

WORKSHOP REPORT

Nurturing and Working with Emotional Quotient (EQ) Workshop

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Context

There are considerable evidences showed that EQ is a determinant of success in a variety of occupational setting. Studies concerning EQ have been reported from Asia, Australia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America. Although they are varying widely in their quality, they include a number of individually well-done and convincing demonstrations of the predictive power of EQ. Accumulating findings suggest EQ may predict important outcomes in several areas such as better social relationship with others during work, better psychological wellbeing and perceived positively by others. Although there is large literature on EQ in general, their specific application to medical education has been largely unexplored. To fill this gap, we describe in this article an EQ training program for postgraduate students known as 'Nurturing and Working with EQ Workshop' in our institution.

Reason for the idea

This workshop was developed to enhance postgraduate students' self-awareness towards the importance of nurturing and working with EQ, and to assist them in developing self-improvement strategies to develop their EQ. It offers a unique opportunity to develop postgraduate students' skills in such areas.

Methods

The workshop was run over one day. It was open to postgraduate students. The programme was run by academic staff from the Medical Education Department. The objectives of this first session were to enable participants to measure their EQ by USM Emotional Quotient Inventory (USMEQ-i), to recognize the main components of EQ and to understand the importance of EQ. Participants were given some input regarding EQ related to postgraduate study as well as future specialist, the components of EQ, and the evidence-based outcomes of EQ. Hands-on and discussion sessions were held to explore practical part of EQ. After they went through the sessions, they should be able to

recognize their own strengths and weaknesses and develop their own self-improvement strategies to improve their EQ.

Evaluation

A total of 20 postgraduate students participated in the workshop. At the end of the workshop, evaluation questionnaires were distributed to participants. The questionnaire solicited participants' ratings regarding the usefulness of the EQ questionnaire, the discussion sessions and the facilitators. Participants were also asked to rate the success of the workshop in achieving the objectives and its overall usefulness. In an open-ended section participants were asked to describe the most important thing they learnt from the workshop as well as the most important thing that can be improved. Data analysis was done using SPSS version 12. The evaluation showed that the participants rated the overall workshop as highly useful (89.9%) and as having achieved the objectives (89.1%). All sessions were rated as highly useful. Among the comments written in the open-ended section regarding the most important thing participants learnt from the workshop, 50% wrote comments related to improved self-awareness. The importance of EQ was commented by 30% of them. The fact that EQ can be nurtured and developed was mentioned as most important by 12% and another 8% appreciated the usefulness of increased knowledge such as EQ components.

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