emotional Literacy in the Middle School: A six-step program to promote social, emotional, and academic learning in middle school students (Maurer, Brackett, & Plain, 2004). Of particular interest to this program is the inclusion of classroom projects that prompt students to explore the regulation of both anger and sadness. Students are asked to think of a situation that caused them to feel angry or sad and write a story about the event. In the story, they are asked to explore questions related to the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that accompanied the episode of anger or sadness and the events and persons that helped them feel better about the situation. The second half of each project asks students to explore how other people handle their anger or sadness through discussion and through actual interviews of the student’s friends and families. This task stresses the skills involved in the interpersonal aspect of emotion regulation and promotes the development of empathy by having students adopt another’s perspective. A recent experiment using this curriculum showed that students who received the intervention for 7 months (compared with students in the control group) were rated by their teachers to be more prosocial and less anxious and depressed. The students in the intervention group also had higher grades at the end of the school year (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2005). Much more formal evaluation is needed to determine how successful both the previously mentioned programs and others currently being implemented across the nation are at reducing conflict and improving emotional skills in the classroom.

The training of adults in emotional intelligence remains an important application as well. We believe that emotional intelligence comprises skills that can be learned rather than fixed abilities or personality traits, and that it is subject to improvement with effort and the acquisition of new knowledge. Workplace interventions focusing on the development of emotional skills in
employees are already popular in the corporate world, and although we think any focus on emotional training is better than none at all, we are cautious about programs not based on sound scientific research. We advocate the development of workplace training programs emphasizing the particular skills of the four-part emotional intelligence model, which, as discussed in a previous section, seem to be directly related to several important employee outcomes. As more research is conducted on how the management of emotion impacts the welfare of individual employees and the company as a whole, we believe that this knowledge has great potential to improve the working environment through training programs that increase the emotional intelligence of a company’s employees.

REFERENCES


