

Time out of class works very well!

BROOKE LONGMORE – EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENC COACHING

HP

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The pressure is on in the Scottish education system.

We are seeing an increase in teaching staff feeling unheard, stressed and unable to teach in the classrooms. Teachers enter their profession to lead the younger generation, to teach new ideas and to share their expertise knowledge. They do not wish to sign up to a career where it feels like all they do is deal with challenges.

There is something we can do about this and it involves work on emotional intelligence.

When tension is high it is often a result of unmet emotional needs. Often the pupils with the most challenging behaviour are unable to express how they feel, this confusion will leak out in ways that will have them getting into bother.

The number of pupils being excluded from school is on the rise ***(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-44886153>).***

It is described as “problems escalating” however, the question we must ask is are we doing enough or are we missing out on opportunities for transformation? Schools are cutting back on the individual support they provide but it is still being left to schools to “pick up the pieces”.

Individual support can be time consuming and not always the best way to approach the problems. I developed programmes that range from 3 weeks to 10 weeks for up to 20 pupils at a time.



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The benefits of these programmes are:

- *Learning how to communicate in groups*
- *Increased confidence for pupils who disconnect from their peer groups*
- *Reduction in challenging behaviour*
- *Improved parental engagement with the education system*
- *Increase in solution focused thinking*

Here are some words from the pupils who attended my group work in a North Lanarkshire school:

Feedback when asked has the group programme been helpful?

- *Helps with talking to others*
- *Helps to feel more confident*
- *Helps to control emotions*

Feedback when asked would you recommend the group work?

- *Yes, can control yourself when upset or angry*
- *Helps if you are nervous or don't feel confident to talk*
- *It's awesome*
- *Helped me so could help others*

When I work with groups of pupils I help them explore how they feel and how this impacts their actions, until then most have never made this link.

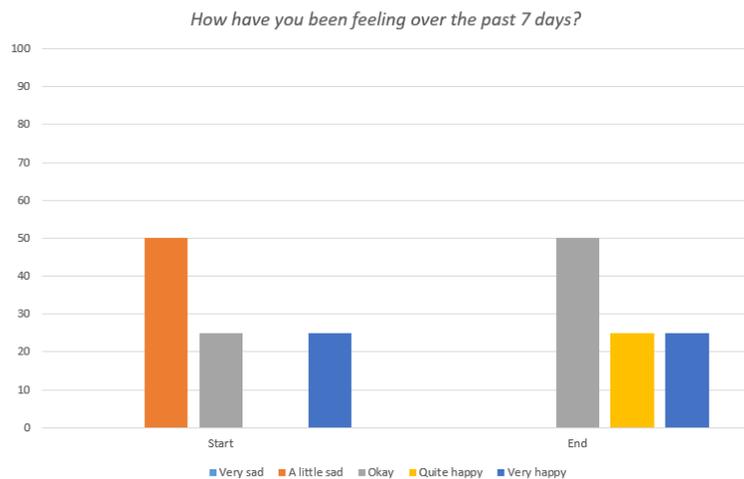
When we work on understanding of emotions and actions the emotions the pupils experience often move away from negative emotions towards positive emotions. Understanding and knowledge is the key to success at this stage, it can transform the lives of both young people and adults. **No one is exempt, everyone can benefit from this understanding.** There are times teaching staff have opted to attend the sessions I deliver

as they want to improve their skills when working with pupils but also want to go home and share the information with their own children.

You will see from the graph below that I check in with how they feel at the start of the programme and how they feel at the end of the programme. **The overall emotional state for the young people who attended my emotional well-being programme changed** during this 6 week programme, the pupils felt better at the end than they did at the start.

Some pupils started smiling at school which teaching staff reported was a huge improvement.

S2 Emotional Intelligence group work results (North Lanarkshire High School) – November 2018



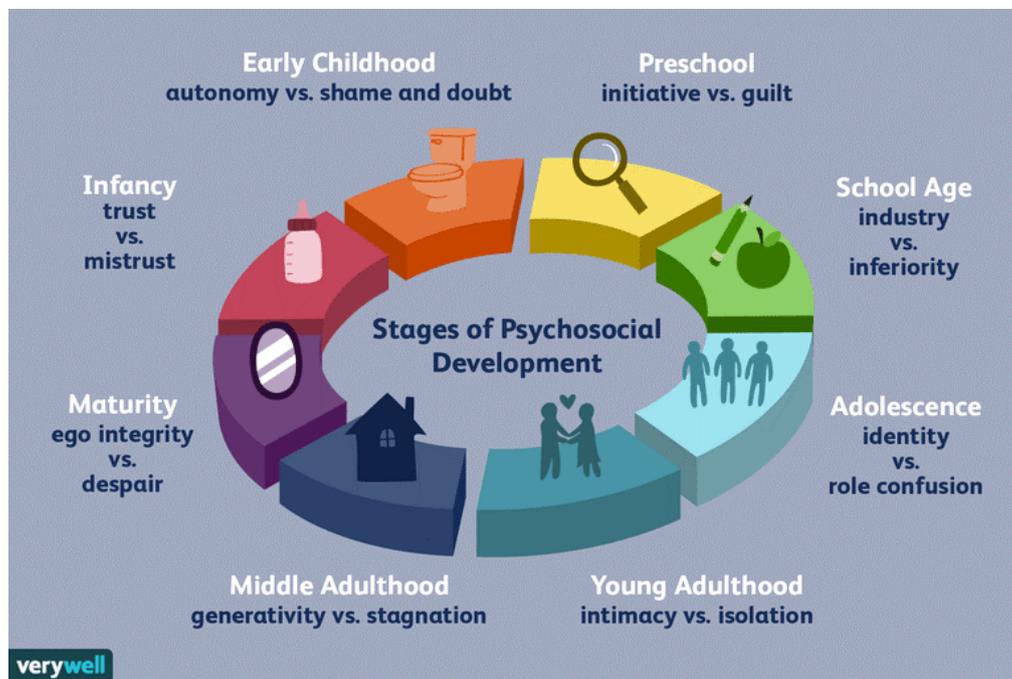
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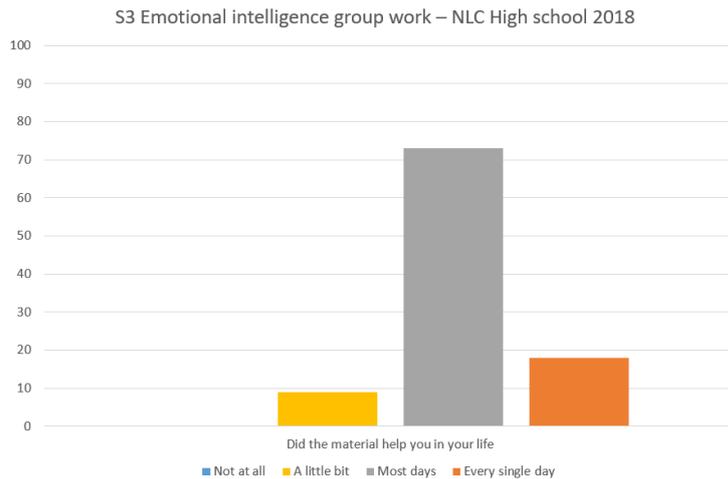
The following news report is refreshing as it tells us that there is nearly 4,000 new students entering into teaching this year (https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-46501068?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cdl8n2edgggt/scotland-education&link_location=live-reporting-story).

The best way to retain these new students is to provide robust support for both them and the pupils they teach. **Many teachers who leave their careers do so as a result of feeling the pressures with limited support**, we can do better by providing support around emotions and expressing emotions. I have spoken to many ex teachers via my private coaching sessions, all that I have chatted with did not want to leave but felt it was the only option.

We take the emotional mind everywhere we go therefore, the pupils who have a challenging home life are bringing the emotional baggage into the school day which can then impact their experience of learning. If you refer to the image below that details ***Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development*** you can see throughout life there is emotional lessons at every stage. If a preschool child's emotional state is dominated by guilt you could be dealing with a young adult who is unable to accept any form of criticism and will fly off the handle at the mere mention of it. Helping them gently understand their strengths and the value they add could flip this guilt turning it into a great leader and friend.



In the graph below the results show the pupils who had access to emotional well-being programmes were using them most days, this meant that all areas of their life were impacted by what they learned. **They reported to be using the lessons at home also.** One young boy (aged 14) had started to make his mum toast in the morning as an act of kindness, when he fed this back to me he beamed with pride, the relationship between he and his mother had improved significantly.



Every single child I work with will say the words “I love this group as it gets me out of class” and I mean every one of them say this and it’s true it does give them time out of class. This time out of class is something the pupils engage with instantly and it is something that gives the teachers time to recharge, **whilst these benefits are great there are still more as the pupils learn in a way that is fun.** Throughout the programmes there is interactive activities that are enjoyed as groups and also individual reflective activities, it’s always refreshing to see pupils who have a tough time laugh together.

Pupils face many challenges as they move through their school years from exams to choices to fall outs to illness, it is up to us as adults to help them navigate their way through this with ease.

Teaching staff alongside emotional intelligence experts can make a huge difference to the lives of our future generation.

A huge focus for me right now is working with the primary 7’s who are about to make their way to the ‘big school’. I designed a 3 hour programme for 10 – 15 pupils and the interest in this programme has been great with various schools booking in to start in 2019.

Do you think you are doing enough in your school in relation to emotional intelligence or could you be doing more?

I am open to meeting with schools and chatting to staff teams who are open to this work being carried out. The benefits of emotional intelligence programmes in school is endless, you could be turning your pupils into superstars by unleashing unlimited potential.

To discuss this in more detail please email me brooke@brookelongmore.co.uk or visit www.brookelongmore.co.uk