

This year I decided it was time to take more pro-active steps to manage my emotional attachment to the outcome of my conflict resolution work and I thought that increasing my investment in self-care might be a good place to start.

Over the last 10 weeks I have been undertaking one of [Daniel Goleman's online Emotional Intelligence Course](#) covering Emotional Intelligence and Leadership. It has been an unusually rewarding experience.

I have been using Goleman's material in my work for a long time and I thought I knew the material well and applied it effectively. However the ability to engage in some structured daily work and to reflect and debrief with an international cohort online has given me access to a much deeper understanding.

The program uses the original [4 domains and 12 competencies](#) and, under the self-awareness domain adds a further competency of **focus**. This adds much more depth to the self-awareness domain and helps participants to linger there rather than to move quickly to the domains which bring the attention to the external world.

With 2 weeks left of the program I have been reflecting on what worked and why and I am surprised that it has been such a success. I signed up at an incredibly busy time of my working year and I was far from enthusiastic when I began. I was working long hours and facing tight deadlines. I was tempted to cancel. At first glance, the work looked very basic and seemed to offer little that was new to me – 'Big mistake; big; huge' to add another useful *Pretty Woman* quote.

Some important tools

The big 'aha' was that whilst I have been drawing on the tools regularly, I have been accessing them for my work with others and completely overlooking how they offer support in my work on myself. This program has shone a spotlight on Self Awareness.

The benefits have been remarkable.

I thought sharing the 3 tools I found most valuable might be useful.

1. [Mirabai Bush's Well-wishing practice](#) has become an important start to my day – perhaps not quite how she intended since, whilst I do offer well-wishes to others as she suggests, I get the most benefit from choosing the wishes for myself. It is affirming and calming.
2. [The Atlas of Emotions](#) project provides a useful, analytical process for looking at emotions and what they do. Reviewing this with the facilitator provided new additions to my thinking and self-talk which included:
 - Treat emotions that show up kindly;
 - Sometimes we need to say to an emotion 'now is not a good time';
 - You don't have to believe your thoughts; and
 - What would it take to feel grateful about everything that showed up emotionally?

3. Exploring **Interoception** – an awareness of how emotion shows up physically in the body. It is the key to recognising the signs of an emotional hijack. This process has been particularly helpful in understanding what triggers me so I can work on my ability to down-regulate.

This is a work in progress for me and I still have 2 more weeks of hard work ahead. However I value the seemingly reckless and poorly informed decision I made to keep investing in self-development. It seems that I knew what I was doing after all!


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The graphic features a black background with white text and a circular icon. The icon depicts a group of stylized human figures, with one figure in the center being magnified by a magnifying glass. The background is accented with horizontal lines in blue and green.

This entry was posted on Monday, May 22nd, 2023 at 9:06 am and is filed under [Developing the Field](#), [Mediation Practice](#), [Mindset](#), [Practical Challenges for Mediators](#), [Reflective Practice](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.

