



EQUIPPER

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Dear servant of Christ and of his church:

The CAD team wishes you and yours a deeply rewarding celebration of Holy Week. Thanks for all that you will be doing this month to help your congregation(s) rejoice in the lavish love and amazing grace of the Father, given to us in the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ.

As you know, the Easter season is particularly busy for pastors, though ministry can be hectic year-round, given the multiple demands placed on a pastor's time, talent and energy. That being the case, what would you say characterizes an *effective* pastor?

“Out of control emotions make smart people stupid.”

Daniel Goleman, 1998



IQ: 178

EQ: 0

No doubt, the answer varies from place to place and culture to culture. Nevertheless, some things are of universal importance—like the issue we touched on last month of our personal calling. But what other factors do you see as essential?

It seems to me that a sometimes (often?) overlooked essential factor is that of *emotional intelligence* (sometimes called *EQ*). According to an article in *Harvard Business Review*, EQ is a composite of several personal attributes: “self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill” (to read the article, go to <http://hbr.org/2004/01/what-makes-a-leader/ar/1> and note the summary chart on page two of this issue).

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In my experience, these personal attributes play a significant role in pastoral effectiveness. Why? Because ministry challenges and taxes a pastor's emotional resources. Certainly, no pastor is perfect in any of these attributes (except, of course, our Chief Shepherd, Jesus). But a bit of reflection will, I'm sure, help us understand why each is significant and thus worth our attention.

I personally find the attribute of *empathy* to be particularly important. In the helpful book, *The Relational Pastor: sharing in Christ by sharing ourselves*, professor and Trinitarian theologian Andrew Root shows how empathy is fundamental to pastoral ministry in that it is the emotional ability to enter deeply into the life of another and there experience what they experience; feel what they feel; and in so doing, to actively participate in the empathetic relationship that Jesus himself has with that person.

Empathy is thus a “gate-way” into a deep sharing in Jesus' own ministry with another person. In that regard, I've included on page two of this issue quotes from Root concerning empathy. Also, check out the series of posts at *The Surprising God* (<http://thesurprisinggodblog.gci.org/>), where I am currently blogging about *The Relational Pastor*.

Often I have been richly blessed by the empathetic care given to me by pastors and others. What a blessing to receive through them Jesus' own place-sharing care! Thanks for all that you are doing as a pastor to be a vessel of that care. You and your ministry are deeply appreciated and much needed.

In Christ's service,

Ted Johnston, *Equipper* editor and U.S. regional pastor

Outfitting GCI churches and ministries for a mission-focused journey with Jesus.

Key attributes of emotional intelligence

Consider gathering your ministry team to discuss how and why the attributes of emotional intelligence shown below are vital for ministers and ministries of all kinds. As you have this discussion, consider how these attributes might benefit a ministry when present, or harm it when weak or absent. If weak or absent, how might they be strengthened or acquired? See what you come up with. And if you have a close, trusting relationship as a team, you might gently explore the emotional intelligence of the team as a whole and the team members individually, asking, “How are we doing?”

	Definition	Attributes
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-confidence Realistic self-assessment Self-deprecating sense of humor
Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods The propensity to suspend judgment – to think before acting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustworthiness and integrity Comfort with ambiguity Openness to change
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status A propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong desire to achieve Optimism, even in the face of failure Organizational commitment
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people Skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise in building and retaining talent Cross-cultural sensitivity Service to clients and customers
Social Skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proficiency in managing relationships and building networks An ability to find common ground and build rapport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness in leading change Persuasiveness Expertise in building and leading teams

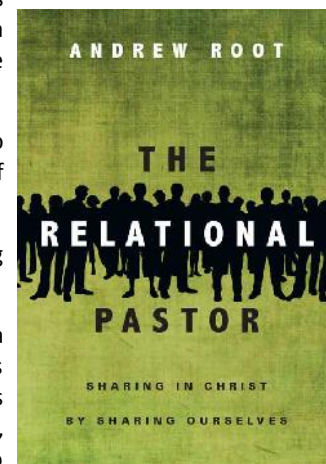
As food for thought concerning emotional intelligence in general and empathy in particular, here are quotes from Aaron Root’s helpful book, *The Relational Pastor*:

The first step in pastoral leadership is to focus on your own personhood... [I]f at first glance this seems self-centered, it is anything but. To focus on your own person, to commit to being a person, is to recognize and live the fact that you are your relationships. It recognizes that you are bound to others and others are bound to you in action, language and brokenness (p. 209).

Individualism [which is rampant in our Western cultures] has no room for empathy, no room to feel the other’s *place* as your own. The popular phrase, “It sucks to be you!” is the mantra of individualism and the enemy of empathy (p. 20).

The personal, empathic encounter possesses the power to bring forth transformation, to bring change to the person (p. 20).

Empathy...is the experience of feeling (often involuntarily) the very relationships that make a person. Empathy is a feeling that touches the relationships that makes us, a magnet that draws our person to another’s. Empathy, as a feeling, is how we experience the ontological relationships that make a person. Because it is the feeling of another’s person through their relationships, empathy is the feeling of spirit. Empathy is the spiritual reality that takes us into, that moves us to indwell, another (p. 91).



Note: Andrew Root is the author of several other books grounded in Trinitarian, incarnational theology, including *Revisiting Relational Youth Ministry* and *The Theological Turn in Youth Ministry* (with Kenda Creasy Dean). You will find a list of GCI’s “You’re Included” interviews with Root at <http://www.gci.org/category/people/andrew-root>.