

Open Your Class With This Tomorrow ***The Happiness Advantage***

Background: Psychologist Dr. Richard Davidson has written about how emotions and emotional style define personality and impact one's overall happiness and relationships with others. Davidson, the founder of the Center for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin has outlined six emotional styles which are discussed in the 2012 book coauthored with Sharon Begley titled, *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*. The six emotional styles, which define personality according to Davidson are resilience, outlook, social intuition, self-awareness, sensitivity to context, and attention. Davidson argues that understanding one's emotional style and how it impacts health and well-being is the first step toward deciding if you want to make changes. Davidson stresses that there is no correct or best emotional style for everyone. An individual who is low in social intuition may find greater career success and personal happiness in some fields more than others. Even having a negative outlook can be beneficial as it may lead an individual to work harder. Davidson does however stress that if you want to change your emotional style that it is possible and provides a variety of specific tactics. Changing your emotional style is possible because although much of your emotional style make up is inherited, environmental factors have an impact. According to Professor Davidson, "We have the power," to live our lives and train our brains in ways that will shift where we fall on each of the six dimensions of emotional style."

Directions: Direct students to the website link below to have them take the short online test to identify their emotional style. The students will receive a score on a scale of 0-7 for each of the emotional styles and a short explanation about what the score means. Student should complete the summary page (on the next page) provided to determine which categories they have identified as strengths.

<http://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/whats-your-emotional-style>

Name: _____

Emotional Styles Scores

Directions: Go to <http://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/whats-your-emotional-style> and click on the icon that says "Take the Emotional Styles Questionnaire and Receive Well-Being Tips. This 5 minute exercise will provide you with a score for each of the emotional styles on a scale of 1-7 as well as provide you with a short description of your personal results. For each of the emotional styles indicate your personal results.

Resilience

Resilience refers to the speed with which people recover from adversity. Resilience is determined by signals between the prefrontal cortex and the amygdala. If you score high on Resilience, you can shake off setbacks and bounce back from challenges relatively easily. If you have a high score on this dimension you may be less responsive to cues that provide negative feedback. Middle scorers on this dimension exhibit a pattern between the high and low scores. They show some persistence of negative emotion following adversity and recover at a moderate pace. If you score low on Resilience, you are slow to recover from adversity, oftentimes crippled by it. Low scorers on this dimension show persistence of negative emotions following adversity and a heightened sensitivity to negative feedback.

Score: _____ / 7

Outlook

Outlook refers to the capacity to sustain positive emotion over time or how long positive emotion persists following a joyful event. Outlook is determined by the levels of activity in the ventral striatum (a part of the brain linked to the reward system). If you score high on Outlook, you are generally upbeat and good at seeing the silver lining in every cloud. If you score low on Outlook, even if you experience joy, your joys melt fast and you tend toward gloominess and pessimism.

Score: _____ / 7

Social Intuition

Social intuition refers to how attuned people are to nonverbal social cues. This attunement is central to both empathy and compassion. Social intuition is shaped by the interplay between the amygdala and fusiform regions. If you score high on Social Intuition, you are acutely sensitive to the emotional states of others. If you score low on Social Intuition, you might have a difficult time reading others' emotions. Women on average score higher than men on this dimension.

Score: _____ / 7

Self-Awareness

Self-Awareness refers to the ability to perceive one's own bodily signals and as signals that constitute emotion. Self-awareness is determined by the ability of the insula to interpret signals from the body and organs. If you score high in Self-Awareness, you are acutely conscious of your thoughts and feelings and attuned to the messages that your body sends you. If you score low on Self-Awareness, you are less sensitive to your internal signals and might experience confusion about the nature of your emotions.

Score: _____ / 7

Books For Psychology Class

<http://booksforpsychologyclass.weebly.com/>

Sensitivity to Context

Sensitivity to Context refers to the degree with which people's emotional and behavioral responses take into account their current social situation. Sensitivity to Context is driven by activity levels in the hippocampus. If you score high on Sensitivity to Context, you know how to modify your responses to the implicit rules and expectations that govern different social situations. If you score low on Sensitivity to Context, you are insufficiently sensitive to the surrounding context at times and your behavior can be judged as inappropriate by others. Women on average score higher than men on this dimension.

Score: _____ / 7

Attention

Attention refers to the ability to screen out distractions and stay focused. Attention is regulated by the prefrontal cortex. If you score high in Attention, your focus is sharp and clear. In contrast, if you score low, your attention tends to get easily captured by the most attention-grabbing stimuli in the environment and overall you feel like you have little control over where your attention goes.

Score: _____ / 7

What were your top two emotional styles and explain how these strengths could help you in a situation you have or may encounter in your life?

1.

2.

Sources

Davidson, R. What's Your Emotional Style? - Center for Healthy Minds. Retrieved January 5, 2016, from <http://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/whats-your-emotional-style>