

Introduction: Drawing with mind and emotions

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ABSTRACT: Emotional intelligence, a set of skills hypothesized to contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and in others.

(Salovey & Mayer, 1990)

The sciences alone cannot illuminate the entirety of human experience without the light that comes from the arts and humanities.

(Damásio, 2017 p. 17)

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1 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

What sparks the creative mind? Is it a need to solve a problem? Is it an emotion that needs to be expressed and communicated? Is it both? Can emotion and reason exist without one other?

These were the starting points for this congress. These were also the starting points for this reflection.

In his work *On the Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin (1809-1882) mentions the importance of emotional expression for survival and adaptation. Having been one of the first in a long list of scientists to identify the need for a balance between rational intelligence and emotion for the progress of our development, as human beings, and for the quality of our relations with other beings, contributing to get the best out of our experiences. In this sense, the concept of emotional intelligence emerges.

According to our research, the term “emotional intelligence” first appeared in texts by the American psychologist Hans Kierkegaard Leuner in 1966.¹ However, it was only deepened in 1989, first by the child psychiatrist Stanley Greenspan (1941-2010)² and, later, in 1990, by psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey. (1997). However, it was in 1995, with Goleman’s *Emotional Intelligence*, that the term became known to the general public.

A combination of personality traits influences emotional Intelligence. We can say that Emotional Intelligence is a concept that psychology describes as an individual’s ability to recognize and evaluate her/his own feelings and those of others and the ability to deal with them. From the Japanese philosophical point of view of *ikigai*³ is the competence responsible for much of the success and leadership capacity.

Control over emotions and the ability to master impulses are essential to achieving any creative and/or professional activity in general. In this sense, the neurologist António Damásio wrote in his book, *Descartes’ error: emotion, reason, and the human brain*, that emotions point us in a direction, take us to the appropriate place in the decision-making space where we can make the best use of the instruments of logic. (Damásio, 2013, p. 17)

In this perspective, we can ask the following questions, is it possible to learn to be emotionally intelligent? And can emotional interference influence the creative process?

According to American psychologist Daniel Goleman (1995), concerning the first question, the answer is yes, although it is not simple and is not achieved overnight. Goleman says that there are five essential elements of emotional intelligence to be worked on: Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Self-motivation, Empathy, and social skills.

Self-awareness is related to having a deep understanding of our emotions and the impulses that cause

1. Psychologist Hans Kierkegaard Leuner published in 1966 an article entitled Emotional intelligence and Emancipation edited in the journal *Praxis der Kinderpsychologie und Kinderpsychiatrie* (Matthews et al., 2002).

2. Stanley Greenspan, presented an IE model in 1989.

3. *Ikigai* (in Japanese: 生き甲斐) is a Japanese expression meaning “reason for living”, “pleasure object for living” or “driving force for living”.

them to react positively. In Self-regulation, knowing how to control emotions that generate negativity, anxiety, sadness, anger, etc. It is not a question of repressing them because they have their utility, but of finding the balance so that we are not prisoners of them. Concerning self-motivation, emotionally intelligent people are characterized by using the will and strength necessary to achieve their goals. Optimism is an essential requirement to achieve pre-defined goals. Concerning Empathy, it is essential to have the ability to put oneself in the other person's shoes, understanding his/her feelings and motivations without assuming them as one's own. And finally, Social Skills entail relating to people in the surrounding environment to seek our own benefit and that of others.

When considering that the mind controls and shapes the brain when generating thoughts, it is essential to give singular importance to the thinking process. Thus, the feelings of the emotions are perceptions extracted from the body/mind relationship when emotions are felt. With regard to the body, the feelings do not concern the actions themselves but the images of those same actions. Emotions are understood as actions accompanied by ideas and ways of thinking. Emotional feelings are related to what happens in our body in the course of emotion in parallel with the state of mind during a certain time (Damásio, 2010).

In this sense, the mind has the power to model and recreate the way the brain acts, for better or worse, depending on the type of emotion that arises in the thought.

In recent decades, cognitive science has proven that the brain's development is unlimited, and its development depends on how the mind relates to its thoughts. The brain needs to be stimulated, taught, nourished, and provoked by thoughts. The incredible novelty will be discovering that turning our brain into a super-brain will depend exclusively on how we use our minds.

The human being has always questioned himself about his ability and his need to create. Throughout the evolution of human civilization, expressions of creativity have been a constant in human activity. However, it will not be possible to imagine the birth of the arts without thinking of a human being just struggling with problems raised by feelings. (Damásio, 2017, p. 246)

A recently published article in *Molecular Psychiatry* (Zwir. et al., 2021) identified more than 200 human genes that underlie their capacities for self-awareness, creativity, prosocial behavior, and healthy longevity. These are not found in chimpanzees or Neanderthals, and that may account for the rapid emergence of human creativity and other components of behavioral modernity, including physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual features. This study shows how these capacities are important in our lives; they are characteristics that distinguish us, homo sapiens, from our ancestors and other species

and permit our evolution. The world we live in is shaped by creativity. In our day-to-day, we are faced with unusual problems, apparently insoluble. In order to obtain an answer, it is to creative thinking that we need to resort. (Puccio, 2006).

Creative acts are based on knowledge. Knowledge must, however, be selected in order to allow flexibility and openness to restructuring. Incubation consists of a gestation period resulting from an unconscious or partially conscious process, which requires flexibility and organization. In the enlightenment phase, the “click” or “flash” appears. It is seen as the end of the incubation phase and consists of inspiration, revelation, and understanding, transforming what was unconscious into consciousness. Finally, in the verification, which involves refining or correcting the result/product - an assessment of the idea is made as to its suitability and form of communication. (Wallas, 1926; referenced by Rato, 2009)

Despite the multiple attempts to define the act of creating, there has not yet been agreement on a sufficiently comprehensive and enlightening definition. Only one consensus seems to exist that creativity must be understood as a multidimensional process, and the context in which it occurs must always be considered. (Baia and Nogueira, 2005).

Naturally, other variables affect human performance in daily activity and how people face their challenges. These variables can be associated with external or internal factors. As an example for external factors, we can refer to the characteristics of the environment, such as purely technical conditions (like funds, means, materials), and for internal factors, awareness, motivation, or the emotional state.

Traditionally, artistic creation is more associated with emotion than reason. The image of the artist working just for his delight and giving expression to his emotions in his ivory tower prevails. However, the reality is often different. In the Renaissance, for example, artists such as Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), or Rafael Sanzio (1483-1520) worked for a patron or by commission. Thus, in their artistic creation, reason and emotion had to be balanced, as artistic freedom was conditioned to a program imposed on them. This situation continued and continues to exist.

Reason and emotion are present not only in the creation but also in the enjoyment of artistic works



Figure 1. Abstract Point Effects (Chinese Ink painting on Rice Paper) 2021, painted by Mário S. Ming Kong, Dim: 15 cm × 33 cm (5.9 in x 12.99 in).

When the artist expresses himself, he exposes his work to observation. This work will provoke emotions that may or may not be the object of rational analysis, which in turn may differ from the artist's vision or intention.

Let us exemplify the above with the help of what is considered the first element of plastic expression – the point.

Considered the simplest visual element, the point becomes somewhat abstract when studied in isolation due to its characteristics that can be defined as both immaterial and versatile. It has the particularity of being an element that can represent the beginning or the end, enhancing the imagination and the association of ideas, abstract or not, and being an expression of sensations and emotions. In geometry, the point is considered to have no dimension, a mere mental construction, the place where two lines intersect. However, considering it as a visual element, the point is material (it has intensity, dimension, ...) and can be applied, analyzed, and interpreted under various aspects such as magnitude, visual appearance, possible relation to other points, among many other aspects.

Before proceeding, it is incumbent upon us to mention that it is not our objective here to deepen the theoretical and practical concepts of a point. For this matter, we refer to the plastic artist Wassily Kandinsky (1926), who approached it brilliantly in his work, both literary and plastic.

Returning to the representation of the point. Product of rational human action, in an act of expression of an artist's sensations, feelings and emotions, the point can, in turn, generate various interpretations when observed by others. For some, the point will be a fixed and immobile element. For others, it can be a latent element that, suggesting movement or not, can be associated with new sensations, new feelings and provoke new emotions. In fact, the expression given in the registration of the point can contain, transmit and provoke various tensions, impressions, and impulses. However, the interpretation of this drawing depends on internal factors such as the observer's state of mind, their experiences, their influences and experiences, their motivation; as well as external effects: the environment in which the spot is observed, the noise, the temperature, the presence or absence of other people. Thus, we can say that the simple point can reflect and transmit the most varied expressions of emotion: creativity, fear, anger, joy, strength, fragility, harmony, confusion, simplicity... In other words, even the most elementary element of plastic expression is born from the artist's will, reason, and emotion and may, to those who observe it, transmit sensations and provoke emotions.

2 CONCLUSION

In this understanding, we conclude that a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and

problem solving, emotional intelligence and creativity, and a significant relationship between creativity and problem-solving exists in all human creation, be it scientific, artistic, or humanistic.

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