

## Special Section on Central Oregon Coaches & Consultants

# Gifts of Emotional Intelligence

by ANN GOLDEN EGLÉ, MCC of GV&A, Coaching for Success

This third article, in a series distinguishing savvy from struggling leaders, may surprise you. Every indicator today points to the fact that in order to thrive in business, leaders must be savvy. An immediate sign of a savvy leader is their emotional intelligence.

Study after study proves that emotions provide valuable information. For example, *fear* warns us to be aware, while *joy* tells us that things are brilliant. Leaders who recognize their own emotions and the influence they have on their team are far ahead of the game.

The challenge with emotions is that we want to recognize our positive emotions and ignore or stuff the rest. When we



**Ann Golden Eglé**

suppress seemingly undesirable emotions it's like stuffing a beach ball under water—it will pop up at some unexpected time. You've likely experienced this in getting upset with your partner when you're really angry at a supplier.

Emotions not only provide valuable information in the moment but offer long term *gifts* if you simply notice and name them.

**Consider these gifts next time you experience the following positive emotions.**

**Joy** is the inner exhilaration you feel, oftentimes when accomplishing something like a great run or board presentation. It has nothing to do with anyone else, just you. The gift of joy is *emotional energy, confidence and a zest for living*.

**Love** is that flow of inexplicable optimistic feelings when exposed to someone or something that touches your heart. The gift is *strong, positive relationships*.

**Consider these gifts you might miss out on the next time you try to ignore or stuff a perceived undesirable emotion.**

**Anger**, the second oldest emotion, following fear, is an intense emotion often carried over from childhood. The gifts are that it can ignite *positive boundaries and change*.

**Anxiety** may have a specific focus as an upcoming presentation or be general feeling of being anxious (numbing, disoriented). The gift is that this confusion can stimulate *clarity*.

**Fear**, the oldest human emotions is a warning sign. It comes with a strong instinct for survival. The gift *heightened focus on safety and self protection*.

**Sadness** reflects loss, ours or another's, current or past. The gift is that we often become more *sensitive and compassionate*, both to ourselves and others.

**Shame** cuts deep and is related to 'not good enough' or 'not doing enough' which

is often characterized by perfectionism. The gift of shame is *humility*.

I invite savvy leaders, and savvy leaders in the making to recognize, not judge your emotions. The more you notice and name them, the more information and 'gifts' you will receive.

Now that you've heightened your awareness what's next? Stay tuned. We'll explore recognizing emotions in your team and how you can foster more positive emotions all the way around with a more positive work environment next month. In the meantime I invite your questions or observations on this topic.

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## Retirement – What Are You Going to Do When You Really Grow Up?

by LESLIE KOC of Coaching What's Next, LLC

If you thought it took only financial security to retire, think again. While financial security is certainly important, it is only one aspect of retirement. But what does "retirement" mean today anyway? It certainly isn't how your parents defined it. In fact "retirement" is quite a confusing and emotionally packed word. It's loaded with dreams, plans, fears and anxiety all at the same time.

The Department of Labor defines retirement simply as: working less than 40 hours and receiving some form of pension vehicle. With that definition it's quite easy to see that retirement can take on many faces. We are just beginning to get comfortable with the reality that those currently entering traditional retirement years will probably experience several retirements in their lifetime.

We are living longer; in the last 90 years longevity in developed countries has increased 30 years. That translates to living 30 to 40 years in this stage of life. Even with the economic downturn we are now experiencing, a recent Wall Street Journal survey found that the biggest reason surveyed adults planned to continue to work in retirement is not to get a paycheck, but rather to stay mentally fit.

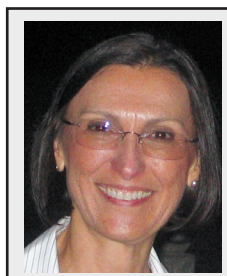
Whether a *first* retirement comes at 55

or 66, this is the best time of life to be in touch with what brings meaning to our lives and how work can be a critical part of that. Remembering that volunteering is work too, why do we work? Richard Johnson notes in his book, *The New Retirement*, that work has provided us with five specific benefits which have become part of our lives and value systems to the point that they have become basic needs.

**1) Time Management:** Work gives our life structure; it manages our time. We may complain that we are over managed by our work schedule, but it does keep our lives orderly.

**2) Utility:** Work gives us a sense of utility or purpose. We have more meaning in our lives by assisting others in some way through our work. Our work gives us a "cause" or mission from which we derive a level of satisfaction.

**3) Status:** It's from our work, our role, that we achieve a certain status. Through this status we define or measure our worth and identity. It gives us the answer to the question, "what do you do?"



**Leslie Koc**

**4) Socialization:** Our work brings us in constant personal contact with others. We are connected to others through our many workplace relationships.

**5) Financial Remuneration:** This is the most obvious function of work and the one that gets the most attention. Usually in the form of a paycheck, it provides a means to meet both material and emotional needs.

We must acknowledge and replace these five functions of work to find fulfillment in our retirement years. Ignore any one of them and the risk is similar to riding with a flat tire; we can move forward, but we are missing the smooth and pleasurable journey.

How does one start to design a fulfilling retirement? Realize first that work isn't all that bad and retirement won't be total bliss. There are many books, tools and assessments to enhance your preparation for your own unique retirement. The key point is to get started. Studies show that we put more time into planning our annual vacation than planning for our retirement. Just as the advice of the best time

to look for another job is while you have one, planning for your retirement should begin years in advance. So, what's next? How will you make the most of your 30 bonus years?

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Whether a first retirement comes at 55 or 66, this is the best time of life to be in touch with what brings meaning to our lives and how work can be a critical part of that. Remembering that volunteering is work too!



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