



## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

Teaching the emotional skills needed  
to succeed in the modern economy

## **DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

At The School of Life, we believe that emotional maturity is the key to better employee performance and engagement. Alongside technical skills, employees need to master a range of sophisticated 'soft' emotional skills to be able to better thrive, manage themselves and succeed at their tasks.

Our Learning and Development programme is designed to build emotional maturity in the workplace through the teaching of 20 core Emotional Skills. For each skill, we provide a precisely-designed two-hour workshop, best experienced within a modular, comprehensive learning journey. We provide our own suggested learning-journeys or can create one for you with your organisation's particular needs in mind.

Our workshops bring about true changes in behaviour, helping employees to overcome hurdles and approach tasks with greater focus, confidence and maturity. The experience is psychologically rich, thought-provoking and enjoyable, often resorting to case-studies drawn from history, philosophy and culture.

## The Emotional Skills





Businesses need to be agile, and people increasingly do too. In fact, 91% of human resource directors say that, by 2018, adaptability will be a major trait for which to recruit.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Discuss why we often fear change and how we can come to fear it less
- Practise techniques for cultivating an open mind towards change and new strategies for implementing it
- Learn imaginative techniques for developing new ideas, rather than relying on old paradigms
- Learn methods for coping with uncertainty and setbacks and for embracing improvisation, uncertainty and growth

**INTELLIGENCE IS THE ABILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGE.**

Stephen Hawking



No one is calm all the time. Nor should we be; a touch of fear and adrenaline can be useful and helps us to perform in tight situations. However, many of us struggle in our jobs with excessive stress, anxiety and burnout. Indeed, stress and mental ill health costs the UK economy upwards of £30 billion a year.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider the role of anxiety in our lives--and its purpose
- Consider the difference between healthy stress (which helps us learn and grow) and unhealthy stress
- Think about how to access our “deep self”, or our most centered and value-driven self, and other forms of perspective to help us navigate stress
- Learn five different ways to deal with anxiety and stress: acceptance of difficulty, mindful discernment, surrender and appreciation of beauty, compassion for ourselves and communion with others

**I LOVE THE STORM AN FEAR THE CALM.**

Christina, Queen of Sweden



## CONFIDENCE

The greatest projects and schemes die for no grander reasons than that we don't dare. Indeed, research shows that having the right level of confidence makes us more likeable, productive, influential and ultimately successful. That's why nearly half of all employers say they look for confidence when hiring.

In this 2- hour session, we will:

- Consider how to avoid both overconfidence and underconfidence
- Identify sources of confidence and ways of coping with anxiety
- Practice cultivating a growth mindset, where we recognise our own capacity to grow and acquire new abilities over time
- Learn how to overcome setbacks and remain confident when things get tough

**HOW VERY LITTLE CAN BE DONE UNDER THE SPIRIT OF FEAR.**

Florence Nightingale



## COMMUNICATION

The stronger a team's communication skills are, the better the outcome: studies have found that highly effective communicators are 32% more likely to meet the goals of a major project. This makes it crucial that we learn how to convey tricky but important messages in good time, with clarity, respect and patience.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider barriers to good communication at work
- Learn how to "tune in" to the signals we are giving others and the way they may see us
- Practice listening better and asking the right questions
- Consider better ways to handle difficult conversations and give feedback

**LANGUAGE IS WINE UPON THE LIPS.**

Virginia Woolf



## CREATIVITY

Einstein said that we're all born geniuses – which suggests that a lot of education strips us of our innate creative powers. Very often, the pressure to be serious, along with stress, anxiety, and self-criticism holds us back from being fully creative. With the right mindset and strategies we can overcome these blocks and bring creativity back into our daily lives and our professional career.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Learn the myths and the realities of the creative process
- Learn strategies for coming up with new ideas
- Consider the role of experiment and play
- Practice overcoming our doubts and insecurities during the creative process

**YOU CAN'T USE UP CREATIVITY. THE MORE YOU USE IT, THE MORE YOU HAVE IT.**

Maya Angelou



## DECISIVENESS

Making good decisions is a fundamental aspect of being a trusted co-worker or an excellent leader. Yet, too often, studies show, our emotions have a huge influence over the quality of our decision-making, preventing us from making sound judgements.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider the barriers to effective decision making, including decision fatigue; fear of regret, loss, and sacrifice; dislike of ambiguity; the influence of others; and a lack of self knowledge
- Examine decisions from our past, how we made them, and how they went
- Learn tools to help us frame the issue in the best way and accept uncertain outcomes
- Create a plan for how we will take action following our decision and track and adjust over time

**YOU CAN'T MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON FEAR  
AND THE POSSIBILITY OF WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.**

Anon



## DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is the art of navigating around difficult and sensitive issues without causing catastrophe or unnecessary distress. Studies show that poor diplomatic skills are responsible for dramatic drops in the productivity of employees.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Learn to identify different conflict styles in others and in ourselves
- Consider the value of politeness and how to apply it in difficult situations
- Practice empathy towards those we find difficult
- Consider when to press our point, when to compromise, when to let things go and when to find a genuinely collaborative solution

**DIPLOMACY IS THE ART OF TELLING PEOPLE TO GO TO HELL  
IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY ASK FOR DIRECTIONS.**

Winston Churchill



## EFFECTIVENESS

The end result of an absence of efficiency isn't just inefficiency, it's regret. In order to work through the never-ending to-do list and juggle the multiple demands of others, we have to sort the urgent tasks from the merely important and make a habit of being efficient.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider what makes getting things done difficult
- Discover our personal working style and how we best get things done
- Learn specific ways to adapt our approach to the task at hand
- Learn habits and techniques to beat procrastination

**THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DO IT IS TO DO IT.**

Amelia Earhart



## ELOQUENCE

Although many of us fear it more than death, knowing how to speak to others in front of small or large groups is a critical but neglected skill of the modern workplace. It's an enviable kind of charm that makes us far more powerful and that we can all learn how to wield.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Learn the key elements of a good message and practice applying them to our work
- Practice presenting our body and voice in an authentic, engaging manner
- Practice overcoming anxiety and self-consciousness during public presentations

**THERE IS NO LACK OF READERS AND LISTENERS; IT IS FOR US TO PRODUCE SOMETHING WORTH BEING WRITTEN AND HEARD.**

Pliny the Younger



## EMPATHY

Feeling and demonstrating empathy is tied to better performance at work, and especially to better leadership. Empathy is also crucial for customer service – research shows that for every point increase in customer-perceived empathy, an organisation experiences a 16.4% increase in financial returns.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider the differences between empathy and sympathy
- Consider the uses of empathy in overcoming conflict, building connection with others, and devising products and solutions that will work well for other people
- Practice anticipating the needs of other people

**DO NOT DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM DO UNTO YOU — THEY MIGHT HAVE DIFFERENT TASTES.**

George Bernard Shaw



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is a major fascination of our times. We often think of entrepreneurs as bold risk-takers with completely original ideas, but we all can benefit from thinking like an entrepreneur: generating new ideas, understanding what customers need, and constantly evaluating the end product to look for improvements.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider myths about what it takes to think like an entrepreneur
- Practice using empathy to uncover about what our potential customers might like
- Consider the role of higher needs in the development of new ideas and products

**THE BEST WAY TO HAVE GOOD IDEAS IS TO HAVE LOTS OF IDEAS —  
AND THEN THROW AWAY THE BAD ONES.**

Linus Pauling



## INNOVATION

It's one thing to have a good idea and another thing to put that idea into practice. In this session, we think about what to do once a good idea has struck, from the first prototype to keeping your stakeholders on board as you scale up over years.

In this 2-hour session we will:

- Practice prototyping and pitching
- Consider how to keep multiple stakeholders engaged over the long run
- Think through how to keep our project going long term
- Explore our responses to failure and risk and identify ways to overcome and learn from setbacks

**THOSE WHO WALK ON THE WELL-TRODDEN PATH ALWAYS  
THROW STONES AT THOSE WHO ARE SHOWING A NEW ROAD.**

Voltaire



## OBJECTIVITY

Emotions can sometimes blur our vision. To make good decisions and work well with others, we need to be able to separate the way we feel about the world from the way it actually is.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Learn about the different errors and biases to which our minds are prone, and how to correct for these
- Practice the art of detachment from our own experiences and interests, in order to consider things from a wider, more universal point of view
- Learn strategies for making decisions that will serve us well in the long term

**A SUPERSTITION IS SO INTANGIBLE YOU CANNOT GET AT IT TO REFUSE IT, BUT TRUTH IS A POINT OF VIEW, AND SO IS CHANGEABLE.**

Hypatia



## PERSUASIVENESS

In order for even the best ideas to have the greatest impact they need to be communicated with a skill too often neglected in the workplace: charm. That's why studies show that those who receive training in how to be more personable and charismatic are rated as 60% more effective by their peers.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Take a look at some surprising things that do and don't make people charming
- Learn about the psychology of persuasion and the key role of emotion in decision-making
- Practice making our case attractive to others and reassuring others about their concerns
- Learn how to use humour, empathy, and honesty to connect with others and motivate groups

**PEOPLE ALMOST INVARIABLY ARRIVE AT THEIR BELIEFS NOT ON THE BASIS OF PROOF BUT ON THE BASIS OF WHAT THEY FIND ATTRACTIVE.**

Blaise Pascal



## PLAYFULNESS

Too often we think of play as something reserved for children, or worse, for the lazy, idle, and irresponsible. But playfulness is serious business. It helps us connect to one another in an authentic way, recover from high-stress situations, enjoy our job more, and remain curious about the world around us.

In this 2-hour session we will:

- Consider the role of play in connecting with colleagues, clients, and customers
- Learn about the role of humour in building rapport and addressing conflict
- Practice using play to generate new ideas and solutions to pressing problems
- Learn ways to make our daily routine more adventurous and playful

**SOME DAY YOU WILL BE OLD ENOUGH TO START  
READING FAIRY TALES AGAIN.**

C S Lewis



## PURPOSE

Day-to-day work can all too easily make us feel bored or burnt out. For many of us, this is when we start fantasising about changing careers. But what we most often need is to feel reconnected to our underlying values and the long-term impact of the work at hand.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider our values and think about how to prioritise among them
- Explore five different areas of life in which we can find meaning, and how we can approach these through our work
- Practice “scaling up” our ambitions and create an action plan to work with a deeper sense of purpose

**WHAT YOU DO MAKES A DIFFERENCE, AND YOU HAVE TO DECIDE  
WHAT KIND OF DIFFERENCE YOU WANT TO MAKE.**

Jane Goodall



## RESILIENCE

To overcome the inevitable changes, stresses and setbacks of the professional world, individuals and organisations need resilience. Its value is indisputable – a meta-analysis of different studies suggests that when employees are happy and confident (whatever other challenges they are facing) they are 31% more productive, make 37% more sales, and are three times as creative.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Learn how to recognise unhelpful thought patterns that stop us from being resilient
- Learn to develop a growth mindset, where setbacks are seen as temporary learning experiences
- Learn the preconditions for post-traumatic growth, and how we can use them to learn from difficulty and setback
- Create an inventory of our resources to use when times get tough – and consider what new resources we might acquire

**ANYTHING WORTH ACHIEVING WILL ALWAYS  
HAVE OBSTACLES IN THE WAY.**

Chuck Norris



## RESOURCEFULNESS

Employees who lean heavily on their supervisors to make day-to-day decisions or solve problems are much less useful and productive – and take a lot of their supervisors' valuable time. The best employees are self-driven, and resourceful, keeping themselves motivated, focused, and organised, and meeting challenges without needing too much guidance or permission.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider why we often seek solutions from others, rather than ourselves
- Practice strategies to build our confidence and keep ourselves motivated
- Learn techniques for quick and creative problem-solving when challenges arise
- Consider when to seek help, when to check in, and when to take initiative

**DO WHAT YOU CAN, WITH WHAT YOU HAVE,  
WHERE YOU ARE.**

Theodore Roosevelt



## SELF-AWARENESS

Self-Awareness is the foundation of emotional intelligence, yet studies show that while most of us think we understand ourselves, we often have little idea how others really see us. This alarming gap leads to misunderstandings, poor teamwork, increased conflict, poor decision-making and a lack of direction.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

- Consider how our image of ourself may differ from how others view us
- Learn to recognise elements of our unconscious mind, including projection, transference, resistance, and the split between our rational and irrational mind
- Learn the technique of “philosophical meditation” which helps us uncover the beliefs, worries and hopes that lie beneath our everyday feelings and behavior
- Recognise inner ‘voices’ or influences from the past that may affect our beliefs and ways of behaving

**THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD IS TO  
KNOW HOW TO BELONG TO ONESELF.**

Michel de Montaigne



## SUPPORTIVENESS

Supporting others and listening carefully (but not uncritically) to their signs of distress allows us to give them the best advice on how to approach their challenges. The skill of being correctly supportive is crucial when leading teams, connecting with colleagues, and understanding clients.

In this 2-hour session, we will:

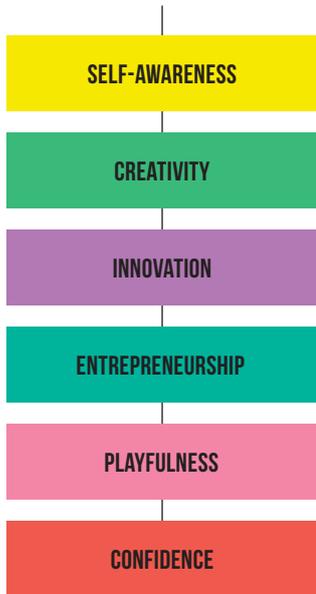
- Practice listening in an insightful and emotionally supportive way
- Consider the art of when and how to give advice and feedback
- Consider ways to demonstrate availability and supportiveness through action as well as words

**WHEN PEOPLE TALK, LISTEN COMPLETELY.  
MOST PEOPLE NEVER LISTEN.**

Ernest Hemingway

## SUGGESTED LEARNING JOURNEYS

The Innovative Journey



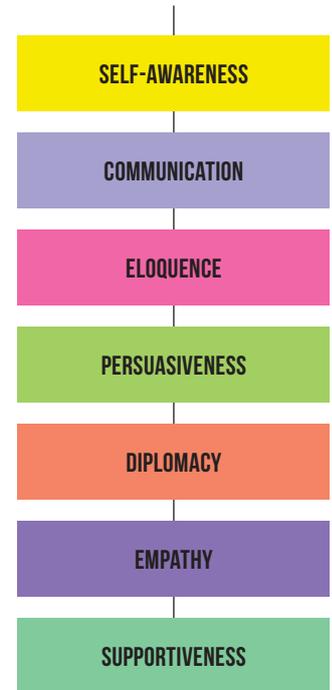
The Productive Journey



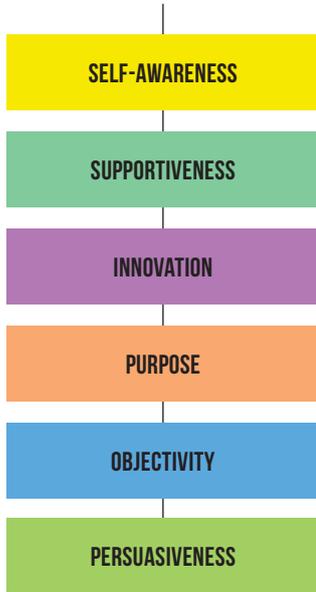
The Resilience Journey



The Collaborative Journey



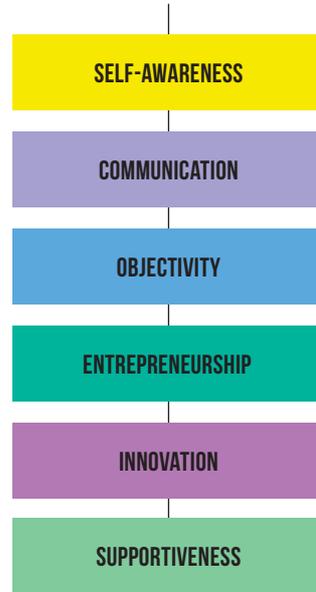
The Leadership Journey



The Graduate Journey



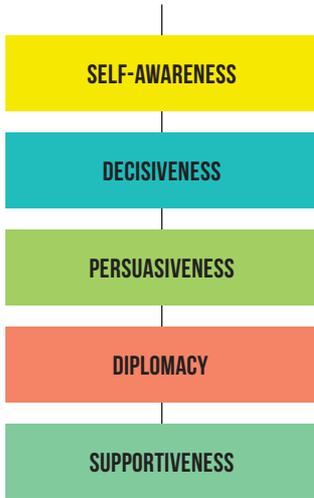
The Consultant Journey



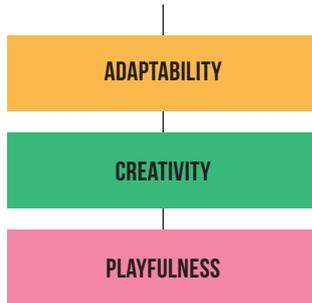
The Customer Service Journey



### The New Manager Journey



### The “Away Day” Journey



## DIGITAL LEARNING

If you are interested in using any of our digital content for in-house or training purposes, please do get in touch.

## OUR WORLD-CLASS FACULTY

Our workshops are created and delivered by a distinguished faculty of leading philosophers, writers, artists, scientists and psychologists. Our faculty have extensive experience working with businesses and organisations and a deep understanding of the challenges of the modern workplace, as well as years of experience facilitating training sessions and working with people one-to-one.

## OUR CLIENTS



## TESTIMONIALS

**INCREDIBLY THOUGHT-PROVOKING, FUN, INSIGHTFUL AND INSPIRING.  
I REALLY LOVED IT**

Class Participant, Creativity workshop

**THE SESSIONS HELPED ME UNDERSTAND WHAT MOTIVATES ME AND TO STAND  
BACK AND LOOK AT MYSELF AND SAY 'HOW DO I WANT TO DEVELOP AS A  
PERSON?'**

Class Participant, Self-Awareness workshop

**I GAINED INSIGHTS INTO MYSELF AND HOW TO IMPROVE MY LIFE  
BEYOND THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE WORKSHOP SUBJECT.**

Class Participant, Creativity workshop

**I GAINED PERSPECTIVE – THE ABILITY TO STEP BACK, BREAK IT DOWN AND  
ANALYSE PROBLEMS MORE CLEARLY.**

Class Participant, Decisiveness workshop

**SCIENTIFICALLY BASED, INSPIRING, LIGHT-HEARTED.**

Class Participant, Purpose workshop

Average feedback score: 9.1 out of 10

## CONTACT

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With over 2.8 million subscribers, our online curriculum is teaching the world how to be emotionally intelligent one short film at a time.

**THE  
SCHOOL  
OF LIFE**