"Can you detail one theory related to emotions and how they can best be controlled?"

In the Emotional Intelligence Theory, Daniel Goleman posits that IQ is a poor indicator of an individual’s ability to perform in a business environment, and that instead his five characteristics enveloped in the EQ theory, often referred to in business circles as “soft skills” are a better indicator.  These five characteristics are Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills. (Goleman, 2008)

            The primary failing of Goleman’s theory seems to be its inability as yet to quantify measurements and therefore withstand empirical testing.  In the meantime, it has the appeal of common sense, and encourages businesses to look past the worn concept of IQ as a determinant of hire or advancement decisions.  (DuBrin, 2013)

            The up-shot is that the characteristics listed by Goleman are perfect fodder for the self-improvement industry.  They are skill sets that can be; with varying methods and efficacy; explored, exercised, and improved – at least on an individual-by-individual level.

            Self-Awareness can be explored in a number of ways.  These include writing the navel-gazing id-centric autobiographical history with emphasis on motivations and goals – “How did I get here?”; and the egoist invitation of 360-degree input from peers, subordinates, and supervisors. Knowing one’s self increases the ability to react to a historical embedded emotional stimulus or pro-act according to vision, values, and goals. (Goleman, 2008)

            Self-Regulation is an experiential issue, and is related to decision-making, especially in conflict or crisis management.  The decision may be fraught with emotion, the weight of potential outcomes, and the charge of the moment.  Knowing that everything will work out alright allows the decision-maker to remain calm and level-headed during the crisis, and apply all faculties of reason and wisdom to the problem.  Improving this trait can be done by recounting small decisions, and exercising decision-making in academic or extra-curricular settings, such as coaching Little League or acting in a play, or by intensive means such as attending a boot-camp training session.

            Motivation may or may not be trainable, but achieving goals can be exercised and practiced, and once knowing that a thing has been done it is a smaller leap to see that it can be done again.  Knowing a thing is doable being necessary for most pragmatists being motivated to do it, this understanding of history can improve motivation.  Reinforcing this praxeological aspect, and emphasizing innovation, values, and goals, can also improve some individuals’ motivation to exceed precedence and achieve new goals.  “This has been done, and we’re going to do one better!  CHARGE!”

            Empathy is simply the ability to see things from the perspective of others.  This can be exercised by traveling, studying other cultures, and socially interacting outside one’s normal sphere of relationships.

            Social Skills relate to the ability to get along with, receive and benefit by information from, and influence others.  These can be improved by a variety of means, most readily by simply visiting and interrelating with others.  Learning and improving hygiene, dressing the part for a given situation or environment, studying and learning to apply lingua-franca colloquialisms or trade and technical terms, and training listening skills are methods to improve social skills.

            I tend to agree with Goleman that EQ is a better description of an individual’s potential for success in most business roles than IQ.  IQ may be more relevant to engineering or math, for instance (roles that are routinely more highly rewarded with greater pay and benefits), but EQ appears a better assessment regarding the interpersonal workings of business.  This issue was engagingly presented, if not denominated as such, in the case of John Forbes Nash, Jr. by Silvia Nasar in her book, “A Beautiful Mind.” (Nasar, 1998)

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