



STEVE HEASLIP/CAPE COD TIMES

Christine Casper of Dennis helps individuals and corporations improve emotional intelligence. The ability to identify our own and others' emotions and to empathize with others is a higher indicator of person and business success than IQ.

# Emotional intelligence

The means  
to better  
decision-  
making

BY SUSAN CURTIN

**W**hen you feel conflicted, how do you typically make a tough decision? Many of us wrestle with our emotions for a while, try to suppress them in favor of the facts, and eventually surrender to "gut instinct." This isn't such a bad idea, according to Christine Casper. Chris says gut instinct is another way of saying "emotional intelli-

gence," a field of study that's gaining traction in the personal – and professional – arenas. Chris maintains that emotional intelligence (EI) is even more important than one's intelligence quotient (IQ) in determining a person's success and happiness. She should know: she's built a thriving business using its principles and extolling its virtues. "Think about how great it feels when you make a good decision. That's the essence of high EI," she explains. Her EI has also

enabled this youthful 60-something to live an energized, focused and fulfilling life.

Chris, who holds an MBA from Northeastern, was born and raised in New York, but lived with husband, Mike, for many years in Harvard, Mass. After Mike retired, they relocated to the Cape 11 years ago, taken in by its natural beauty and cultural offerings, and so they could easily visit or host their seven kids

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and 15 grandchildren. "The Cape fills my soul," she says, and its many charms "replenish" her and help her feel grounded. "It is a blessing to love where you live. The Cape provides a strong platform from which I can spring, and with joy, return to after my work travels."

Chris' company, Communication, Motivation & Management, Inc., a Dennis-based consulting firm that specializes in leadership, executive coaching and EI, finds her lecturing around the world on the subject. She has been interviewed on Good Day New York, Fox News and National Public Radio, ever ready to share the benefits of living a more authentic life by learning to elevate one's personal EI.

"Think of some people you know who have high IQs and great educations, but they just don't get it. They are defensive, take things personally, let little things bother them. Now think of others with maybe just an average education, but they totally get it. They greet people, know how to listen, feel compassion and exercise self-restraint. These people have emotional intelligence. They create a culture of open and honest communication."

According to Chris, scientific data has proven conclusively that "In business, the people with high emotional intelligence are the superstars. They are enthusiastic, optimistic, empathic and resilient. They view stumbling blocks as challenges, not problems." Chris sites numerous studies that indicate EI trumps technical skill and experience every time.

To boost your own EI, Chris advises people to practice paying attention to their emotions and purposefully decide how to respond to them. "Give yourself time and really listen to your emotions. They are trying to tell you something. Breathe. Feel them. Name them. How can you deal with something if you can't identify it?"

Emotions are neither good nor bad, Chris points out. They are a source of information that can provide valuable insight. "It's how you chose to respond to emotions that can be good or bad," notes Chris. "You can

**Emotional intelligence  
outranks IQ**

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suppress them, try to rein them in, or just let go and let them drive your behavior. These choices don't achieve the best results.

"Emotional intelligence is simply your ability to make good decisions. It's about how you respond to your emotions in your everyday life. To make good decisions you have to have self-awareness, understand your emotions and the emotions of others.

You also have the power to generate positive emotions," she argues, which can impact all aspects of life: your marriage, friendships, family life and career.

Client Anthony Baroni concurs. Anthony is the president of Stonewood Products of Harwich, who, after meeting Chris at a Rotary Club event, hired her to talk to his management team about EI.

"She really struck a chord here. We all recognized how EI can have a huge effect on the way we communicate with each other.

"Just by taking five seconds before you respond to another person and think about what they said before you speak. It really changes the way we're able to connect with people." Anthony said Chris' EI training helped create a new culture at the company, a leading supplier of landscaping stone, wood flooring and other building products. He said the company has since changed the way they interview

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and hire people, in an effort to gauge a candidate's EI.

"It doesn't matter how smart they are, but how well they relate to other people," he asserts.

Anthony believes that as people increasingly curtail their face-to-face communication with others – due to the prevalence of email, smartphones and the internet – EI is becoming a rare commodity. "Young people don't even have to ask someone for directions. They use a GPS. Something is being lost here."

Andi Genser is executive director of WE CAN (Women's Empowerment through Cape Area Networking), a 13-year old nonprofit organization that helps women in transition. She hired Chris to address a group of 42 mentors and their "mentees," who found her workshop on EI powerful: "Chris is really dynamic and high-powered, but she's very approachable and empathetic. She helped our group, comprised of woman of every age and background, understand this important part of themselves. Her message about emotional intelligence really resonated."

The women from Chris' workshop at WE CAN agreed: "Chris reminds us that we have the power to change ourselves," and "She taught me to dream with my eyes open" were two comments.

Chris summarizes her passion for her subject: "Nothing great is ever accomplished without strong positive emotions: No work of art, no relationship, no career success, no product. It's our emotions that connect us and make us human," she argues.

Chris is the author of the award-winning book "From Now On With Passion, A Guide to Emotional Intelligence." She is also co-author with Dr. Rob Bogosian of an upcoming book called "Breaking the Corporate Silence: Encouraging Employee Engagement," as of this writing slated for release in March. In it they discuss what corporate leaders can do to create an open working environment so workers can better voice their ideas and concerns to management. "The best resources in a company are the people there. Unfortunately, they often go overlooked. Management has to be taught to listen," concludes Chris. ♦

QUIZ ANSWERS

QUIZ, PAGE 24

- 1. "The Usual Gang of Idiots." Individual credits appear with the features.
- 2. Beginning in 1957, he refused to accept paid advertising, a policy that held until 2001. Early on, he also published at deliberately irregular intervals, and always kept his creative staff – some of whom spent their whole careers at MAD – as freelancers, though he sponsored lavish annual getaways for them.
- 3. "Spy vs. Spy," headlined as "Joke and Dagger Department." It was taken over by artist Jeff Kuper after Prohias retired in the 1980s, but "By Prohias" appears in Morse code at the bottom of each strip.
- 4. "The Lighter Side." Berg held an honorary doctorate in theology and published a number of collections of his work.
- 5. Alfred E. Neumann, who says, "What, me worry?"

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

PUZZLE, PAGE 25

MAGMA	LAMA	SLAT	CAMEL
AURAS	EDIT	NITE	ALAMO
STIRS	AIN'T	OGLE	TOXIN
CONQUERED	NEW	HAMP	SHIRE
URANUS	AMTS	EPA	
CAREER	ATEE	AKA	PAS
OHYES	ALL	BUNNY	NEWYORK
LEES	PREAMP	ITS	ELMO
AMS	REPASS	APPS	POLAR
FOREST	PSI	LAMENT	
ANAPPLE	LESS	MARYLAND	
CRATES	EMT	LAUREN	
OMITS	EGGS	FIRMED	LOW
MLLE	ALA	JACOBS	PURE
FEENICKS	SARIZONA	SITAR	
YTD	QTS	ROLE	SIZZLE
ITE	EAST	CORTEZ	
BOSS	EDIN	MASSACHUSETTS	
AMASS	MOAN	ARTY	TRURO
UNCUT	AKIN	SEEM	AIRE
MIKES	MICE	ETTE	SANKA

Although visible to the naked eye, URANUS (31 Across) was not recognized as a planet before 1781, because of its dimness and relatively slow orbit. The two LEES (48 Across) who signed the Declaration of Independence were both Virginians: Francis Lightfoot Lee and his brother Richard Henry Lee. A.J. JACOBS (77 Across) recounts his reading of the 33,000+ pages of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in the 2004 book *The Know-It-All*.



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