



From Now On with Passion: A Guide to Emotional Intelligence

Christine Mockler Casper

Cypress House (June 2001)

Unknown \$17.95 (253pp)

978-1-879384-41-5

In a recent study, the L'Oreal company found that salespeople selected on the basis of emotional competence sold \$91,370 more per year than other salespeople did. That's just one of the facts the author uses to convince readers of the need to recognize, manage, and integrate their feelings-their passion-into all aspects of daily life. As president of her own consulting firm specializing in communications, Casper serves up a beginner's guide to emotional intelligence, which she defines as "an intuitive or sensitive response to feelings, one's own as well as others." Because she sees feelings as just as important as reasoning, she uses her own appreciable motivational skills to sell the benefits of emotional awareness while providing well-structured exercises for reaching that state.

Readers will appreciate not having to trudge through the bog of theory, learning instead by means of animated examples and bulleted lists. For instance, Casper asks readers to identify the emotions behind any aches and pains they have and "own" those feelings, bad as well as good. "We cannot control emotions," she writes, "only the way we respond to them." She illustrates with a story of how two families respond to similar emotions in different ways, one using confrontation to deal with anger; the other, honesty and problem solving.

The strength of the book is also its weakness: its straightforwardness often translates into shortcuts. When the author doesn't have the abutments of exercises or self-assessment tests to lean upon, she sells the benefits of "EI" with short, abstract imperative statements that too often smack of bumper-sticker philosophy, such as, "Allow yourself to be filled with love for all mankind."

Fortunately, the many practical applications more than ground any airiness in a book sure to be useful to both lovers and lawyers. Opened to almost any page, the book offers rules for any communication situation, whether asking participants to think about the feelings behind statements, or to remember the importance of validating others' feelings, which in turn provides intrinsic rewards. The sections aimed at managers and leaders are especially noteworthy.

Casper's book shows that to live authentically and purposefully, we must "bring the heart as well as the mind to the decision-making process," since, as the old saying goes, nothing great has been accomplished without passion. (September / October 2001)

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