



Emotional Style Assessment

3. SOCIAL INTUITION

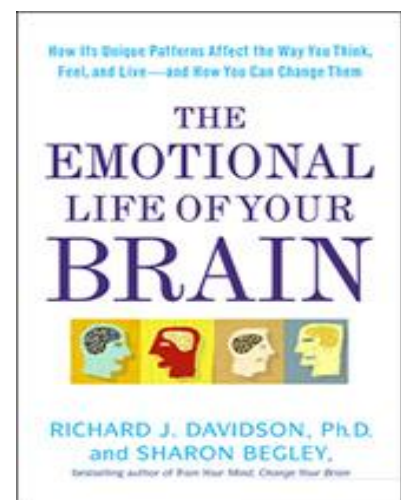
People differ dramatically in how attuned they are to nonverbal social clues. Extreme insensitivity to these signals is characteristic of people on the autism spectrum, who struggle to read facial expressions and other social cues, but people who fall well short of a clinical diagnosis can also be socially deaf and blind, with devastating consequences for personal and professional relationships. Conversely, acute sensitivity to the emotional state of others is central to both empathy and compassion, since being able to decode and understand social signals means we can respond to them.

The following ten questions are designed to help you better understand your Emotional Style of 'Social Intuition'. If you are tempted to think long and hard about a question, or if you feel that there are too many nuances or exceptions, resist. The most accurate results come from making a snap judgment about whether a question is True or False about you. There are no right answers here - take it from the profile's creator, CIHM Founder Richard Davidson. This is not a pop quiz - it's about better understanding who you are, how you perceive the world, and how you navigate the obstacles of life.

The profile consists of 10 simple 'True/False' statements and should take only a couple minutes to complete. You can even ask someone close to you to answer these questions about you for an additional perspective. That serve as a reality check.

Following the assessment are some exercises that can help you adjust your Social Intuition. Nothing is guaranteed, of course, and what you get out of it depends a great deal on what you put in.

Remember, this is simply a starting point to learning more about Emotional Style. To learn more about how Dr. Davidson describes the neural underpinnings of Emotional Style, the remaining five dimensions and strategies and tips to shift within the continuum of each, we encourage you to read the book!

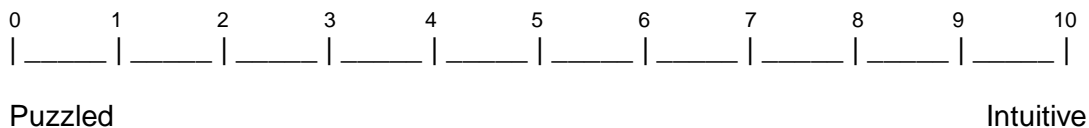


SOCIAL INTUITION ASSESSMENT

Question	T or F?	Score
1. When I'm talking with people, I often notice subtle social cues about their emotions – discomfort, or anger – before they acknowledge those feelings in themselves.		
2. I often find myself noting facial expressions and body language of others.		
3. I find it does not really matter if I talk with people on the phone or in person, since I rarely get any additional information from seeing who I'm speaking with.		
4. I often feel as though I know more about people's true feelings than they do themselves.		
5. I am often taken by surprise when someone I'm talking with gets angry or upset at something I said, for no apparent reason.		
6. At a restaurant, I prefer to sit next to someone I'm speaking with so I don't have to see his or her full face.		
7. I often find myself responding to another person's discomfort or distress on the basis of an intuitive feel rather than an explicit discussion.		
8. When I am in public places with time to kill, I like to observe people around me.		
9. I find it uncomfortable when someone I barely know looks directly into my eyes during a conversation.		
10. I can often tell when something is bothering another person just by looking at him or her.		
TOTAL =		

Scoring: Give yourself one point for each True answer to questions 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 10, and one point for each False answer to questions 3, 5, 6 and 9. All other answers score zero.

Plot your score on this scale:



It would seem that everyone would want to shift their social intuition as close as possible to the Intuitive end of the scale. It could be argued that skills in this area presages better success in love, work, and life in general. But it is also possible to be so focused on social cues and social events that it interferes with activities of daily living.

Key Tools to adjust your Social Intuition include:

1. Present Moment Awareness. The first step to increase Social Intuition is to pay attention to what is happening around you. To detect social cues, particularly subtle ones, you need to focus on things like tone of voice, body language, and facial expression. This is basically a matter of practice.

- a. Start with strangers. Pick some people out in public and discreetly watch them. Pay particular attention to faces.
- b. See if you can predict how this person, or persons, will interact. See how they watch each other. Are they paying attention to each other?
- c. If you can hear them, see if their tone of voice matches their body language and facial expressions. If not, you may be missing something, or they may be trying to mislead their companion. Which is it?
- d. After your skill gets a little better, try this with friends or colleagues.
- e. Don't forget to observe yourself, too. This will tie into the dimension of self-awareness later.

2. Mindfulness Meditation. This involves observing your thought and feelings from the perspective of a nonjudgmental third party. One attends just to the bare facts of a perception received through the senses or the mind, without reacting to them in any way.

By learning to observe nonjudgmentally, you can break the chain of associations that typically arise from every thought. If you find that you are beginning to judge the thoughts, return to a state of nonjudgmental awareness. Practicing breathing awareness is a good place to start to learn mindfulness meditation. (See more on this in the Self-Awareness Dimension.)

3. Other Exercises to Increase Intuition:

a. To enhance sensitivity to vocal cues of emotion, go to a public place and find some people who are chattering away. Close your eyes and pay attention to the voice around you. Tune in to specific voices, focusing on the tone and not the content. Describe to yourself what the tone conveys – serenity, joy, anticipation, anxiety, stress, whatever. Test yourself by opening your eyes and observing what comes next.

b. Now try it with posture and body language. As you observe a conversation, note how the speaker orient themselves toward one another, how they sit or stand, what gestures they use. What happens next in the conversation?

c. Designate one channel (tone of voice, body language) to be your focus of attention for a full day. Observe people who come across your field of awareness; be an observer whenever possible and not a participant. At the end of the day, write down any insights or what you learned.

4. To reduce your Social Intuition, you can reduce people contact or avoid looking into their eyes. You can schedule meetings for a particular time of day, giving yourself a break in between. Use your Attention training (on another segment) to pull your focus back from intense concentration.

The exercises in this segment and the other five segments all work through the mind to actually change your brain. They have the power to alter your neural systems that underlie each of the six dimensions of Emotional Style:

- Resilience
- Outlook
- Social Intuition
- Self-Awareness
- Sensitivity to Context
- Attention

Any decision to shift your set point on any of these dimensions should be based on thoughtful introspection about whether it is keeping you from being the person you wish to be and living the life you aspire to.

Emotions help us appreciate others and the world around us; they make life meaningful and fulfilling.