



Fostering Emotional Intelligence Skills In Adolescents: A Critical Need For Holistic Development

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Abstract

The emotions play a major role in our life. It is our responsibility to take care of our emotions so that they can take care of us. Emotions can make us richer, in knowing, educating and developing of intelligence. Emotional. Emotional intelligence is the capacity and the ability for recognising our own feelings and of others, for motivating and managing our own emotions, empathize with others, and maintain our relationships. Adolescence is a developmental stage and is a crucial phase of emotional growth, marked by fast physical, social, and psychological changes and emotional period, identity exploration. The emotional intelligence allow us to think more creatively and make effective use of our emotions to tackle with challenges of daily life. Emotional Intelligence skill calls for a serious attention in managing the adolescent's life and for their academic performance and for positive social interaction for a balanced life.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, Adolescents, Academic performance

Background and Rationale

Effective interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in developing emotional intelligence skills during adolescence, a critical period when young people are forming their identity and learning to navigate complex social relationships. In this modern world education of adolescents is fast growing and technology changes daily and there is a huge competition among the students to excel. Adolescence is the phase of life between childhood and adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. It is a unique stage of human development and an important time for laying the foundations of good health. The world Health Organisation defines adolescents as a vulnerable period between ages 10–19 years. Adolescents experience rapid physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth. This affects how they feel, think, make decisions, and interact with the world around

them. This will affect their academic performance as well . Emotional Intelligence, defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), comprises the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively. Emotionally Intelligent adolescent is skilled in four areas namely:

1. Identifying emotions
2. Using emotions
3. Understanding emotions
4. Regulating emotions

Emotional Intelligence skill is highly important in an adolescent's development and the stakeholders policy makers, nurses and teachers have the responsibility to provide training for the adolescents as they are always amidst problems and issues they are not able to manage .Studies reveal that adolescents with high EI exhibit better emotional self-regulation, interpersonal skills, and academic outcomes. Conversely, low EI is linked to increased risk of anxiety, depression, and behavioural problems .

Objectives

1. To understand the components of Emotional Intelligence and its need for adolescents.
2. To appreciate the values and significance of Emotional Intelligence skill training in maintain adolescent healthy development.

Main domains of Emotional Intelligence for Adolescents

1. **Emotional Self-awareness:** Ability to recognise one's own emotions, and acknowledging the strengths and weakness of our own.
2. **Emotional Self-regulation:** Self-regulation is all about communicating one's emotions appropriately in context.
3. **Motivation:** Harnessing emotions to pursue goals.
4. **Empathy:** the capability to comprehend how other people are feeling, is crucial to perfecting emotional intelligence.
5. **Social Skills:** The ability to interact well with others is another vital aspect of emotional intelligence. Solid social skills allow people to build meaningful relationships with others and develop a more robust understanding of themselves and others.

Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Adolescence

Adolescents with strong EI are better at:

- Managing stress and anxiety
- Resolving conflicts peacefully
- Engaging in prosocial behaviour
- Achieving academic goals
- Preventing risky behaviours (e.g., substance abuse, aggression)

Studies show that EI positively correlates with self-esteem, social competence, and school performance. It also predicts future workplace adaptability and leadership potential.

Implementation of EI Skill Training

Implementation of EI Skill Training: It includes structured training programme implemented through preparing module through school curriculum and life skill training programme through school health programme and other health programmes.

Some tips on improving one's self-awareness:

- Ask for constructive feedback from a person who can help you.
- Keep a journal for labelling of one's thoughts and feelings.
- Do mindfulness meditation.
- Be on watch and pay careful attention to one's thoughts and emotions.
- Find out the passion of each person carry out actions that makes you happy .
- Try to learn new skills and set goals for oneself.
- Reflect back of the daily activities and be grateful to the persons contribution for your happiness .
- Practice positive self-talk daily.
- Have a habit of building a growing mindset.

Some tips on improving one's self-regulation:

- Watch for challenges as opportunities.
- Become aware of thoughts and feelings.
- Practice skills to build up tolerance.
- Accept the real emotions passing by each event
- Practice ways to manage difficult emotions.
- Have an free zone for communication.
- Understand that one has a choice to respond to emotions.

Some tips on improving social empathy:

- Have a circle of good friends willing to share emotions.
- Have an open mind to listen to other people.
- Practice deep breathing exercise in meditation .
- Build up a collaboration for a community project.
- Use opportunities to meet and talk to new people.
- Put yourself in someone else's shoes.

Some tips on improving social skills:

- Have open-ended questions.
- Provide icebreaking sessions that will help start conversations.
- Always try to Practice good eye contact.
- Active listening can be practiced with the team members.
- Celebrate small and big success of the team members
- Greet all and interact with everyone and build up personal interest.
- Observe the one's body language and that of others.

Emotional Burn out

Emotional burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged exposure to emotionally demanding situations. Unlike simple fatigue, burnout represents a deeper depletion of emotional resources that can significantly impact one's ability to function effectively in personal and professional contexts.

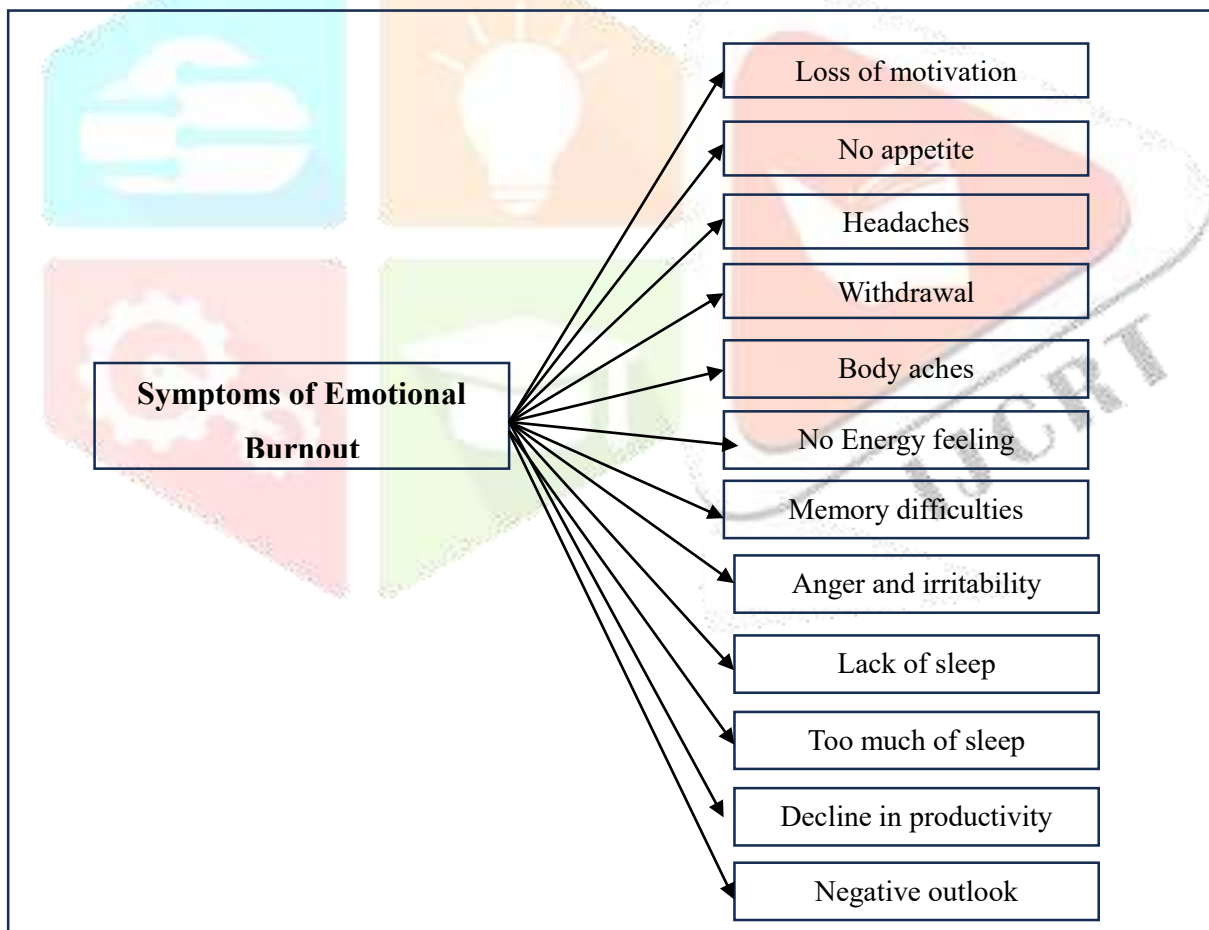


Figure 1: Shows Symptoms of Burn out

Managing Difficult Emotions

Each emotion has something to tell us. The experiences we gain throughout our life has one or other emotion attached to the event or situation it may be pleasant or unpleasant experiences. We learn and build up coping strategies around these experiences which we associate with one or more emotions. Every emotion has a message to give. For example, anger and anxiety tell us that we need to change something, fear tells to be alert and watch on safety level. Unchecked optimism can lead to unrealistic expectation that can lead us to disappointment, anger, annoyance irritation and sadness. so it is not that the emotion that is negative or positive but our perception, coping and actions.



Why do we experience difficult emotions :

1. Past negative experiences
2. Unresolved negative experiences
3. Ignoring emotions
4. Not acknowledging emotions
5. Constant triggers and stressful situations

Steps for expressing anger :

1. Stop and breathe -refrain from making any move to blame or punish the other person
2. Identify the thoughts and feelings or actions that make other person angry
3. Stay conscious of the violent thoughts that arise in our minds
4. Identify the unmet need of the person and yours
5. Offer empathy and try to listen
6. Take your time for the action

The Foundation of Emotional Intelligence Through Communication

Interpersonal communication serves as the primary vehicle for adolescents to develop the core components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. When adults and peers communicate effectively with teenagers, they create opportunities for emotional learning and growth.

Active Listening and Validation Effective communication begins with genuinely listening to adolescents without immediately judging or offering solutions. This approach helps teenagers feel heard and understood, which encourages them to explore and articulate their emotions more clearly. When adults reflect back what they hear and validate the adolescent's emotional experience, it teaches young people that their feelings matter and are worth examining.

Modeling Emotional Vocabulary Adults who communicate with rich emotional language help adolescents expand their ability to identify and express feelings. Instead of accepting "fine" or "whatever" as complete emotional expressions, effective communicators gently probe with questions like "Can you help me understand what frustrated means to you in this situation?" This builds emotional granularity—the ability to distinguish between subtle emotional states.

Building Self-Awareness Through Dialogue

Reflective Questioning Skilled communicators use open-ended questions that prompt self-reflection. Questions like "What do you think triggered that feeling?" or "How did your body react when that happened?" help adolescents develop the internal awareness that forms the foundation of emotional intelligence.

Non-Judgmental Feedback When adolescents share their thoughts and feelings, responding with curiosity rather than criticism creates a safe space for emotional exploration. This approach encourages continued self-disclosure and deeper self-understanding.

Developing Empathy Through Communication

Perspective-Taking Conversations Effective communicators regularly engage adolescents in discussions about others' experiences and viewpoints. Asking questions like "How do you think your friend felt when that happened?" or sharing different perspectives on situations helps develop empathetic thinking.

Emotional Storytelling Sharing appropriate personal experiences and discussing characters in books, movies, or current events provides rich material for exploring emotional complexity and building empathetic understanding.

Practical Communication Strategies

Creating Emotional Safety Adolescents need to feel psychologically safe to explore and express emotions. This means avoiding shame, blame, or dismissal when they share vulnerable feelings. Consistent, calm responses to emotional expressions build trust and encourage continued emotional openness.

Teaching Emotional Regulation Through Modeling When adults demonstrate how to manage their own emotions during difficult conversations—taking deep breaths, pausing before responding, or acknowledging their own feelings—they provide real-time lessons in emotional regulation.

Collaborative Problem-Solving Rather than immediately solving problems for adolescents, effective communicators guide them through the process of understanding their emotions, considering options, and making decisions. This builds both emotional awareness and practical emotional regulation skills.

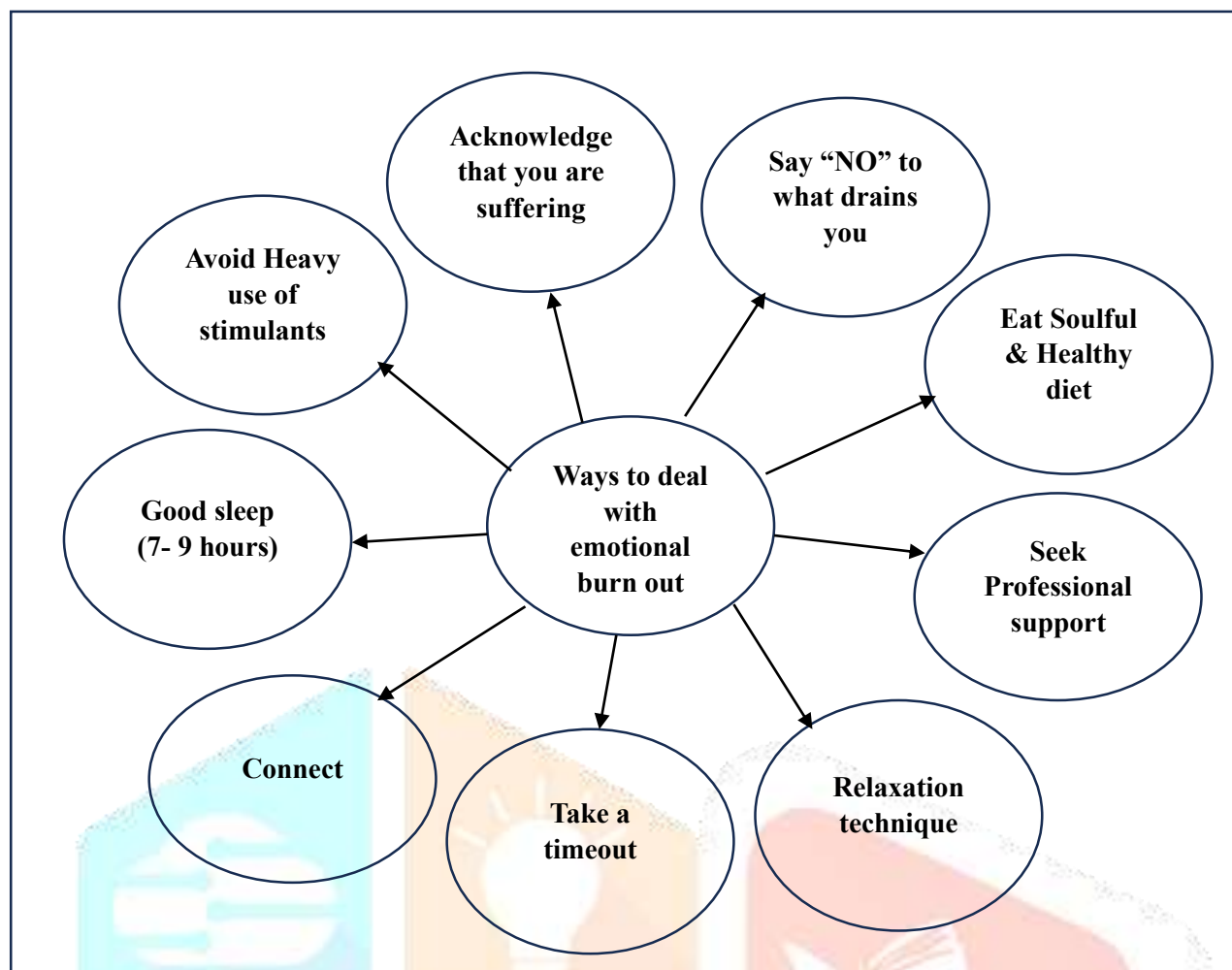


Figure 1: Ways to deal with emotional Burn out

The Ripple Effect

When adolescents experience effective interpersonal communication, they internalize these patterns and begin applying them in their own relationships. They learn to listen empathetically, express emotions clearly, and navigate conflicts constructively. These skills become the foundation for healthy relationships throughout their lives.

The investment in communicating effectively with adolescents pays dividends not only in their immediate emotional development but also in their long-term capacity for emotional intelligence, relationship satisfaction, and overall mental health. By treating every interaction as an opportunity for emotional learning, we help young people develop the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly complex social world.

Components of Effective Interpersonal communication

- Appropriate message
- Active listening
- Open body language
- Empathy

- Problem solving skill

Methods to handle and develop emotional intelligence skill

Parenting and Home Environment:

1. **Model emotional intelligence:** Parents can encourage healthy emotional expression and regulation in daily interaction in Home environment.
2. **Encourage open communication: Parents and family members can** Create a safe space for adolescents to express their emotions and expectations freely.
3. **Teach emotional labelling and validation:** Help the adolescents identify and validate their emotions in daily events .
4. **Extracurricular Activities**
 - **Team sports and group projects:** Allow and motivate them to collaborate, communicate and to build up team work.
 - **Creative expression:** Adolescents are skilled with variety of talents so engage adolescents in creative activities like art, music, or writing to express their emotions.
 - **Volunteer work:** Opportunities to Participate in community service to develop empathy and social responsibility can be encouraged .

Digital Resources

1. **EI-focused apps and games:** Adolescents can utilize digital tools to teach Emotional Intelligence skills to peer groups in their interactive sessions .
2. **Online resources and workshops:** Adolescents can have access to online resources, workshops, or webinars on Emotional Intelligence skill development.

Challenges and Issues

- Awareness on emotional intelligence skill is lacking among the school personnel in schools.
- Lack of flexibility from traditional educational system to creative methods.
- There are various cultural influences which can vary in emotional expressions.

Conclusion

Investing in EI skill training during adolescence is critical for nurturing emotionally resilient, socially responsible, and academically competent individuals. The integration of EI education within the school system can bridge the emotional learning gap and prepare students for life beyond academics.

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