



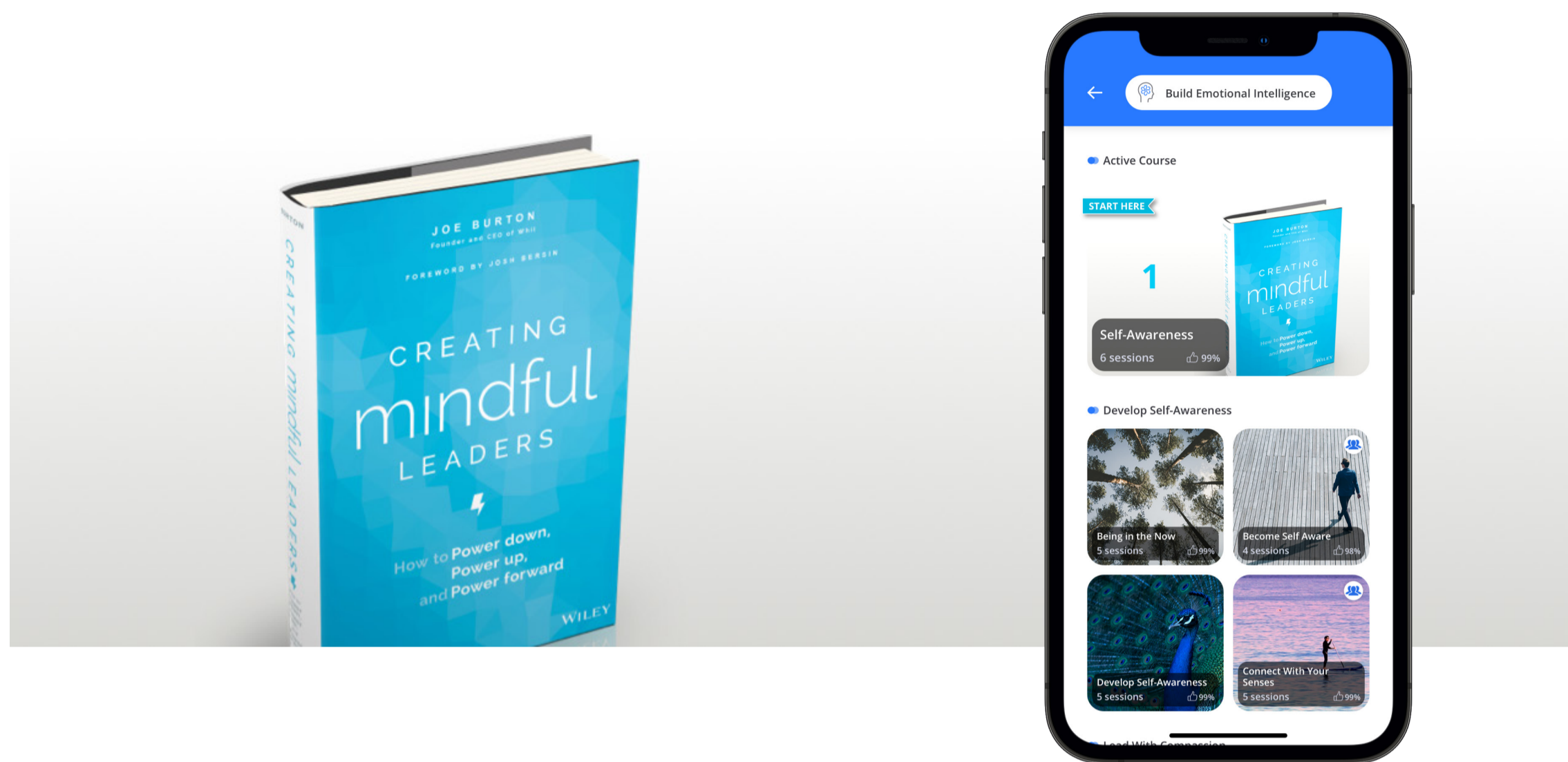
RethinkCare Presents

How to Build Emotional Intelligence, the “Must Have Skill for Modern Professionals”



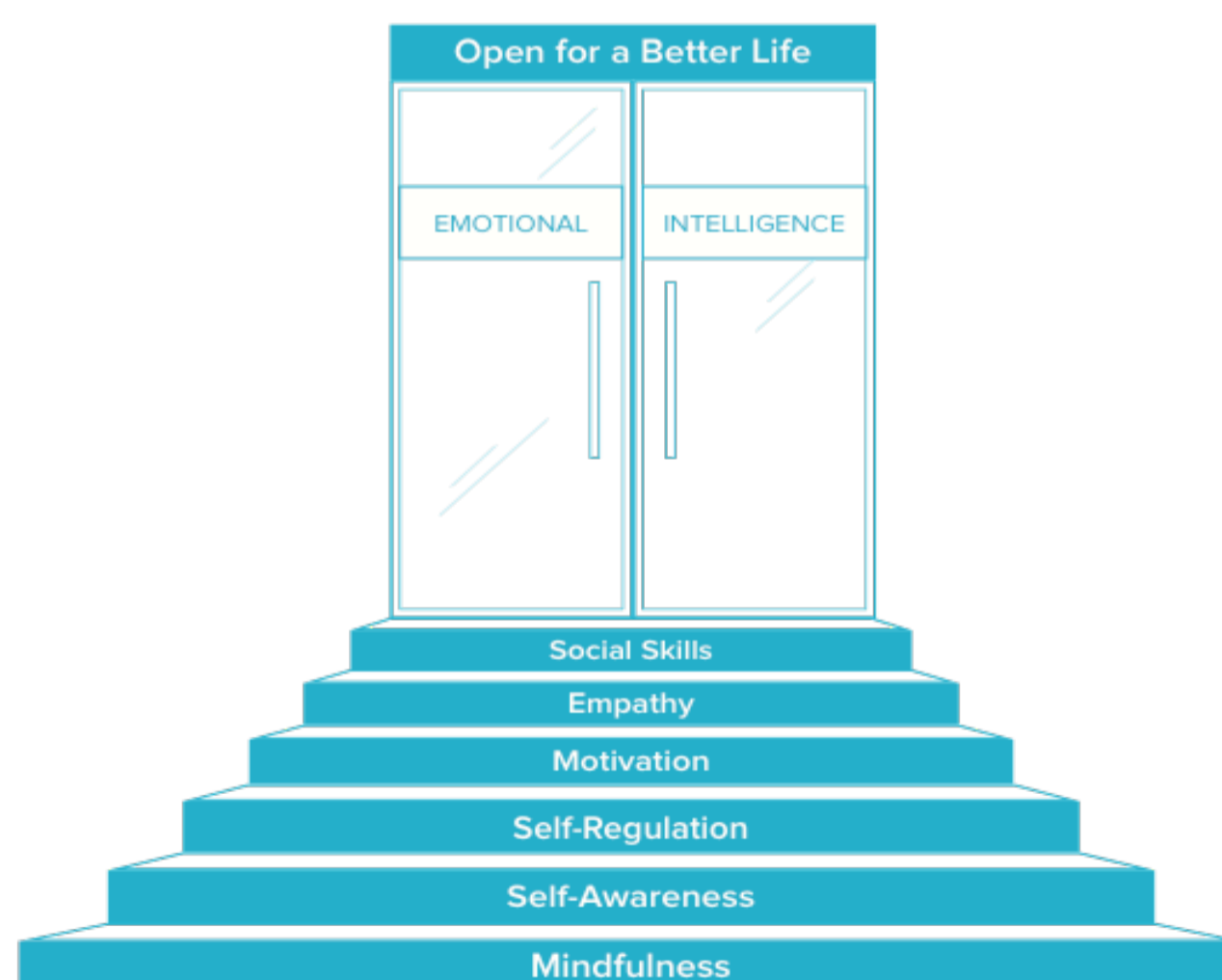
Introduction

Harvard Business Review calls emotional intelligence “the must have skill for modern professionals.” There are five key areas to Daniel Goleman’s famous research on emotional intelligence (EQ). All of this and more is covered in RethinkCare’s new 5-week digital training program featuring our best selling book *Creating Mindful Leaders*.



Our digital training provides ongoing micro-learning sessions to help employees learn these repeatable life skills. In this guide, we’ll explore how the program helps employees develop emotional intelligence skills in each of these key areas by following specific exercises to improve their EQ for business and life.

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Motivation
4. Resilience
5. Empathy & Compassion



These five elements build on mindfulness, the foundation to being present, focused and ready to perform. Each is like a step up the stairs to a healthier life and more effective management and leadership style. As employees develop skills in the other steps, starting with self-awareness, they become more complete leaders - and they are equipped to transform their own mental wellbeing and performance, as well as your company culture.

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1 Self-awareness

Practicing self-awareness is about developing clarity within oneself, including a high-resolution perception of your emotions. In fact, it's one of the most important, foundational things we can do to manage our emotions more skillfully. Simply put, we can't work with something that we can't see clearly. To be better able to manage our emotions and to understand our growth areas as leaders or why we get frustrated with certain people, it helps to first know ourselves clearly.

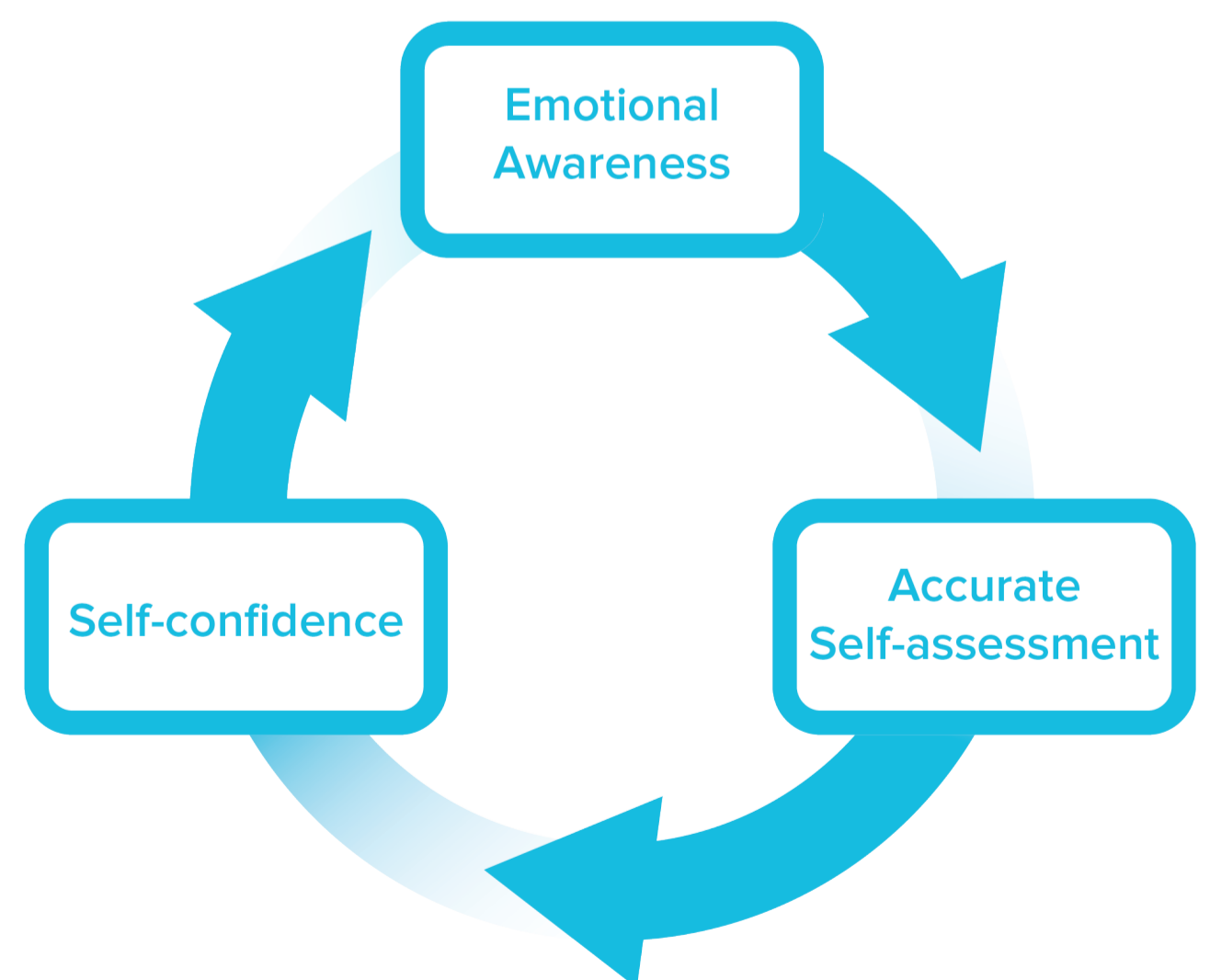
We help employees explore what self-awareness is, how to develop it, and why it's beneficial to them. And we introduce different repeatable skills and practices that help cultivate greater self-awareness.

For most of us, taking the time to slow down and look inward can be challenging. We're used to moving fast and filling up our time with things to do. But when we make some space to be aware of what's happening internally, we can learn to Respond, rather than React. We become masters of our experience - moving more consciously through our day and having more choice in how we engage with the world around us.

“ We can learn to **Respond**, rather than **React**”

Dr. Daniel Goleman, who wrote the book on Emotional Intelligence, defines self-awareness as “knowing one’s internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions.” Developing self-awareness is about cultivating clarity around our emotions and inner wisdom. With a higher resolution of awareness, employees can then work more skillfully in managing their emotions. This can be applied to the three elements of self-awareness:

- 1 Emotional Awareness:** Primarily a physiological skill – being aware of the body. Emotions start in the body and impact everything that follows: how we think, what we say, and what actions we take.
- 2 Accurate Self-Assessment:** The ability to know what we can and cannot do. Understanding our inner resources and our limits. And this helps employees to regulate how they choose to engage and respond to the world around them.
- 3 Self-Confidence:** The sense of our own self-worth and capabilities.



So if you're looking to help employees better understand themselves, to work more skillfully with their emotions and strengths, or to develop self-confidence **it all begins with Self-Awareness.**

As we develop an awareness of our emotions, we gradually notice a subtle but very important shift. Emotions are what we FEEL. They are not who we ARE. Through mindfulness practice, emotions go from being existential ("I am angry") to experiential ("I am experiencing anger in my body"). Just like clouds passing in the sky are not the same as the sky itself, emotions passing through the mind are not the mind itself.



“ Emotions are what we **FEEL**. Not who we **ARE**.”

Developing an awareness of this distinction creates the possibility of greater balance, choice and freedom in relation to our emotions. If my emotions are who I am, then there's very little I can do about it. However, if emotions are what I experience in my body, then feeling angry becomes a lot like feeling pain in my shoulder after an extreme workout: both are experiences that I have influence over. These are critical skills for professionals at any stage in their career.

Mindfulness builds self-awareness in three ways: stabilizing the mind, providing a moment-by-moment awareness of our emotions and how they affects us, and helping us shift from an existential view of emotions ("I am angry") to an experiential view ("I am experiencing anger"). This enables a clearer perspective and the possibility to learn from our emotions.

Throughout this 5-week program, employees experience many practices to develop emotional intelligence skills, including:

Mindfulness and Meditation Skills

Body Scan Practice

Journaling for Self-Discovery

Mindful Listening and Mindful Conversation Techniques

2 Self-management

That higher-resolution of emotional process is important to help professionals manage themselves, especially in challenging situations. Self-Management is about moving from compulsion to choice (especially when triggered). This helps employees grow their capacity to be more skillful and intentional about how they respond to challenging situations.

It is a necessary skill for being effective at work and getting along in society. Humans are social creatures. We impact each other by what we say and do, and how we say things and how we do things. So we rely on one another to follow basic social norms and to treat each other well to produce, create and accomplish, as well as to just get through the day.

Self-management is especially important in a high performance work environment. In this section of the program, employees learn and practice repeatable skills to foster effective self-management. Additionally, these practices make for better relationships, enhanced trust, increased creativity and greater effectiveness at work and in all we do.

Understanding and mastery of our emotions, thoughts and even how we hold our bodies, is critical to self-management. **It's about moving "from compulsion to choice."** Self-management is about shifting away from a reaction when we feel compelled to do something (like sending an angry email) to pausing and making a wiser choice (to save it as a draft instead).

Self-management is the process of managing one's internal states, impulses and resources. Our 5-week digital program explores the impact of creating this little pause before jumping to our strong habitual reactions. Creating space before getting flustered, curbing the impulse to yell at a difficult colleague or not shutting down when someone else is disappointed in us.

These are vital skills to be able to stop, pause and take a breath in difficult situations – and respond as our wisest, most skillful self.



Self-management is particularly important when working with “triggers.” A trigger is a situation that creates a powerful surge of emotional activity and reactivity.



“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

- Victor Frankl, author, psychologist, and concentration camp survivor

PRACTICE TIP:

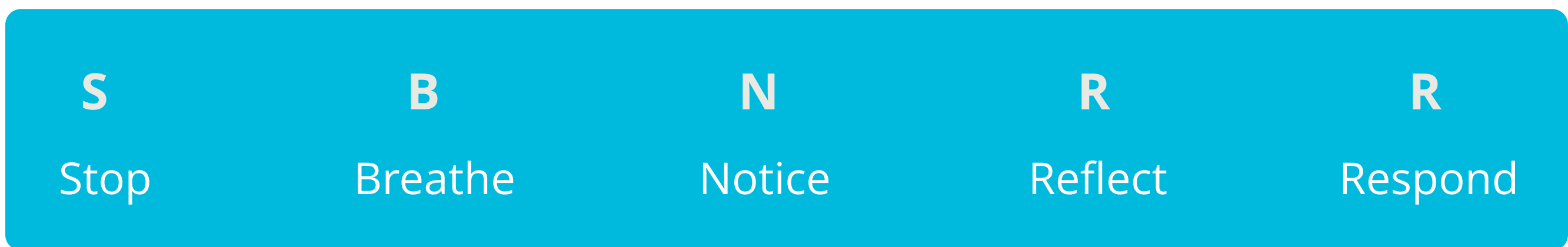
The amygdala is the brain’s alarm center: the emotional hub. It’s responsible for inciting emotions and storing memories. It’s main concern is self-preservation so it activates a full body defense response at any real or imagined threat. An “amygdala hijack” puts employees in a fight, flight or freeze mode. The higher reasoning center of the brain, the prefrontal cortex, goes offline. All of our attention zeros in on the threat and our muscle fibers twitch, ready to make any move for our survival. Maybe to run or to fight. With practice, anyone can improve their ability to regulate their emotions, their thought patterns, and respond with kindness.

By training in mindfulness and self-management, we can start to catch ourselves more readily when we are triggered, bring down our activation, and gain more perspective. And eventually start to diminish the frequency and duration of our triggered experiences.



Many think that regulating our emotions means suppressing, avoiding or denying our emotions. That's not true. James Gross at Stanford have run numerous studies demonstrating that there is a physiological cost when we do this. When we chronically clamp down on our responses, it drains our energy and impacts our physical health. It is OK to suppress occasionally, like in a job interview or during a big presentation, but we can't do it chronically.

A foundational self-management practice is the 5-step process called **SBNRR** to work with emotional triggers. Practicing this helps us develop the ability to respond more effectively to emotionally intense situations.



Employees will find SBNRR to be a powerful practice for managing triggers. We can find opportunities to practice SBNRR in our daily routines. The more we use it, the stronger the new neural pathways we're creating become. The most important takeaway is that self-management helps us move from compulsion to choice. And as we do, we gain the ability to navigate challenges more skillfully.

Think of it like steering a kayak. At the most basic level, self-management means not running into rocks and sinking the boat. With practice, however, self-management allows us to intentionally steer into the rapids of life with more confidence. We can work through difficult conversations with people we care about, or step into challenging new areas to grow.



3 Motivation

By helping employees understand their motivation, we encourage practices to help rediscover the things that bring them alive, envision a life that's aligned with their values, and practice living it. By uncovering what motivates them with greater focus and clarity, we can then help them align that with the work they're doing.

“Motivation” is where we get to start applying the self-awareness tools we've learned, and make choices about how to live a more fulfilling life.

Understanding motivation starts by examining one's own life, to discover and clarify the motivations already there. Then, going deeper by looking at motivations through the lenses provided by the experts.

Through the *Search Inside Yourself* program, we're always amazed by how inspired people feel when they rediscover what's most important to them. This occurs by exploring how to strengthen the courage to ask the big questions about our motivations, our visions for our lives. And how to maintain it through difficulty and setbacks.

Fundamentally we help employees reconsider major aspects of their life. How they spend their time, their attitudes towards work and life and relationships. And letting go of habits that aren't working for them.

Employees also do exercises to envision an ideal future. Envisioning activates the predictive brain, making it easier for us to stay focused on our goals. The reflections we do in this training also help us uncover, or make conscious, what we focus on.



4 Resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficulty faster, allowing employees to “stay the course” toward what’s most important to them. These practices help them learn how to develop Inner Calm, Emotional Resilience, and Cognitive Resilience as well as the foundation for mental calmness, composure and evenness of temper.

We all face setbacks. Things are always changing--and sometimes that’s hard for us.

Resilience is a quality that consistently predicts people’s ability to achieve long-term goals, to stay the course in their life. Practicing mindfulness develops EQ, which helps us become more resilient. Difficulties then become more like waves in the ocean: the waves may be stormy on the surface, but there’s a deep ocean of calm underneath that is unaffected.

Within the program, we help employees build resilience in three ways: Inner Calm, Emotional Resilience, and Cognitive Resilience. They learn to establish a composed, stable state, as a baseline – and, how to recover faster and more skillfully when they do face one of life’s inevitable setbacks. Consider it mental Aikido training - learning to move with life and their opponent gracefully, to maintain balance, and use their strengths through constant change.

As human beings, we experience a river of emotions that flow through us. Normally it’s tempting to get caught up in these emotions: we try to jump into the stream and grasp onto things that feel good, and push away things that feel bad.

Here, we learn to simply sit on the riverbank and observe as emotions come and go. We give ourselves some space in which we don’t need to force things to be a certain way. We allow ourselves to experience what’s present, trusting we can tolerate whatever is here. Over time, we gradually develop the ability to experience emotions with more confidence and ease, without fearing them or getting lost in them.



“ We train employees to label emotions as they come up such as: **“anger”, “fear”, “excitement.”**”

Giving it a name helps us create a perspective on our inner experience and see that the emotion itself is a temporary phenomenon - arising, fading, always changing. Naming our emotions also differentiates them from thoughts, which often amplify the emotion and create an inner virtual reality driven by it.



Noting the distinction between emotions, sensations and thoughts helps employees to see that emotions are temporary. We see that we don't need to be as reactive towards them, and there's something wonderfully freeing about not letting our minds or emotions carry us away.

We can become more emotionally resilient by being able to let go of the strong emotions related to success and failure. We can cultivate the ability to acknowledge and accept those emotions- even to appreciate and learn from them-but not to get swept away by them.

Both success and failure are part of our human experience. If we base our wellbeing on chasing success, it makes us more vulnerable to upset as it's impossible for everything to work out all the time. We don't always get what we want. And even when things do seem like they're working out, we can still become bored or restless. So we see that the more our wellbeing depends on external circumstances, the more off-balance we become and the more likely we are to experience suffering.

With the practice of holding success lightly, employees can appreciate it without losing track of a more basic sense of peace in your life. Without slipping into the stress and anxiety of needing to hold tightly onto success to be happy.

PRACTICE TIP:

Something we can do to short-circuit these loops and bring about greater joy is to practice gratitude. Gratitude has been shown to be one of the most powerful factors in long-term happiness.

To do it, we simply say thanks for what we have. We can do that through a number of different ways, like gratitude journaling or simply through developing an attitude of gratitude and appreciation as we sit quietly or move through our day.



The great gift of resilience is the ability to live the full range of our emotions. And that allows employees to live and appreciate a fuller range of experiences and opportunities in work and life. They will learn to better experience success and failure at work without getting caught up in them. They'll practice kindness and understanding toward others even when in conflict.

4 Empathy & Compassion

Having good relationships with others is a big part of what makes work and life satisfying. In this part of the program, employees learn how to better understand and connect with other people through the skills of empathy and compassion

Empathy and compassion are both trainable. Empathy involves understanding others' emotions and perspectives. Compassion involves having a feeling of warmth, goodwill, and a desire to help—even in difficult situations, or when people are feeling strong emotions.

These skills are good for healthy relationships, as well as for an employee's own wellbeing. Forbes magazine called empathy "the force that moves business forward" because it allows business leaders to relate more effectively to those they serve and helps them see the future needs of their organizations more clearly.

It's no wonder that training in empathy is becoming an increasing priority in fields like healthcare, education and law enforcement. These industries are recognizing its importance in relationships of all kinds.

Almost anything we try to do in business or in life involves other people, and when people feel understood and acknowledged, they want to join us, want to follow us, want to help us get things done. If we look behind a business that is successful, most likely there's a leader who has strongly developed the skill of empathy.

Empathy is an essential skill for leading and relating to people with emotional intelligence. Tough decisions are made every day, in the workplace, and in life. As leaders, we can make difficult decisions and execute plans while maintaining kindness and empathy.

Treating people with empathy and kindness creates trust and understanding. A foundation of trust optimizes the likelihood of finding creative solutions and better outcomes.

Empathy and compassion can help us better relate to what people are feeling, with greater openness and understanding. What do we value more than our relationships? Taking the time to learn and practice empathy & compassion techniques with the people we work and live with transforms our relationships, our team dynamic, and over time, our company cultures.



“ It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”

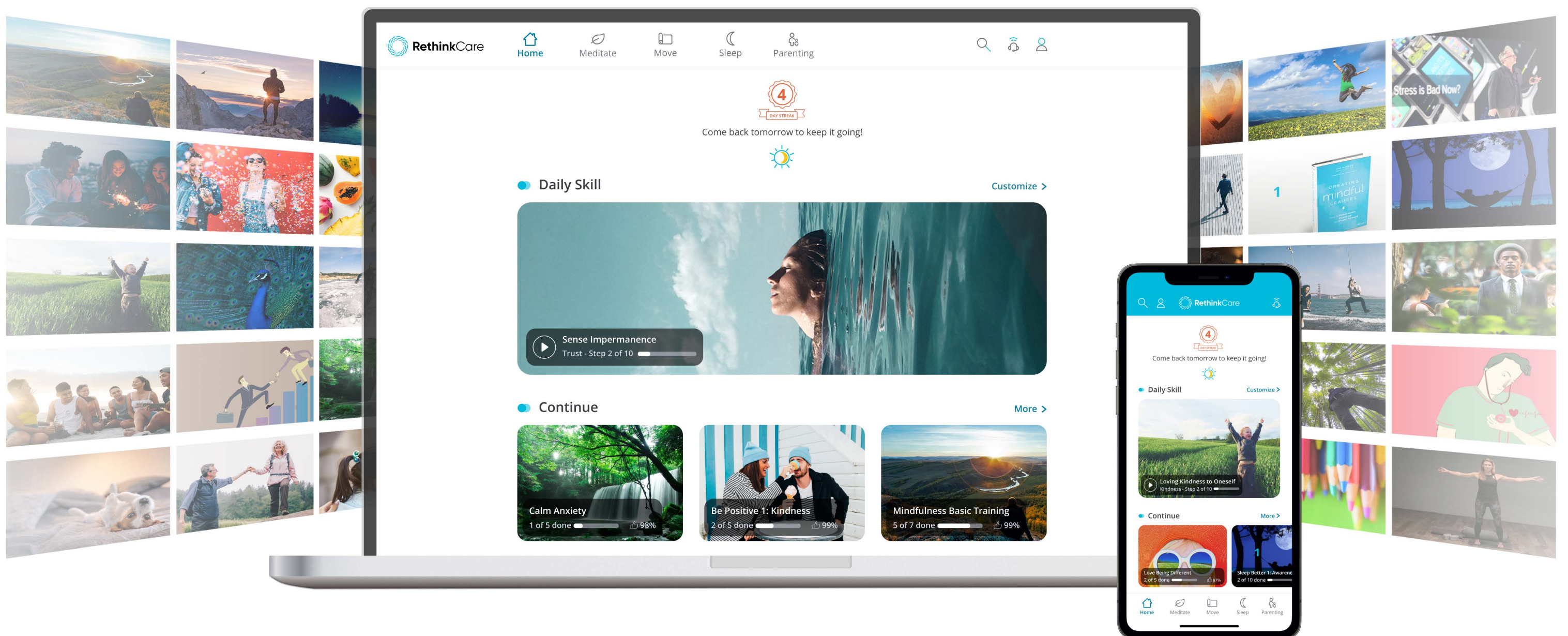
- Aristotle

Takeaways

Let's not argue with Harvard Business Review. Emotional intelligence truly is the "must-have skill for modern professionals." The practices we cover in our 5-Week digital program around self-awareness, self-management, motivation, resilience and empathy & compassion will equip your leaders, managers and professionals at any stage in their career for greater mental & emotional wellbeing. All of that adds up to more success and a healthier workforce.

What is RethinkCare?

RethinkCare is the leading holistic care platform for working parents, caregivers, and their families. The platform's live, expert parenting support and evidence-based trainings empower your people to be better parents, better employees, and better versions of themselves. We support the various needs of employees across all areas of their lives – from work life to home life and everything in between. Thirty of the Fortune 100 companies rely on RethinkCare's global enterprise platform to drive individual productivity and organizational performance. The platform is available in nine languages and can integrate with leading corporate wellness platforms and employee assistance programs (EAPs).



 9+ Languages

 30+ Training Areas

 370+ Mini-Courses

 9,000+ Sessions, Tips & Resources

Contact Us

To find out more about how RethinkCare's digital mindfulness, resilience and sleep training can improve outcomes for your employees and company, contact us at info@rethinkcare.com.

Because life is stressful and we're here to help.

The RethinkCare Team

Click here for more
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Get a Demo

About the Trainers

Our digital training program for emotional intelligence features master trainers from the famous *Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute* including Mark Lesser, Laurie Cameron, Dr. Dan Siegel, Dr. Rick Hanson, Lori Schwanbeck, Norman Fischer, Meg Levie, Simon Moyes, Michelle Maldonado and more.