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wisdom[®]360



Discovering Relational Wisdom[®]2.0

Three-Dimensional Emotional Intelligence™

Building better relationships by taking every thought,
emotion, word and action captive to Christ

About the Course Designer

Ken Sande is the founder of Peacemaker Ministries and Relational Wisdom 360. Trained as an engineer, lawyer, and mediator, Ken has conciliated hundreds of family, business, church and legal conflicts.

As president of RW360, he now focuses on teaching people how to “get upstream of conflict” by building strong relationships in the family, church and workplace. He teaches internationally and is the author of numerous books, articles, and training resources, including *The Peacemaker*, which has been translated into seventeen languages. He is a Certified Relational Wisdom Instructor and Conciliator, Emotional Intelligence Certified Instructor (through TalentSmart), and has served as a church elder and as an Editorial Advisor for Christianity Today.

He and his wife, Corlette, have two adult children and a growing number of grandchildren, and love to hike and ski in the mountains near their home in Billings, Montana.



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Discovering Relational Wisdom[®] 2.0

This Study Guide Belongs To

Three-Dimensional Emotional Intelligence[™]

Building better relationships by taking every thought,
emotion, word and action captive to Christ

Introduction

Welcome to Discovering Relational Wisdom® 2.0!

This course is designed to teach you how to improve your ability to develop authentic, enjoyable, productive and lasting relationships. We will also study ways to resolve conflict and restore broken relationships. The principles you will learn have the potential to impact every area of your life, including your worship, marital intimacy, parenting and friendships, as well as your workplace performance and career advancement.

I say “potential to impact” because there are no quick and easy shortcuts to developing better relationships. We've all developed attitudes and habits that undermine our relationships, and it takes a lot of determination and effort to change some of the ways we view and engage others. The good news is that we can change! This process will go more smoothly if we are willing to admit where we've gotten it wrong in

the past, if we decide to learn and practice new relational skills, and if we are open to accepting advice and assistance from those who love us and want to help us grow.

My motivation for developing this seminar is my belief that every person on the face of the earth has been made in the image of God, and since God is highly relational, we are designed and called to be highly relational as well. That both excites and challenges me!

Your motive for exploring these concepts may be different from mine. That's okay—we're all on a journey of learning and growing. Whatever your motive is, I hope that what you learn in this seminar will enable you to better understand yourself and those around you and to enjoy deeper, more fulfilling relationships in every area of your life.

Ken Sande

Scripture, Movies & Feedback

The principles in this seminar are supported by over three hundred Scripture citations, which are compiled in a 40-page document (rw360.org/RW-Scriptures) that students are encouraged to download and study to verify the biblical integrity of this course (see Acts 17:11). The movie clips shown in this seminar are used under a license with WingClips (wingclips.com) and are discussed in detail on our website (rw360.org/movie-clips).

We would welcome your evaluation of this seminar and the individual who teaches it to you. Please visit rw360.org/survey and give us the benefit of your experience, comments and suggestions on how we can improve the delivery of this material.

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LESSON 1

God Created us For Relationship

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... and love your neighbor as yourself."
Matthew 22:37-39

What is relational wisdom?

In essence, relational wisdom (RW) is the ability to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself... better yet, as Jesus has loved you.
Matt. 22:37-39 | John 13:34-35



Living out the two great commandments.

In modern terms, relational wisdom is your ability to discern emotions, interests, and abilities in yourself and others, to interpret them in the light of God's Word, and to use these insights to manage your responses and relationships constructively.

Why is relational wisdom worth pursuing?

Because life is all about relationship.
Gen. 2:18 | 1 Cor. 1:9 | John 3:16; 4:1-42; 13:34-35; 17:20-23

Because relationships are precious gifts that God entrusts to us with the expectation that we will see them as opportunities to show his love and multiply the number of people who will enjoy him forever.
Matt. 25:14-30



**Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.
- Matt. 25:21**



Here's a simple example of relational wisdom

Relational wisdom is so simple a child can learn it, yet so intricate and robust you can spend the rest of your life enhancing it. To start this learning process, we'll show you four simple acrostics you can easily memorize and practice in daily life. The first of them is:

To be relationally wise in all situations ...

Practice the SOG Plan™

- S Self-Aware:** How am I feeling and acting?
- O Other-Aware:** How are others feeling? How am I affecting them?
- G God-Aware:** Where is God leading me?

What are the benefits of developing relational wisdom?

Stronger relationships

- Experience, love and enjoy God more fully.
Jer. 29:13 | Matt. 22:37 | John 8:29; 14:21, 23
- Less conflict and more enjoyable, productive and enduring human relationships.
Ruth 1:16-18 | 1 Sam. 20:17 | Prov. 18:24



Get Wisdom...
prize her highly,
and she will exalt
you. - Prov. 4:7-8

Valued influence

- Your example and advice will be more credible and welcomed by others.
Prov. 3:35 | 16:23
- Improved relational skills enhance personal and team performance at work, at church and in other group activities.

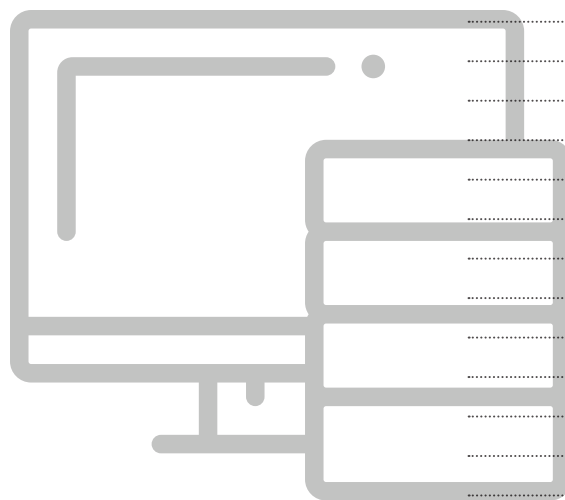
Compelling witness

- Noticeable changes in your character and relationships reveal God's transforming power in your life.
2 Cor. 5:17-20
- Love and unity among believers show that we are Jesus' disciples and prove that God loves us and sent his Son to save us.
John 13:34-35; 17:20-23

Think of RW as a "relational operating system" for life

Just as Windows and Mac OS control every program on your computer, RW impacts every aspect of life, not only improving workplace performance and advancement but also enhancing worship, marriage and church unity.

This seminar is specifically designed to help you upgrade your "relational operating system!"



LESSON 2

Soft Skills Surpass Hard Skills

"He who loves purity of heart, and whose speech is gracious, will have the king as his friend."
Proverbs 22:11

When people are working together, relationship usually surpasses expertise

When we are working with others, whether in an office or warehouse, on a church committee or nonprofit board, or as a mission team in the field, relationship usually surpasses expertise.



Soft skills can either **magnify** or **diminish** the value of our hard skills, as well as those of the people around us.



Soft skills increase “social capital” in both work and ministry settings

Soft skills bring out the best in people and produce bonds of loyalty, trust and mutual support (aka “social capital”), which yields countless benefits, including improved team creativity and cohesiveness, better balance between work and family life, less conflict, reduced staff and volunteer turnover, higher member and customer satisfaction, and increased productivity, growth and impact.



It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was a time of wisdom, it was a time of foolishness.
- Charles Dickens
A Tale of Two Cities

According to Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves, authors of the best-selling book, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*:

- Relational skills are the single biggest predictor of performance in the workplace and the strongest driver of leadership and personal excellence.
- Ninety percent of top performers are high in relational skills.
- People with high relational skills usually earn substantially more money than people with low relational skills.¹

See rw360.org/workplace for over 100 articles on the value of relational skills in business, healthcare, education, ministry, sports and military settings.

¹ Emotional Intelligence 2.0. (San Diego: Talent Smart, 2009), pp. 19-22

Can people improve their relational wisdom?

Yes! Unlike your IQ (intelligence quotient), which does not change noticeably after the teen years, your relational wisdom can improve significantly if you are willing to work at it.



We all are being transformed... This comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. - 2 Cor. 3:18

Psychologists who study relational skills attribute our ability to change to the "plasticity" of our minds. Christians attribute it to a transformational process called justification and sanctification. *2 Thess. 2:13*

In fact, God commands and empowers us to grow in relational wisdom as he sanctifies and transforms us into the likeness of Christ. *Rom. 12:2 | 2 Cor. 3:18 | Eph. 4:22-24 | James 1:5 | 2 Pet. 1:3-7*

Don't give in to guilt or regret

As you study relational wisdom, you may think, "Oh, I wish I'd learned these concepts years ago!" Don't let guilt or regret for past deficiencies discourage you.



Because of Jesus, it is never too late to start doing what is right!

Instead, remember that Jesus makes all things new (*2 Cor. 5:17*) and that God delights to bring beauty out of ashes (*Isa. 61:3*). Then follow the Apostle Paul's example by "forgetting what lies behind" and "pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." *Phil. 3:13-14*

LESSON 3

Emotions Were Designed By God

"Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!"

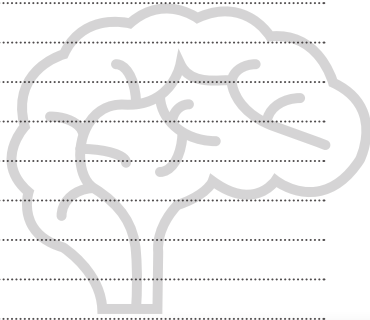
Psalms 32:11

Emotions move our relationships, both positively and negatively

Emotions influence most of what goes on in this world. Whether it's the romantic attraction that draws a couple together, the sacrificial love of a parent for a child, the desire to build a successful ministry or business, the bitterness that corrodes a friendship, or the anger that fragments a family or church—emotions play a powerful role in every aspect of life.

And yet most of us know far too little about the source and dynamics of our emotions. Let's begin to deepen our understanding by taking a quick look at eight basic facts about emotions.

1 Emotions are built into all people in all cultures by God's design. They are hardwired into our brains and bodies through the neurological and hormonal systems that he designed at creation and weaves into every baby as he forms it in the womb (*Gen. 1:26-27 | Ps. 139:13-14*). Thus the human vocabulary—and the Bible—are filled with emotional terms.



Core Emotions

	Sadness	Shame	Fear	Enjoyment	Love	Surprise	Disgust	Anger
High	Despair Depression Grief Loneliness	Guilty Sorrowful Worthless Disgraced	Terrified Dreading Fearful Afraid	Ecstatic Overjoyed Excited Thrilled	Worship Adoration Infatuation Loyalty	Shocked Stunned Alarmed Astonished	Revulsion Despising Detesting Loathing	Fury Hostility Hatred Animosity
Medium	Hurt Hopelessness Sorrow Self-pity	Dishonored Humiliated Remorseful Unworthy	Frightened Anxious Insecure Intimidated	Delighted Passionate Cheerful Happy	Attraction Respect Compassion Fondness	Perplexed Bewildered Disoriented Confused	Contempt Scorn Aversion Rejection	Bitterness Exasperation Antipathy Resentment
Low	Distress Unhappiness Gloom Disappointment	Embarrassed Bashful Regretful Uncomfortable	Nervous Worried Uneasy Concerned	Satisfied Glad Contented Pleased	Friendliness Kindness Liking Acceptance	Wondering Unsettled Puzzled Bemused	Disrespect Disapproval Dislike Distaste	Mad Frustration Annoyance Irritation
	Spirit of Fear			Spirit of Power, Love, and Self-Control		Spirit of Anger		
	<i>"God gave us a spirit not of fear... (2 Tim. 1:7a)</i>			<i>... but of power and love and self-control." (1:7b)</i>		<i>"Be not quick in your spirit to become angry for anger lodges in the bosom of fools" (Ecc. 7:9)</i>		

2 Emotions are physiological experiences that involve measurable neural, muscular, respiratory, hormonal and cardiovascular changes that impact our thoughts and **move us to action**, both positively and negatively (*Exod. 32:19 | 2 Sam. 18:33 | Mark 1:40-42*). In fact, the word "emotion" comes from a Latin word that means "to move."



Emotions are designed to **move** us to action.

3 Emotions provide some of our greatest pleasures in life, such as love, joy, delight, acceptance, compassion, belonging and peace, to name just a few. These emotions are found in both saved and unsaved people, and drive some of our most noble and constructive behaviors. *Exod. 2:5-6 | Dan. 1:9*

4 Emotions are also tied to our greatest struggles and agonies in life, which often involve negative feelings such as sadness, embarrassment, anger, bitterness, jealousy, self-pity and regret. *Gen. 37:11 | Matt. 27:3-5*

5 Emotions are not inherently sinful. Jesus felt a wide range of emotions, including love, compassion, joy, pity, anger, sorrow and agony (*John 11:5 | Matt. 14:14 | Heb. 12:2 | Mark 1:41 | Mark 3:5; 14:34 | Luke 22:44*). Yet he never sinned (*1 Pet. 2:22*). His emotions never surprised or overwhelmed him or moved him to act contrary to his Father's will. *John 8:29*

6 Human emotions are often twisted by sin. Because of the fall, sin has corrupted our whole being, including our thoughts, emotions and will (sometimes called the "noetic effects of sin"). Therefore, like a computer with a defective motherboard, we are unable to consistently understand and control the emotions that are triggered by people and events in our lives (*Gen. 3:6-13 | Jer. 17:9 | Eph. 4:22*). Therefore, while positive emotions usually move us to do good things, negative emotions often move us to sin against God and one another. *Gen. 37:11 | 2 Sam. 11:2-4 | Ps. 73:21-22*



When my soul was embittered...
I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.
- Psalm 73:21-22

7 Through the gospel, God has redeemed us from the curse of sin, made us new creations (which impacts our thoughts, emotions and will) and is now pouring his grace into us, giving us the ability to understand our emotions and progressively bring them under the Lordship of Christ.

Ezek. 36:25-27 | 2 Cor. 5:17 | Titus 2:14 | Rom. 12:2 | 2 Cor. 3:17-18

8 The key step in redeeming our emotions is to bring them to God in humility, faith and prayer, examine them in the light of God's truth, and ask him for the grace, wisdom and strength we need to harness the power of our emotions so that their ultimate impact is to move us to love the Lord with all our heart and to love our neighbor as ourselves. *Ps. 51:6 | 1 Pet. 1:22 | 2 Cor. 10:5 | 2 Pet. 1:3-8¹*



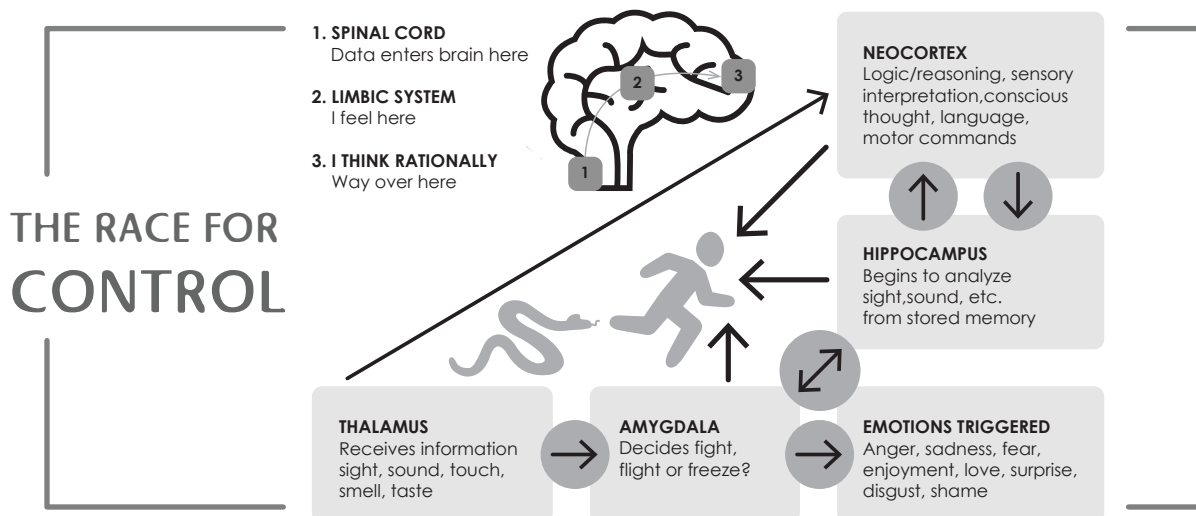
¹ For more information on the theology of emotions see rw360.org/Emotion-in-Christian-Anthropology: Feelings and Faith: Cultivating Godly Emotions in the Christian Life, Brian Borgman (Crossway, 2009)

LESSON 4

Emotions Can Hijack Our Brains and Bodies

"[Peter] denied [Jesus], saying, "Woman, I do not know him." Luke 22:57

In high stress situations, our emotions can overwhelm rational thinking



Man's fall into sin has corrupted our brain's ability to work as perfectly as God designed it to do (AKA "the noetic effect of sin"). Data enters the brain through the thalamus, which sends impulses to other parts of the brain. Impulses arrive at the limbic system (amygdala) a few nanoseconds before they get to the neocortex, which allows your emotions to take control before you are able to rationally process the information (rw360.org/hijacking).

Hijacking = Strong emotions that trigger an impulsive reaction that is quickly regretted

The downward spiral of emotional hijacking, flooding, and relational failure¹

Definitions

- **Hijacking** occurs when our emotions (in the amygdala) overpower rational thinking (in the neocortex).
- **Flooding** is the sense of feeling repeatedly swamped by our own or others' emotions.



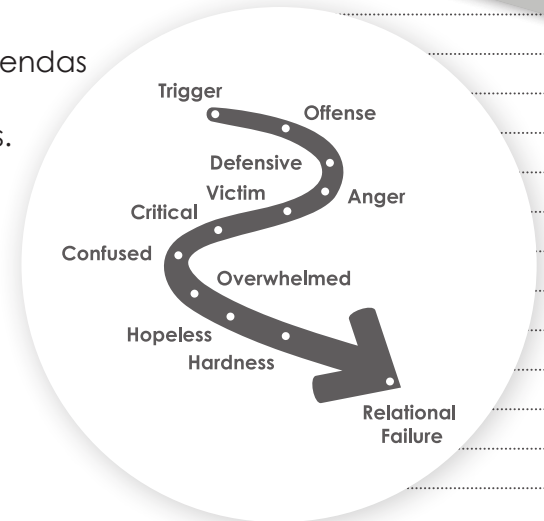
Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. - Gen 4:8

So David took Bathsheba... and lay with her. - 2 Sam. 11:4

Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy [Rhoda] did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate. - Acts 12:14

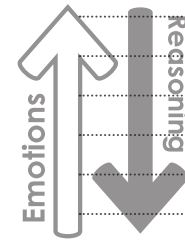
Triggers and Downward Spiral

- Triggers: poor communication, misunderstanding, conflicting agendas
- Defensive reaction to criticism (sarcasm, anger, silence, flight)
- We begin to see ourselves as innocent or unappreciated victims.
- We develop a critical spirit, assuming the worst about everything others do.
- We grab evidence that supports our view and ignore evidence that doesn't.
- This puts the other person into a no-win (lose/lose) situation.
- We experience prolonged physical distress (pulse, adrenaline, respiration).



If Intense Emotions Continue

- We feel increasingly confused, frustrated and out-of-control.
- As emotions intensify, our limbic system pulls oxygen away from our neocortex so we have less capacity for rational thinking.
- It becomes increasingly difficult to recover from feeling hurt or angry.
- We lose hope for a positive resolution.
- We develop a hard, uncaring heart, partly as protection and partly as punishment.
- We avoid the other person, spending more and more time apart.
- We eventually give up on our friendships, relatives, churches, jobs or marriages.



Common Tendencies of Men and Women (sometimes reversed)

- Men tend to avoid conflict, often because they are afraid of emotional flooding.
- Women generally want to engage: "We need to talk".
- Fear of flooding often compels men to "stonewall" (withdraw into silence or leave).
- The more a woman presses to discuss, the more most men will pull away. *Prov. 21:9*
- This results in further frustration and flooding in the woman, which prolongs the spiral.

The Three-Fold Pattern of Emotional and Relational Failure

- Failure to understand and faithfully obey God's instructions
- Failure to understand and consistently control the emotions and interests that are driving us
- Failure to understand and wisely engage the emotions and interests of others

Are you tired of being controlled by an invisible puppeteer?

- If you fail to develop the ability to understand and master your emotions, they will act like an "invisible puppeteer," jerking you around, provoking impulsive words and actions, and damaging your relationships.

There is hope:

As you grow in relational wisdom, you can learn to anticipate, prevent, and reverse this spiral, and become skilled at building healthy relationships.



LESSON 5

You Are Designed to Relate to God, Self and Others

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... and love your neighbor as yourself."
 Matthew 22:37-39

Relational wisdom is a theology for life

The Bible provides a highly effective way to deal with relationships and the emotions that fuel them. These truths may be organized into a discipleship paradigm called "relational wisdom" or simply "RW."

Relationships are three-dimensional *Matt. 22:37-39*

- God, Self, Others¹

Relationships involve two dynamics *Matt. 26:10*

- **Aware** – What do I know?
(Knowledge)
- **Engaging** – What will I do?
(Action)

Biblical Synonyms

The six skills or disciplines of relational wisdom are described by a variety of biblical words, such as: remember, faithful, humble, disciplined, compassionate and serving.



Values-based RW

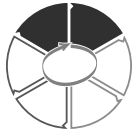
If you do not believe in God or actively think about his role in your life, you still need to be aware of the fact that outside values are constantly influencing your relationships; that is, you still need to be **"Values-Aware"** and **"Values-Engaging"**.

¹ For additional insights on three-dimensional interpretations of life by theologians like John Frame, CS Lewis, John Stott and Tim Keller, see rw360.org/Triperspectivalism.

Relational wisdom is taught throughout Scripture

Relational wisdom is taught as individual disciplines and in complete 360s (all three dimensions addressed in one passage), with each discipline fueling and supporting the others.

Ephesians 4:30-32



“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

_____ Aware / Engaging*



Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

_____ Aware / Engaging



Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another...

_____ Aware / Engaging



...as God in Christ forgave you.”

_____ Aware / Engaging*

** Motivational bookends*



**360 passages are everywhere:
Exodus 20:1-21
Matt. 22:37-39
Matt. 28:18-20
Phil. 2:1-11**



Lined writing area for notes, consisting of horizontal dotted lines.

LESSON 6

Practice the SOG Plan

*"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God." Psalm 42:5-6*

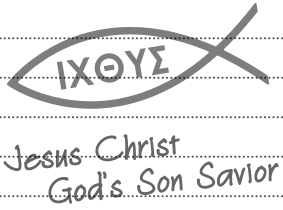
Relational wisdom can be summarized with simple acrostics

The Christian church has used acrostics for centuries to help Christians learn biblical truths. For example, the letters in the Greek word for fish came to stand for "Jesus Christ God's Son Savior."

This practice is helpful for learning the principles of relational wisdom, which are so simple that a child can apply them, and yet so intricate and robust that you can spend the rest of your life exploring and applying them. For example:

To be relationally wise in all situations...

Practice the SOG Plan™

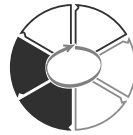


An innovation, to be effective, has to be simple and it has to be focused. Effective innovation starts small.
- Peter Drucker



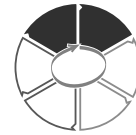
Self-Aware:
How am I feeling and acting? Ps. 42:5-6

- What am I feeling? Why?
- What do I feel like doing? What are the likely consequences?
- What can I do instead?



Other-Aware:
How are others feeling and how am I affecting them? 1 Pet. 3:8

- What do others seem to feel? Need? Want? Fear?
- How am I impacting others?
- Is this really the best time to talk, counsel or correct?
- How can I serve, love or forgive others?



God-Aware:
Where is God leading me? Prov. 3:5-8 *

- Who is God? What is he like? What is he doing?
- Am I acting in faith or unbelief?
- Do I trust in him or in myself?
- What difference does the gospel make?
- How can I pray? What Scriptures can guide me?
- How can I show that I love, trust and obey God above all things?

***Values-Aware:**
Where are my values leading me?

LESSON 7

Emotional Intelligence Is a Form of Common Grace

"For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5:45

God graciously shares knowledge of his creation with all people

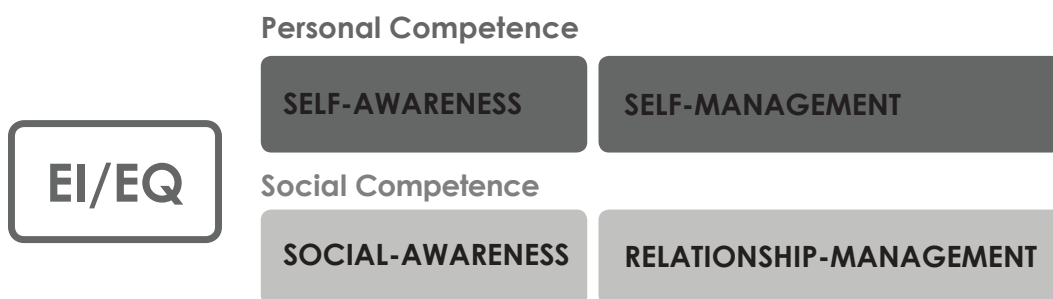
General revelation is a knowledge of God's existence, character and moral and physical laws that he gives to all humanity generally through studying nature and through an inner sense of God's existence and laws. *Gen. 1:27 | Ps. 19:1-4 | Rom. 1:20; 2:14-15 | Acts 17:26-29*

Common grace is the grace that God pours out on all people, whether they believe in him or not, to give them innumerable blessings that are not necessarily part of salvation. This grace includes knowledge, health, prosperity, happiness and peace, as well as the ability to comprehend and respond (imperfectly) to what God reveals through general revelation. *Matt. 5:45 | Acts 14:16-17 | Ps. 145:9,15-16 | Rom. 2:14-15*

Through general revelation and common grace, God gives both believers and nonbelievers insights into the laws of nature (physics, medicine, etc.) as well as insights into how humans behave and can form healthy relationships and stable societies (psychology, emotional intelligence, sociology, law, etc.).¹

Emotional intelligence provides valuable insights into human relationships

By God's grace, secular studies on emotional intelligence (which address four of the six skills of relational wisdom) have produced valuable insights on human neurology and behavior. Dan Goleman's writings, including his best selling book, *Emotional Intelligence*, are particularly insightful.² Therefore, we can gain a great deal of useful knowledge from these studies.



¹ See rw360.org/Common-Grace-RW • ² See rw360.org/Emotional-Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has a major deficiency

Unfortunately, teachings on emotional intelligence typically ignore God's existence, the reality of sin, and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. As a result, traditional teaching on EI lacks an objective moral compass. The primary motivation for improving EI is personal advancement. And apart from the transforming power of the gospel, change depends entirely on human effort.

Moreover, an increasing number of articles are highlighting "the dark side of EI," namely, the fact that unprincipled people with exceptional emotional intelligence often use those skills to manipulate others for their own advantage.

Christians have a unique opportunity to cure this deficiency by teaching and modeling a God-centered, biblically-grounded and gospel-driven form of emotional intelligence, namely, relational wisdom.



LESSON 8

Relational Wisdom Involves Six Life-Enriching Skills

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight." Proverbs 9:10

In real life, people live both inside and outside the RW circle

Even King David vacillated between relational wisdom and foolishness.

- **In his youth** 1 Sam. 17, 24:
remembered, faithful, humble, disciplined, compassionate, serving.
- **Later in life** 2 Sam. 11:
forgot, fickle, proud, indulgent, insensitive, manipulative.



Relationships improve as we learn to relate to others in increasingly wise ways

Foolishness	→	Wisdom
Forget	→	Remember
Fickle	→	Faithful
Proud	→	Humble
Indulgent	→	Disciplined
Insensitive	→	Compassionate
Manipulative	→	Serving

With practice, these six skills or disciplines can become habits

- **God-Awareness (remember)** is the ability to view all of life in the light of God's character, works and promises.
Prov. 9:10 | 1 Chron. 16:12 | Ps. 77:11-12; 111:2-3; 103 | Rom. 8:28-39 | Eph. 3:14-19 | 2 Pet. 1:3-8
- **God-Engagement (faithfulness)** is the ability to trust, obey and imitate God in a way that pleases and honors him.
Deut. 10:12-13 | 1 Kings 3:6 | Prov. 3:5-6 | Matt. 25:21 | John 14:15 | 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1 | Eph. 5:1-2
- **Self-Awareness (humility)** is the ability to honestly discern your own emotions, interests, values, strengths and weaknesses.
1 Peter 5:5 | Ps. 139:23-24 | James 4:1-3 | Mark 7:21-23 | 2 Tim. 2:22
- **Self-Engagement (discipline)** is the ability to manage your thoughts, emotions, words and actions so that they advance God's purposes.
Gal. 5:22-23 | Matt. 16:24-25 | John 8:29 | Titus 2:11-12
- **Other-Awareness (compassion)** is the ability to understand and empathize with the experiences, emotions and interests of others.
Mark 6:34 | Luke 10:30-37 | 1 Pet. 3:8 | Phil. 2:3-4
- **Other-Engagement (service)** is the ability to encourage, cooperate and resolve differences with others in a mutually beneficial way.
Mark 10:42-45 | John 12:24-26 | 1 Thess. 5:14-15 | 1 Pet. 3:8-9



Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.
 - 1 Tim. 4:15



LESSON 9

Relational Wisdom Is Inspired by the Gospel

"He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" Romans 8:32

The gospel reconciles us to God... and to one another

The word "gospel" means "good news." To understand God's good news, we first need to understand the truth about ourselves.

The Bible tells us that God created us in his image and designed us to reflect his perfect love and character by living according to his commands.¹ But everyone on the earth has fallen short of that perfection. Instead of living for God, we have lived for ourselves. We have loved and served worldly pleasures more than we have loved and served God. We have repeatedly broken his commands and pursued our own desires and goals. As a result, God's justice requires that we pay for our sins by being eternally separated from him.²

But there is good news. God is radically relational and perfectly wise. In his great love and mercy, he sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sins by dying on the cross.³ He then raised Jesus back to life to show that his sacrifice paid our debt in full and to open the way for us to be reconciled to God and enjoy him forever. The reconciling power of the gospel can also overflow into our human relationships.

Relational wisdom is an outpouring of the gospel

As the gospel overflows in our lives, it inspires and empowers every aspect of relational wisdom.

GOD-AWARE: The first outpouring of the gospel occurs when Jesus makes us God-aware by sending the Holy Spirit to renew our hearts and minds so that we can know, value and love God.⁴

GOD-ENGAGED: As we become aware of God's love and mercy, we are moved to become God-engaged. His grace enables us to worship him in spirit and truth, to glorify him with trust and obedience, and to delight in imitating him.⁵



For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- John 3:16



DEFINITION:
The gospel is the good news that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and rescue us from eternal separation from God, and he rose from the dead to give us new life. Through faith in Jesus, we are reconciled to God, adopted into his family, empowered to love others as he has loved us, and given the gift of enjoying him forever.

¹ Gen. 1:26 • ² Rom. 3:23 | Isa. 53:6 | Matt. 25:41-43 • ³ John 3:16-17 • ⁴ Acts 26:15-18
Eph. 3:14-19 | John 14:15-17, 26 | 3:3 Eph. 4:22-24 | Titus 3:5 | 1 John 4:23-24
Ezek. 36:26-27 John 8:29; 14:23 | Rom. 12:2 | Eph. 5:1-2

⁵ Job 42:1-6 | Isa. 6:1-5 | Luke 5:8

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Discovering Relational Wisdom 2.0.

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