

"The Transforming Power of Spirituality: Breaking Barriers and Creating Common Ground"

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The Change Agency of Emotional Connectedness: The Link between Emotions, Emotional Intelligence and Spirituality

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INTRODUCTION

- By nature, we are "sentient" beings translating our felt needs and desires through interaction with elements in the social environment into ways of meeting those needs and desires (Goleman 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1993).
- Emotions are an integral and significant aspect of human nature, intrapersonal and interpersonal behavior.
- Emotions are critical for social communication and verbal expression, as well as influencing motivation, memory, attention, concentration, imagination and creativity (Kusche & Greenberg, 1998).
- Emotions provide us with information to use in making evaluative judgments and decisions
- Feelings are created to motivate and justify one's direction of movement.
 - Notes: 1) Emotions are natural and critical for human life functioning and interaction.
 - 2) They are primary source for motivation to meet our needs and desires
 - 3) They critical for the dynamics involved in many professional programs
 - 4) Particularly because they provide us with information to use in making evaluative judgments and decisions.
 - 5) Emotions are judgments and perceptions in everyday life and moral activity.
- Emotions and Spirituality are subjects that are
 - largely internal, individual and as such have no universal definition.
 - Both have been ignored, talked around, but not directly discussed.
 - We may know when we are experiencing emotions or having a spiritual experience but cannot put them into words that convey the precise meaning.
- The literature and Research suggest –
 - People with higher EI seem to have happier, healthier more productive lives.
 - People with higher levels of spirituality have healthier, happier and more productive lives.
 - People can grow from less to more EI and spirituality.
 - Notes: 1) Except for a few basis emotions – (e.g. anger, love, envy, anxiety, depression) and spiritual experiences (e.g. feeling connected to the universe, the transcendent, or God, seeing the light, hearing inner or other voices). Our emotions and spiritual experiences are difficult to discern or define even for ourselves when we are having them.
 - 2) Having an understanding of and establishing an association between emotions and spiritual behavior presents significant implications for human relations. In light of continued marginalization, prejudice, discrimination, racism, racial profiling, hate crimes, and violence in an increasingly diverse world of people, and ideas, the need to have a clear picture of the emotion-spiritual-behavior link in the context of human relations, is urgent. Understanding this linkage may provide individuals with more effective skills for developing emotionally/spiritually intelligent interaction across the

socially constructed boundaries of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and nationality

SPIRITUALITY

- ***Spirit*** – of a culture, organization, or work group
 - Equated with individual or organization’s vitality, mood, nature, or intent.
- ***Spiritual*** – related to “emotional”, or to particular behaviors or attitudes of an individual
 - Equates with being open, giving, compassionate, or what we image as “holy” in one’s behavior, being more “unflappable and buoyant” than others.
- ***Spirituality*** – the origins of being spiritual rather than on the results or signs of it.
 - Equates with personal experience of God, Allah, the Transcendent, the Beyond, the Sacred
 - Focus on the direct experience something other than what is normally the focus of daily, material, sensory, or even emotional reality
 - Behaviors, feeling states of being more emotionally mature or intelligent.
 - ❖ Tischer, Biberman, & McKeage (2002). Linking emotional intelligence, spirituality and workplace performance: Definitions, models and ideas for research. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 17 (30), 203-218.*
 - Notes: 1) Many types of awareness and skills seen as components of EI are attributed to spiritual people.
 - 2) Defining spirituality similarly to or in ways related to “emotional”, or to particular behaviors or attitudes of an individual illustrates that spirituality, for some, is related to emotional states, but raises the issue of whether spirituality separates clearly from the areas of concern in EI.
 - 3) I posit that it is and stems from a personal (intra-personal, interior) experience
 - Spirituality like Morality... Self evident?
 - Ego and socially constructed differences blind us to our human connection.
 - Question - How to Overcome Ego and Difference?
 - Answer - We must feel the human connection
 - Our character must be informed by social emotional learning
 - By emotional intelligence
 - Interpersonal
 - Intrapersonal

- Notes: 1) Self evident cannot mean "obvious" It cannot mean that any "rational person" giving it some thought will see what C.S. Lewis in his book the *Abolition of Man* calls Tao, primeval moral platitudes or natural laws. That is the requirements of both general and special beneficence – duties to parents/ancestors, to children/posterity, and the requirements of justice, truthfulness, mercy and magnanimity. These are starting points for all moral reasoning, deliberation and argument, and spirituality they are to morality what axioms are to mathematics.
- 2) Ego/emotion blinds us. As do the socially constructed boundaries of difference.
- 3) Reason and rational while maybe opening our eyes does not mean or guarantee we will see truly or if we do see, much less act morally or spiritually.

- "Trousered Apes" - C.S. Lewis

- Our appetites and desires tempt us to set aside what spirituality requires.

- "The head rules the belly through the chest" - C.S. Lewis

- Social Emotional Learning/education is not a private matter

- ❖ Meilaender, G. (2005, October). C.S. Lewis on Moral Education. *Imprimis*, 34(10), 1-7

- Notes: 1) We may be very bright and very rational, but we will be what C.S. Lewis calls "trousered apes" – Lacking a moral education, our freedom to make moral choices will be a freedom to be inhuman in any number of ways. I posit the same is true of social emotional learning. Lacking social emotional learning and education, failure to cultivate emotional intelligence limits our freedom to make moral, spiritual, choices will be the freedom, as we have historically seen, to make and be inhuman in any number of ways.
- 2) From childhood our emotions must be trained and habituated, so that we learn to love the good, not just what seems good to us. And only as our character is shaped do we become men and women who are able to see, to feel the spiritual connection.
- 3) Spirituality like moral insight is no a matter of reason or logical or of human nature alone, it requires trained emotions. It requires emotional interaction and habits before we reach the age of reason.
- 4) Action/behavior is governed first by the heart as well as the mind. There is the affective and well as the cognitive in action. Feelings are not independent of cognition or other aspects of one's being, including spirituality. Reason disciplines the appetite with the aid of trained emotions. The education of the emotions makes spiritual insight possible can also produce human being traits of character that will incline in us to love the good and do it.

THE NATURE OF EMOTIONS

- The primary function of emotion is to mobilize the organism to deal quickly with important interpersonal encounters.
- Emotions are a primary idiom for defining and negotiating social relations of the "self" in a moral order"
 - Social living presents social animals, including humans, with problems whose solutions are critical for individual survival.
 - Emotions have been designed in the course of evolution to solve these problems.
- ❖ Mayne, T. & Bonanno, G. (2001). *Emotions: Current issues and future directions*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Notes: Emotions operate to help individuals work out the problems of social living in the context of one on one and group human interaction.
- Emotions...
 - express the intimate personal meaning of what is happening in our social lives
 - combine motivational, cognitive, adaptational, and physiological processes into a single complex state that involves several levels of analysis...
- From an emotional reaction we can learn much about what a person has at stake in the encounter with the environment or in life in general.
 - how that person interprets self and the world,
 - how harms, threats, and challenges are coped with.
- ❖ Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than Iq*. New York: Bantum Books.
- Notes: 1) Emotions can be perceived as the directional processes of establishing and maintaining and/or disrupting significant relationships between an organism and the external or internal environment, **which presents important implication for diversity and Spirituality**.
- 2) "Emotional content" is a matter of "perception," perception not only of one's own emotional content and context but of another person's emotional content and context. It is one's emotional perception, meaning, or interpretation that determines the nature, type, duration and intensity of the behavioral response that is initiated.
- Emotional expression is the link between internal experiences and the outside world, an opportunity for a more personal connection and interaction with each other, the external environment, and our internal self.
- In daily life, expression is the means by which people communicate experiences and influence relationships.
- In therapy, emotional behavior provides important information about how clients are feeling, how they are managing their feelings, and how they are relating to the therapist.

- ❖ Kennedy-Moore, E., & Watson, J.C. (1999). *Expressing emotions: Myths, realities, therapeutic strategies*. New York: Guildford Press.

- Notes: 1) "emotional experience" is subjective and related to a felt message or understanding of emotional responses. They are the observable verbal and nonverbal behaviors and expression that communicate and/or symbolize emotional experience.
- 2) Most importantly to emotion, behavior, and emotional intelligence, they add that expression can occur with or without self-awareness, is somewhat controllable, and can involve varying degrees of deliberate intent.

- Object focus
- Intentional Object
- Object Belief
- Judgments

- Notes: 1) Emotions are about "something", they have an object.
- 2) It is intentional in how it fits into the life of or is interpreted by the person whose emotion it is.
- 3) Emotions embody not just a way of seeing an object but ones belief about that object. Beliefs are essential to the identity of emotions. The feeling of agitation, for example, all by itself will not reveal to me whether what I am feeling is fear or grief or pity. Only an inspection of the thoughts discriminates.
- 4) All judgments are implicitly judgments of value (West, 1993, p. 38). Emotions are concerned with the value and importance the individual sees the object invested with. Human judgments are not made in a void. People interpret what they see and hear in terms of their preexisting beliefs and knowledge structures. (socialized learning, stereotypes). Emotions link us to the importance and value which the individual sees the object invested with.

- Motivational aspect is determined by cognitive attributions, formed by prior experiences of the individual,
 - Situation, event, or person produces the emotional experience which, in conjunction with the antecedents, produce specific action tendency"

- ❖ Schaefer, P. (1994). *The effects of the ability to express emotion on physiological and verbal responses to emotionally-laden stimuli*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

- Notes: 1) Understanding emotion can thus shed light on what moves people to one action over another, one belief over another, one vision of life, themselves or others over another vision.
- 2) emotions cause all the individual components of a person to focus on and be motivated towards a goal, understanding, or perception.
- 3) Emotion as provide the energy or impetus, impulse, or driving force for every human action.

- 4) An implication for understanding human behavior, then, requires an understanding of the motivation or reason behind the "emotional reaction" to environmental stimuli, challenges, and social interactions. The root meaning of the word emotion is "to move".
 - 5) Emotion, behavior and motivational link, together represent reactions to an evaluation, perceptions of relationships with others and within the environment. The emotion records that sense of vulnerability and imperfect control. Emotions look at the world from the subjects own sense of personal importance or value. Emotions link us to items that we regard as important for our well being but do not fully control.
- emotion' terms are names for particular interpretive schemes (e.g., 'remorse', 'guilt', 'anger', 'shame') of a particular story-like, script-like, or narrative that people in the world might (or might not) make use of to give meaning and shape to there somatic and affective 'feelings.'
 - 'feelings' (both somatic and affective) have the shape and meaning of an 'emotion' when they are experienced as a perception of some self-relevant condition of the world and as a plan of action for the protection of dignity, honor, and self-esteem..." (p. 32).

- ❖ Shweder, R. (1994). *You're not sick, you're just in love: Emotions as an interpretive system*. In P. Ekman & R. J. Davidson (Eds.), *The Nature of emotion: Fundamental questions* (pp. 32-44). New York: Oxford University Press.

THEORY

- Symbolic Interaction Theory - (Boss, P. G., Doherty, W. J., LaRossa, R., Schumm, W. S., & Steinmetz, S. K. (Eds.). (1993). *Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach*. New York: Plenum Press.)
 - Theme One - the importance of meaning in human behavior through three assumptions.
 - *First Assumption*: human beings act toward things based on the "meanings that the things have for them."
 - *Second Assumption*: "meaning will arise in the process of interaction between people."
 - *Third Assumption*: "meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with things he or she encounters."
 - Notes: 1) SI Theory also notes that people live and relate in a symbolic environment, stimulating each other through communication and learning meanings and values by interacting. And meaning is a valuing which had an emotional basis.
 - 2) SI suggest symbols are determined not by what they seem to represent nor by their inherent meaning, but by those who create and use them.
 - 3) Communicating is a way of understanding each other. Words get the communicative power from the fact that they are symbols. The symbol gives the word its power to carry across to one some meaning from the emotion of another. The symbol always implies more than it states. Thus, Rollo May in 1973 say words, in so far as they are symbolic, point to more than they can

specifically say; what counts is the connotative rather than the sensitive aspects of the words and Spirit, Spiritual, Spirituality being symbols, concepts have value and emotional meaning at its base for the individual.

- Theme Two the development and importance of “self-concept.”
 - *Fourth Assumption* - individuals are not born with a sense of self but develop self-concept through “social interaction.”
 - *Fifth Assumption* - a self-concept, once developed, provides “an important motive for behavior,”
 - Theme Three makes assumptions about society as a whole.
 - *Sixth Assumption* - the larger cultural and societal context and processes influence individuals and small groups,
 - *Seventh Assumption* - it is through “social interaction” in everyday situations that individuals will “work out the details of social structure.”
- Notes:
- 1) SI Theory presented an excellent frame of reference for understanding how humans, in concert with one another, create emotionally symbolic worlds and concepts such as diversity, social and economic justice and how they in turn shape human behavior even spiritual behavior.
 - 2) SI Theory through social interaction suggested that individuals apply broadly shared symbols and actively create the specific meanings of self, others, and situations.
 - 3) SI Theory suggested that symbols—objects, colors, concepts, sounds, facial expressions, body movements, words, etc.— in human interaction, can stand for something beyond the superficial symbolism.
 - 4) SI Theory focused on the shared meaning of symbols and interactions, verbal and nonverbal actions in communications. And emotions are an intricate aspect of meaning or perception.
 - 5) Mead saw symbols as the very foundation of social life. He saw our thoughts and feelings as not assessable to other people unless they are first encoded in mutually agreed upon symbols, which are then interpreted by others. It was believed that social interaction cannot exist without symbols and that symbols gain significance only in the context of that interaction.
- Strengths Perspective - Saleebey, D. (1992). *Strengths perspective in social work practice*. New York: Longman Publishing Group.
Saleebey, D. (1994). Culture, theory, and narrative: The intersection of meanings in practice. *Social Work*, 39(4), 351-359.

– *Cognition Strength* –

- to see the world as other people in their culture see it, having understanding of right and wrong from their cultural, ethnical perspective. the ability to understand how one's behavior affects others and how other's behavior affects his own.

– *Emotional Strength* –

- being in touch with feelings, being able to express them if encouraged, expressing love and concern for intimate others. From this strength, demonstrates a degree of self-control and an ability to handle stressful situation reasonably well, while at the same time one is positive about life and has hope, has a range of emotions that are congruent with a vast range, variety, and quality of situations.

➤ Notes: Saleebey notes five strengths

- 1) When one is strength based , one is insightful, open to different ways of thinking about things, reasoning is easy to follow, one considers and weighs alternatives in problem solving.
- 2) I posit the strengths perspective is component of spiritual development and connection.

– *Motivation Strength* –

- the ability and willingness not to hide from, avoid, or deny problems when one is having them and the willingness to seek help and share problem situations with others one can trust; willing to accept responsibility for his or her own part or role in problem situations; one actively seeks to improve current and future situations, seeking self-improvement through further knowledge, education, and skills and not being dependence on others.

– *Coping Strength* –

- the ability to be persistent in handling life crises; being prepared for and handling new situations well; able to reflect on and act from a history of having dealt successfully with related problems in the past; being well organized, possessed of the ability to follow through on decisions; being resourceful and creative with limited resources; the ability to stand up for him/herself rather than submitting to injustice.

– *Interpersonal Strength* -

- not only having friends but also seeking to understand friends, family, and others and make sacrifices for them; performing one's social responsibilities and roles appropriately (e.g., parental, spouse, son, daughter, community); is outgoing, friendly, truthful, a good listener, cooperative, and flexible in relating to family and friends; self confident when relating to others and is able to show warm acceptance of others while being able to accept loving feelings from others; to have a sense of propriety and good manners, a sense of humor and patience.

- Notes: Saleebey (1992) noted this person is verbally fluent, able to expresses thoughts and feeling spontaneously, and has realistic expectations in relationship with others and a sense of satisfaction in role performance with others and is able to maintain appropriate personal boundaries in relationship with others. This person is able to forgive friends, family, and others, is generous toward them with use of self, as well as with time and money. Furthermore, he suggested this person is ambitious, industrious, resourceful, and is comfortable in his or her sex

role/identity.

- Multiple Intelligence - Garner, H. (1993). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligence*. New York: HarperCollins
Garner, H. (1993). - *Multiple intelligence: The theory in practice*. New York: HarperCollins
 - *Logical/mathematical* - the intelligence of numbers and reasoning.
 - *Verbal/Linguistic* - the intelligence of words, an efficacy in the command of phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
 - *Spatial* - the ability to image, to perceive the visual world accurately, perform transformations and modifications upon one's initial perception, and recreate aspects of one's visual experience even in the absence of relevant physical stimulus.
 - *Body-Kinesthetic* – the intelligence of the whole body and the hands. This intelligence is characterized by the ability to use one's body in highly diverse ways with proficiency, dexterity, and talent for demonstrative as well as goal-directed purposes - mime, actor, athlete, or tradesman.
 - *Musical* – the intelligence to translate language into rhythmic patterns; use of pitch, melody, and tone.
 - *Intrapersonal* – the intelligence for the examination and knowledge of one's own feelings. The central capability is access to one's own feeling life, one's range of affects or emotion, the ability to instantly effect discrimination among these feelings and label them, and to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behavior. This intelligence also involves a sense of self, the ability to balance inner feelings and the pressures of others.
 - *Interpersonal* – the intelligence of looking outward toward the behavior, feelings, and motivations of others. It is also the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals, particularly among moods, temperaments, and intentions. Interpersonal intelligence permits a skilled adult to read the intentions and desires of other individuals, even those intentions that are hidden, and to then act upon that knowledge along desired lines.
 - Notes: 1) Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner (1983) described intelligence as a "set of problem-solving skills, enabling the individual to resolve genuine problems or difficulties that he or she encounters.
 - 2) Garner suggested that rather than a master intelligence; there is a broad range of intelligences. Gardner indicated that seven is an arbitrary figure for the variety of intelligences and there is no magic number to the multiplicity of human talents. And they too present important implications for emotional and spiritual interactions.
 - 3) The value of Gardner's Multiple Intelligence to emotions, emotional intelligence and spirituality is not so much in the theory as a whole but in its parts, the "interpersonal and Intrapersonal intelligences."

- 4) They are far more diverse and culturally dependent than the others. And are the most emotionally based and bring their emotionality to bear on the other five. For example, extreme circumstances such as times of war, subjugation, famine, natural or man-made disasters, recession/depression, life or death situations, and death itself, will make demands of emotions and for actions that will be unique and not common in the experiences of most people.
 - 5) Cultural premises demand that these events be responded to and expressed differently, depending upon the person's locale, age, status in the community, etc.
 - 6) However, in the west, cultural, social, and educational institutions and processes seem to have largely ignored "intrapersonal and interpersonal" skills training. Empirically, one can see that there is a class, course, training, curricular, effort or situation to shape, mold, develop, enhance or educate five of Gardner's "intelligences."
 - 7) Conspicuous by their absence are classes that deal exclusively with or specifically teach skills associated with or develop interpersonal or intrapersonal skills. Is the neglect of these two intelligences evident in behavior such as increased domestic, work place, and school violence, road rage, and sexual and physical abuse? Is it at the heart of sexism, racism, homophobia, ageism etc? Does our disregard for these skills lay the foundation for conditions that breed child pornography, religious intolerance, war or a legal and "pork barrel" political system that seems biased towards special interests, big business, versus connecting compassionately to "promote the common welfare, establish domestic tranquility" of the common man?
- Emotional Intelligence – EI speaks of connecting to one's self and others. Which is also at the heart of spiritual behavior.
 - Developed by psychologists
 - Peter Salovey, Yale University
 - John Mayers, University of New Hampshire
 - Emotional Intelligence define:
 - Being able to monitor and regulate one's own feelings, understand the feelings of other's, and use that "feeling" knowledge to guide thoughts and actions.
 - Popularized in - Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than Iq*. New York: Bantum Books.
 - "basic competencies of the human heart",

- *knowing what you are feeling,*
 - *being able to manage those feelings well,*
 - *analyzing thoughts,*
 - *being able to delay your impulsive actions,*
 - *maintain hope and optimism despite set backs,*
 - *empathizing and taking the other's perspective, and interacting harmoniously.*
 - *The ability to listen,*
 - *to resolve conflicts in appropriate growth producing ways,*
 - *to cooperate with others.*
 - Having the zeal to and the persistence in the ability to *motivate* oneself, as well as the *self-awareness* of knowing ones emotions,
 - recognizing a feeling as it happens, and its mental and physiological manifestations.
- Notes: 1) Goleman (1995) suggested the ability to self-motivate reflects the degree to which emotions may also get in the way of as well as enhance our ability to think, plan, solve problems, propel us toward accomplishment, control our impulses, and delay gratification as we try to achieve a given goal.
- 2) Being able to handle one's emotions can give one the expertise to withstand emotional tumult, as well as use feelings that are proper and proportional to the demands of the situation.
- Goleman, D. (1995) – Five Functions:
 - *Self-Awareness* – not only knowing one's emotions but recognizing the feeling as it is happening, mentally as well as physically. This means at most a calm awareness of passionate or turbulent feelings; at a minimum, it is a slight stepping back from the experience, situation, or event rather than being lost or caught up in it.
 - *Handling Emotions* –using feelings that are appropriate and proportional to the emotional demands of the situation. For example, when emotions are out of control and persist over long periods of time, they can become pathological, causing the individual to exhibit symptoms of major or manic depression or anxiety. Emotions that wax and wane too intensely and for too long can undermine a person's behavioral stability.
- Notes: From these definitions, it is possible to see that the synthesized essence of emotional intelligence involves five functions or skills necessary for the effective use of one's emotions (Goleman, 1995, p. 43). While not directly addressing emotional intelligence, Peck (1997), noted "self-awareness" is the cornerstone on which most other skills depend. Thus, self-awareness would seem to be important to comprehending human behavior in general but more crucial to the understanding of intentions reflected in behavior, particularly when violence may satisfy a personal need. Those the Christian Bible's admonishment to, "Love thy neighbor as thy self"
- *Self-Motivation* – having a goal, knowing the small manageable steps needed to achieve the goal, and having the persistence and zeal to follow through. "Self-motivation" is being able to regulate our moods so that effective critical thinking is facilitated rather than impeded. It is being able to motivate ourselves to continue trying in the face of obstacles and setbacks.

- *Empathy* – the ability to read another person’s feelings by tone of voice or facial expression, not words. When we communicate, we do so in more ways than just with words: There is tone of voice, gesturing, facial expression, body language, etc. Thus, this ability to sense how someone else is feeling in any given situation or circumstance, this “emotional attunement” is said to be the main ingredient in compassion, caring, sympathy, and understanding.
 - Notes: In the tenets of EI we there may be a foundation for spirituality.
- *Social Skills* – allow one to mold a social encounter, to mobilize and inspire others, to succeed in intimate, casual and work relationships, and to put others at ease.
 - All four are tied together and connect us to other people, positively or negatively, in the fifth skill, “social skills.” which have been referred to by Goleman as “the art of relationship”. As noted, humans are in a constant state of communication, sending verbal and non-verbal emotional signals. Social skills allow people to manage these emotional signals for effective interpersonal interaction with others. These skills, which constitute emotional intelligence, reflect our capability of engaging effectively in life’s interpersonal interactions. It is emotional intelligence that gives the individual sufficient meaning and competence for emotional and behavioral self-efficacy. Goleman (1998) saw emotional competence as a learned capability based on emotional intelligence.
- Distinction between cognitive (IQ) and non-cognitive (EI) intelligence.
 - EI intelligence addresses the personal, emotional, social, and survival dimensions of intelligence, which are more important for daily functioning than are the cognitive aspects of intelligence.
 - While IQ is more calculated, EI is more purposeful. IQ is static, does not change over time
 - EI is rarely static; it is fluid, dynamic, and very complex in context, content, perception, and meaning (Saxton, 1996)
 - While IQ peaks at about the age of 21, EI grows from childhood into the late 50s and reaches its peak during an individual’s mid-40s to mid-50s.
 - Notes: 1) EI helps predict success because it reflects how a person applies knowledge to the immediate situation.
 - 2) Like human behavior and human interaction – not static
 - 3) It is this potential for changing over time that presents interesting implications for spirituality.

Emotion/Spiritual Connection & Disconnection

- Attachment to, Empathy for, other who are different from us.
 - In humans, culture looses the linkages between emotions and problems so that culture so that cultures

find new ways to solve problems for which emotions evolved, and cultures find new ways of using emotions

- Notes: 1) humans through socially constructed boundaries, such as gender, race, sexual orientation, regionalism, nationalism, etc. have effectively separated, marginalized, and disenfranchised their members emotionally preventing a level and quality of bonding and attachment for spiritual interaction.
 - 2) It is human beings through the context of society and culture that impose socio-ideological biases on the construction of identity in connection with emotion (Haviland-Jones & Kahlbaugh, 2000), accompanied by socialized beliefs, expression and behavioral expectations for that identity. "It is the socialization of these scripted expectations and beliefs that provide continuity and predictable meaningfulness to the diversity of linkages among behaviors and goals" (Saarni, 2000b, p. 309).
 - 3) While religion might imply dogma and separation based belief, tradition, policy, interpretation; Spirituality seems to imply a unity, a transcendence beyond the social construction of human culture and nature to something higher and with more meaningful interaction among all elements and parts of the universe.
- Prejudices – "a kind of emotional learning that occurs early in life, making these reactions especially hard to eradicate entirely, even in people who as adults feel it is wrong to hold them. 'The emotions of prejudice are formed in childhood, while the beliefs that are used to justify it come later... Later, in life, you may want to change your prejudice, but it is far easier to change your intellectual beliefs than your deep feelings.'
 - ❖ (Goleman, 1995)
 - Racism – "all of the learned behavior and learned emotions on the part of one group towards another whose physical characteristics [*beliefs*] are dissimilar to the former group, behavior and emotions that compel one group to conceive of and to treat the other on the basis of its physical characteristics [*beliefs*] alone, as if they did not belong to the human race"
 - ❖ Hernton, C.C. (1965). *Sex and racism in america*. New York: Grove Press
 - Notes: 1) In American any discussion of race and race relations is "visceral rather than cognitive" (Farberman, 1998, p. 2). Goleman (1995) not only confirmed the association but noted that the psychological price of prejudicial loyalty to one's own group begins with the emotion of "antipathy," which is a strong dislike of another, especially when there is a long history of enmity between the groups:
 - 2) The association between race, ethnicity, culture, emotional and

spiritual disconnection and behavior is self-evident in the nature and dynamics of racism. Racism, prejudice, and discrimination themselves are emotional responses to a group or groups of people. The aging construct as a social process for example can also be decoded to mean age discrimination and age prejudice. The same social process exists for any "discrimination and prejudice, including religious/spiritual.

- "There is also an emotional distance process that plays a vital part in overcoming the resistance to killing. Factors such as cultural distance, social distance and mechanical distance are just as effective as physical distance in permitting the killer to deny he is killing a human being" (p. 158).

- ❖ Grossman, D. (1995). *On killing: The psychological cost of learning to kill in war and society*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company.

- "When emotional and other distances are instilled in people, they are disconnected from others; others are 'dehumanized,' seen as 'inferior forms of life' (p. 250).

- ❖ Watson, P. (1978). *War on the Mind: The military uses and abuses of psychology*. New York: Basic Books.

- Notes: 1) the ability to wrong, hurt, or kill someone is a learned behavior that has to be taught and that a key element in this learning is to create an "emotional distance" between the killer and the victim or enemy.

- 2) "...there is good clinical evidence for an assumption that destructive aggression occurs, at least to a large degree, in conjunction with a momentary or chronic emotional withdrawal"

- 3) Disconnected by virtue of race, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, national origin, culture, etc."

- 4) this lack of emotional, human spiritual connection makes it easy to justify behavior that is unfair, unjust, violent, even murderous, what C.S. Lewis called "inhuman behavior" - Terrorism, school violence, "Pork Barrel" politics, racial profiling, the beating death of a gay man in Laramie, Wyoming, the dragging death of a black man in Jasper, Texas, or a person abusing his/her spouse or children or an animal or manipulating the stock market in a way that cause people to lose their life savings.

- 5) The history of humankind is replete with examples of this disconnection and its resulting behavior

- West (1993) identifies the consequences of dehumanization,
 - demonizing means you have lost contact with the humanity of your foes.
 - But once you demonize, then you call into question the possibility of dialogue or further engagement down the line”.
- In this objectification of human beings, people set aside caring or loving emotions toward others.
 - limits behavioral options and choices by first limiting emotional options and choices.

➤ Notes: 1) Constructed difference supports a denial of emotional and human interconnectedness, which provides a justification for neglecting, exploiting, and intentionally harming people is a denial of spiritual connectedness and spirituality.

2) The solution for greater spirituality and behavior is also within the tenets of emotional intelligence.

3) Through self-awareness and self-acceptance. Emotionally and spiritually, we cannot do for or give to others that which we cannot do for or give to ourselves.

4) The Bible reminds us to “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” If one feels contempt for one’s self, one will behave in a contemptuous manner with others. If one has respect, love, tolerance, and acceptance for one’s self, one will have the same for others.

- “When you love your Self, you cannot walk out the door and kill your brother. You feel too good about yourself to soil your soul or risk going to jail. When you really love your Self, you cannot walk away from your children. You know they are a part of you, and you feel good about them. When you feel that good about yourself you don’t beat women, you don’t do drugs, you don’t hate white people. You feel so good, so you make good choices about what you do, what you say, and how you conduct your life and affairs” (p. 24).

❖ Vanzant, I. (1996). *The spirit of a man: A vision of transformation for black men and the women who love them*. New York: HarperCollins Publisher, Inc.

➤ Notes: When we connect with our emotions, our inter-self, our soul, our inner spirit we can do the same for others.

SIGNIFICANCE OF EMOTION & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

- Gary Zukav notes:
 - “When we close the door to our feelings,
 - we close the door to the vital currents that energize and activate our thoughts and actions.

- We cannot begin the process of understanding the effect of our emotions upon us, our environment, and other people [*intrapersonal*], or the effect of the emotions of other people upon themselves, their environment, and us [*interpersonal*].
- Without an awareness of our emotions, we cannot associate the effect of anger, sadness, grief, and joy - within ourselves or others - with their causes.
- We cannot distinguish between that part of us which is personality and that part of us which is soul [*spirit*].
- Without an awareness of our feelings, we cannot experience compassion. How can we share the sufferings and joys of others if we cannot experience our own? [*spirit*]...

- ...If we are not intimate with our emotions,
- we cannot perceive the dynamics that lie behind emotions, the way that these dynamics work, and the ends that they serve.
- Emotions are currents of energy that pass through us. Awareness of these currents is the first step in learning how our experiences come into being and why.
- Emotions reflect intentions.
- Therefore, awareness of emotions leads to awareness of intentions.
- Every discrepancy between a conscious intention and the emotions that accompany its points directly to a splintered aspect of the self that requires healing.
- Without an awareness of your emotions, you are not able to experience reverence [*spirituality*]. Reverence is not an emotion. It is a way of being, but the path to reverence is through your heart, and only an awareness of your feelings can open your heart" (pp. 60-61).

❖ Zukav, G. (1990). *The seat of the soul*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

- Notes: Remember researcher and authors confirm emotions reflect intentions, action and behavior scripts, schemas

SPIRITUALITY

- The types of awareness that are components of EI are attributes of spirituality, spiritual people and their personal (interpersonal & intrapersonal) experiences.
 - "Spiritual intelligence is related to EI insofar as spiritual practice includes developing intrapersonal and interpersonal sensitivity. Paying attention to subjective thoughts and feelings and cultivating empathy is part of increasing awareness of inner spiritual life... depends on the capacity to see things from more than one perspective and to recognize the relationships between, perception, belief, and behavior" (Vaughan, 2002, p. 20).
 - Notes: She suggests it emerges as consciousness evolves into a continuously deepening awareness of human states of existence, matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit. It is much more than a mental ability. It implies fluidity, movement, transience, personal to transpersonal, self to spirit, an awareness of our relationship with others, to the earth and all beings.

- In discussing what it means to go beyond multiculturalism and eurocentrism, West (1993) notes discernment is about human connection, about having empathy
 - “Empathy is the capacity to get in contact with the anxieties and frustrations of others... to attempt to put yourself in their shoes. An attempt to get into their skin... The moment of human connection means never losing sight of the humanity of others. Always attempting to remain in connection with the humanity of others.” (West, 1993)
- Feelings are not independent of cognition or any aspect of one’s being, including spirituality. Compassionate and loving action/behavior is governed by the heart as well as the mind.
 - “It is emotion, not cognition, that brings to consciousness the moral and spiritual aspects of life” (Scheidlin, 2003, p. 179).
 - Notes: The education of the emotions makes spiritual insight possible can also produce human being traits of character that will incline in us to see the good and the bad but do the good. Thus, social emotional learning/education is not a private matter but involves interaction with other individuals and groups through the larger society. Reason and logic does not facilitate an expansion of consciousness, discernment, or connection to other similar and or diverse people, without emotions.
- In a study of “compassionate love” for others and humanity, Sprecher & Fehr (2005) found
 - overall, people reported experiencing more compassionate love for close others (family and friends) than for strangers or all humanity (p. 643).
 - compassionate love directed to the close others was associated with perceiving oneself as better than members of one’s social/family network in offering social support to friends and family (p. 643).
 - Slavik & Croake (2001) also noted people do not realize their desire to be superior to others.
 - “In a society based upon competition, where being ordinary is equated with failure, they are prone to compare themselves to others who seem very successful in the areas in which they would like to succeed. In this comparison, they create feelings of inferiority and inadequacy that result in moving backward or, at best, standing still rather than moving forward in life at own pace. They become discouraged and pessimistic rather than living with optimism and faith in themselves and others” (p. 357)
 - Notes: The solution for greater spirituality and behavior is within the tenets of emotional intelligence through self-awareness and self-acceptance. Emotionally and spiritually, we cannot do for or give to others that which we cannot do for or give to ourselves.
- **SOCIAL CONTRACTS**
 - Society sets up a social contract via its agents: law enforcers including governmental leaders, *clerics*, educators, and parents.
 - People who behave according to the rules specified in the social contract are provided certain benefits by society in exchange.

- People who break the contract [or seen as not worthy, less than, soulless, different] may be deprived of such benefits or punished" (Mayer & Beltz, p. 301) to include the benefits of heaven, Nirvana, the after life.
- Consider how Christianity has view Blacks as the children of Ham, cursed and thus deserving of differential social, religious and spiritual treatment, as are women due to eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and tempting the man to do so, or gays and lesbians.
- The closeness of the relationship, the emotion attachment of two individuals or groups, their status or difference in dominance is important contributors to emotional expressions (Saarni, 2000a) and in the development and execution of social contracts.
- Social stratification theory relates to social position and the power and influence vested a position (Solomon, 1995). That is, those in power will create social structures and contracts to maintain their privilege.
- Regardless of philosophy, principles, or spirituality every society develops some form of social ranking system that has physical, sociological, political, economic, and psychological dimensions.
- Social ranking, rules, and thus the benefits are and have been, influenced by gender, race, and difference. In this regard, the familiarity and acquaintanceship between societal members, in regards to their status, difference in dominance, power, control, and privilege is significant to the process and development of social contracts (Saarni, 2000a) for spiritual growth and development.
- Solomon (1995) might suggest spiritual ineffectiveness is the result of weak-willed interpersonal and intrapersonal skills or negative emotional attachment to or disconnection from others due to constructed differences and their socialization emotional meaning
 - o "...justice is first of all a sense of one's self, a sense of one's place in the world, and especially in the social world... What distinguishes us not just from animals but from machines are our passions [*emotions*], and foremost among them our passion for justice. Justice is, in a word, that set of passions [*emotionality*], not mere theories, that bind us and make us part of the social world... an adequate sense of justice requires not only concern but also curiosity, a need to know about the state of the world and the plight of people outside of one's own limited domain...
 - o "...I want to argue that what allows the circle to expand is not reason (in the technical sense of calculation on the basis of abstract principles) but rather knowledge and understanding, in the particular sense of coming to appreciate the situations and the circumstances of other people and creatures... It is that emotional awareness, not the impetus of pure practical reason that accounts for our sense of justice... Our affiliations in society and with each other are not rational or a matter of self-interested calculation but a product of natural feelings and affections" (pp. 35, 45, 48, 52, 62).

❖ Solomon, R. C. (1990). *A passion for justice: Emotions and the origin of the social contract*. New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

- Notes: 1) I posit that Solomon is suggesting an emotional connectedness for a large social world connection and thus spiritual growth.
- 2) Reason and Logic does not facilitate an expansion of consciousness, discernment, or connection to other similar and or diverse people, but emotions.
- 3) This is the beginning of spiritual development and growth.
- 4) It will not happen unless there advocacy for and an emphasis on social emotional learning at all educational levels. Unless like the Illinois State Board of Education social and emotional learning is added to state learning standards.

THE EMOTIONAL SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE FRAMEWORK

- An affective orientation and cognitive processes arising from interpersonal relations, have important implications for spiritual interaction.
- A framework for emotional attunement in spiritually mature interactions is within the processes and skills of the EI paradigm and social emotional learning.
- Vaughan (2002) notes:
 - Buddhist teachings point out that any self-concept can be deconstructed.
 - “Self-awareness is essential for developing spiritual maturity. When attention is directed inward, a person may begin by trying to attend to subjective sensations, feelings, and thoughts; Realizing that attention can be voluntarily redirected can begin the process of undoing old habits of thought and patterns of behavior” (Vaughan, 2002, p. 22).
 - Similarly, Slavik & Croake (2001) state,
 - “A person does not move in this direction [community feelings] through extreme self-control, which usually indicates fear for his or her place in the world, but through the slow work of changing his or her perspective on self and the world, his or her convictions” (p. 361).
 - Through the processes emotional “self-awareness”, self-acceptance develops and human beings “become able to choose thoughts, words, and actions that reflect the belief that there is a power of good present in your [everyone’s] soul” (Swigonski’s, 1996, p.23).
- Spiritual maturity and practice is applying wisdom, understanding, non-judgmental tolerance, acceptance and compassion in our daily interactions with other people, regardless of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, and ethnicity etc. as well as having reverence and respect for all forms of life.
 - Wallace (1999) as quoted in Vaughan (2002) said,
 - “When the wisdom of the mind has been unveiled in the spiritually awaked person, boundless compassion for all sentient beings arises spontaneously” (p. 31).
 - Notes: Spirituality thus puts forward an affective beginning and orientation of insight and understanding, with reference to the infinite sources and levels of human knowing, and connecting with the inner life of mind and spirit with external endeavors in service to the world community of human kind.
- “This is the beginning of spiritual development and growth. Integrating spiritual [& *emotional*] intelligence helps us deepen the quest and expand our vision of possibilities” (Vaughan, p. 32).
 - Notes: It will not happen unless there is advocacy for and an emphasis on social emotional learning for emotional intelligence at all levels of our societal infrastructure, particularly educational and religious.

- West (1993) reminds human-kind that the hope, the responsible for change, growth, spiritual maturity and human connectedness lies in our hand, in our intentions.
 - “The doctrine of the value of consequences leads us to take the future into consideration and this takes us to the conception of a universe whose evolution is still in the making, in the process of becoming. Up to a certain point, still plastic. The future has ethical moral and spiritual significance because human will, human thought, and action can make a difference in relation to human aims and purposes. There is moral and spiritual substance in the fact that human will can make the future different and possibly better.”
 - ❖ West, C. (1993) *Beyond Eurocentrism and Multiculturalism: Volume One – Prophetic Thought in Postmodern Times*, Maine: Common Courage Press., p.41-42
 - Notes: If we learn about, connect with, and grow from our mutual sentient.

CONCLUSION

- Before we, as human beings, can expand the circle of compassion to other, we must first
 - become self aware of our own emotions, our own human frailties, our own “humanity”,
 - feeling compassion and love for ourselves in our humanity
 - recognize and accept, without social construction, without judgment, the humanity of others;
- Then we will be in a position to share compassion and love for the individualized and group others.
- People, particularly educators and spiritual leaders must find ways, as Scheindlin (2003) says, to restore emotions to their proper place as a foundation of consciousness and engagement with the world.
 - “Before spiritual emotions can be nurtured, emotional experience *itself* needs to be restored as a *primary means by which we apprehend the world and connect with it*” [author italic] (p. 187).
- The transformative power of spirituality to break barriers and find common ground among members of the human family lies in the connection with our common humanity through emotional awareness and attunement to others in the world community.
- One has to feel the connection, “feel” spiritual, before we can act or interact spiritually.
- Spirituality is not rational or logical; it is a feeling, emotionally based in one’s belief, one’s faith about the unity and connectedness of *all* things in and on this earth, air, water, mineral, plant, animal, and human of diversity and difference.