

THINK WORKBOOK 002:

EMOTIONAL LITERACY

*with Emotional Intelligence by
Daniel Goleman*

by Ivaylo Durmonski | Thinkers Club

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Exclusively for members, this deluxe workbook is made possible by members - thank you!

The benefit of this material is twofold: Help you better concentrate so you can fully immerse in the words. And, escape the online attention monsters.

If you think someone you know can gain from this downloadable, you can direct them to the [Thinkers Club](#) page.

Thank you for your support and for respecting my hard work!

AUTHOR'S NOTE



Hello and welcome! My name is Ivaylo Durmonski. I'm the person behind the website durmonski.com.

Here's what's next: A practical guide outlining the key actionable ideas from a remarkable book followed by guided writing exercises.

This workbook is designed to provoke thinking and doing. It will help you avoid sitting motionless and prompt you to act.

Ivaylo Durmonski

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THINK WORKBOOK |

INTRODUCTION

Instructions: Section outlining the core purpose of this workbook, a nudge to sign a pledge for doing, and what's actually included in this digital asset.

PURPOSE

It's hard to understand what the books we read are all about - how they apply to our lives, what strategies we can adopt from them, what we can change in ourselves based on the text - unless we actively think about the content inside.

The aim of this Think Workbook is to help you improve your reading habits, stimulate thinking, and ignite action.

The pages that follow patiently unpack the best insights from the book Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman, so we can make the most of the material.

The content is particularly useful in our busy, hyper-connected, and maddening world.

THE PLEDGE

Bringing intelligence to our emotions and civility to our actions has nothing to do with reading all that is available online.

It has everything to do with how you engage with the content. How you connect the introduced concepts with your existing knowledge, while also taking into account your personality and the current situation.

Don't get stressed if you are not able to complete *everything* proposed. Life and progress are not linear. Focus more on reading slowly to understand and apply. Progress can be painfully inert, but that's not limiting as long as it's genuine and continuous.

With that being said, before attempting any of the proposed ahead, I want you to consider signing a declaration. It's a simple act, but it can greatly increase your level of participation.

I promise that I will schedule time with myself to read and think, really think, about the content.

I promise that I won't feel bad about any unread material or unaccomplished exercise.

I'm perfectly aware that there is more content on the subject but more, in the online world full of endless rabbit holes, is more a distraction than a benefit.

Sometimes, I will be unsuccessful in my attempts to focus on the content or implement what's proposed in the book. That is normal. I will not let these things hold me back. Instead, I will regroup, find what's working best for me, and practice based on my own schedule.

Signed by:

WHAT'S INSIDE?

This workbook is divided into 7 sections:

- 1. Theme:** A short introduction of the theme explored in this downloadable.
- 2. Toolkits:** The best actionable strategies outlined in the book, clearly presented.
- 3. Exercises:** Powerful ways to think about the content.
- 4. Reflect:** Reflect on the material and describe what you'll do next with the content.
- 5. Takeaways:** What's your takeaway from what you've read?
- 6. Reading material:** What to read.
- 7. Note-taking:** A gentle nudge to take notes while you go through the suggested reading material.

THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 01:

THEME: EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Instructions: A short introduction of the theme explored in this Think Workbook placing the problem front and center along with the proposed solution.

PROLOGUE

There is no doubt that our feelings matter. But how often do you talk about them?

Emotional competence (EQ) is a precious skill we all need to get better at. Sadly, few people teach us how this should be approached.

As the author of the book on focus explains, “being emotionally literate is as important for learning as to handle life as learning math and reading.”

But that’s putting it mildly. Unlike other important skills - math,

science, reading, etc., - emotions are an inseparable part of our identity and at the same time vital life-saving skills.

Rationality is secondary. We first feel and react, and only then we ignite the thinking part. This often makes us unable to properly handle the obstacles we face.

So, how do we improve our EQ? Start with realizing that we always have a choice about how to respond to our emotions.

PROBLEM

Our emotions are the automatic urgent, impulsive even, response of our body and mind when facing an unexpected situation. It's our ability to react when we are facing a dangerous, potentially life-threatening situation that is far too important to leave to the intellect to think about - i.e., jump when a car is approaching. Sadly, these automatic reactions often cause more harm than good, especially in the modern world where you can end up in jail for saying something inappropriate. Plainly, we are designed to feel (and react) before we think.

SOLUTION

Emotional intelligence is the ability to rule over your emotions, not let them rule you. And it's a skill that can be mastered. People with well-developed emotional skills are better at battling sabotaging thoughts that are trying to prevent them from doing their best work. It's a Jedi-like power that helps you coordinate your actions, swiftly handle provocations, adversity, recover quickly after a loss, and regain hope even when all seems hopeless. EQ gives you the capacity to better understand your feelings, quickly regroup, and react intelligently to what's happening around you.

GET INSPIRED

“A view of human nature that ignores the power of emotions is sadly shortsighted. The very name Homo sapiens, the thinking species, is misleading in light of the new appreciation and vision of the place of emotions in our lives that science now offers. As we all know from experience, when it comes to shaping our decisions and our actions, feeling counts every bit as much—and often more—than thought.” Daniel Goleman

“One is an act of the emotional mind, the other of the rational mind. In a very real sense we have two minds, one that thinks and one that feels.” Daniel Goleman

“The working of the emotional mind is to a large degree state-specific, dictated by the particular feeling ascendant at a given moment. How we think and act when we are feeling romantic is entirely different from how we behave when enraged or dejected; in the mechanics of emotion, each feeling has its own distinct repertoire of thought, reactions, even memories. These state-specific repertoires become most predominant in moments of intense emotion.” Daniel Goleman

THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 02:

TOOLKITS

Instructions: Powerful strategies from the book, clearly presented, making it easy for you to implement in your daily life.

INTRAPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE

This is the ability to turn all of your senses towards yourself, so you can better understand yourself.

It's the type of intelligence that will help you draw a line, and outline your boundaries. Point out what type of activities you like, dislike, and why. Basically, you spot the emotions behind the actions.

It is also the skill to recognize and respond properly to other people's moods, motivations, and desires.

Your ability to be fully aware of your own feelings, and read these same things in others, is the key to self-mastery and getting along with others.

Helpful for:

- *Understanding yourself and what motivates you.*
- *Better responding to others by sensing their moods.*
- *Resolve conflicts and fix your mood, faster.*

Prompts:

- *What's your first reaction when facing a difficult situation?*
- *When you are feeling bad, what's (usually) the root cause of the negative emotion?*
- *Can you point out the favorite activities of your friends and colleagues? What type of activities usually makes them happy/sad?*

COGNITIVE REFRAMING

Cognitive reframing is a powerful depression-lifter. It's a super simple, yet rarely used technique. Put simply, it's about forcing yourself to see things differently.

Losing a job or being rejected by a person (a breakup) are things that can surely lead to depression. But instead of obsessing in self-pitying, you concentrate on the ways the relationship wasn't so great. Why the job wasn't the right fit and building upon these statements.

Another example of this framework to quickly lift your mood is comparing yourself to someone who is in worse shape than you. A downward comparison so to say.

Helpful for:

- *Escaping depressing moods.*
- *Take control over your mind and expel negative thoughts.*
- *Inviting the rational mind in a purely emotional situation.*

Prompts:

- *When feeling down, think about the positives - what you've learned from the situation?*
- *Compare yourself to someone who is worse than you.*
- *If depressed and exposed to "successful people", find ways to avoid them for a while.*
- *Instead of feeling worthless if your boss yells at you, reframe it by stating that, "he's probably having a bad day."*

RESISTING TEMPTATION

Self-imposed impulse control is the holy grail skill of progress. However, we are bad at delaying gratification because the very nature of emotion is to trigger movement - we see a wild animal, this forms a feeling, we act on this feeling.

A key ability in impulse control is understanding the difference between feelings and actions, and making better decisions by not acting on the first impulse.

Seeing a chocolate pudding can cause the end of your diet. But when you identify the feeling that emerges from you seeing the desert - I want to feel good! - you can more easily find alternatives. So, think: "What other activity can make me feel good based on my goal to lose weight?"

Helpful for:

- *People who want to build resilience.*
- *The best way to keep progressing on a long-term goal.*
- *Stop acting impulsively.*

Prompts:

- *Think of ways to remove the irresistible desires from your life. (e.g., don't buy sweets if you're on a diet).*
- *When facing something tempting, think about the emerging feeling and find alternative ways to react to soothe the feeling. (e.g., exercise instead of eating a dessert).*

SOCS - PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

SOCS is a framework for dealing with problematic situations. The acronym stands for Situation, Options, Consequence, Solutions.

This is a short four-step model that can help you with problematic situations and mitigate nasty situations.

Here's the gist of the framework:

1) Explain the situation and how it makes you feel; 2) Consider all possible solutions and 3) their consequences; 4) Go ahead and act based on the best plan.

The main benefit of this approach is that it allows you to think, strategically, before you act.

Helpful for:

- *Anticipating possible worst-case scenarios.*
- *Brainstorming solutions to possible (future) problems.*
- *Getting out, unhurt, from a difficult situation.*

Prompts:

- *When challenged, imagine a red light and stop. Don't act. Think first.*
- *Consider all possible solutions and the consequences before you do something.*
- *Don't wait for bad things to happen to you, think about what could happen and how would you best react in advance?*

OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK

Being hopeful and optimistic is more than just smiling and presenting a happy face.

It's an attitude all successful people possess - for a good reason.

Optimistic people don't take feedback personally. When rejected, they don't form inner thoughts that state, "I'm a failure!" They assess the situation as an opportunity to change their approach. Usually, they tell themselves something like, "I should try a different strategy!" And/or, "This person is probably not a good fit for what I'm selling."

Put simply, optimism helps you get up after defeats - big and small.

Helpful for:

- *People who take rejection personally.*
- *Keeping your morale up when things are not going smoothly.*
- *Bounce back from failures.*

Prompts:

- *When rejected, don't see yourself as incapable. Spot what can be modified in the situation.*
- *Your belief about your abilities is key. If you think you can do it, you've won half of the battle.*
- *How do you handle rejection and what can you improve?*

DISPLAY EMOTIONS

Properly presenting your emotions is a swift skill that is hard to master.

On one hand, you don't want to go crazy when someone makes a comment about your shoes.

On the other, showing no emotion makes you colorless, ordinary, boring even.

Comedians are funny not only because they tell jokes. They make us laugh because they skillfully manage their emotions + facial expression, tone of voice, etc.

Sometimes you'd need to mask your real feelings when they can potentially hurt someone. Other times, you'll want to express them loudly to make others like you.

Helpful for:

- *Influencing the social situation you are in.*
- *Attuning yourself to the emotional state of others.*
- *Pass good emotions to others.*

Prompts:

- *People catch what we are displaying. What type of emotions you usually evoke?*
- *You can be "popular" or "charming" if you decide.*
- *When you meet people, add a bit of extra energy to your voice. Display a happy face. You'll make both of you feel better.*

THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 03:

EXERCISES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Instructions: Each one of the following pages carries an exercise based on a short snippet from the book. The goal is to sit, think, and write down your answer after deep reflection.

EXERCISE #1: WHAT'S BEHIND AN EMOTION?

“When we teach about anger, we help kids understand that it is almost always a secondary reaction and to look for what’s underneath are you hurt? jealous? Our kids learn that you always have choices about how you respond to emotion, and the more ways you know to respond to an emotion, the richer your life can be.” Daniel Goleman

Spotting how people feel - and how you feel - is a key skill that can help you find better outcomes to a conflicting situation - and not allow yourself to act impulsively.

To get better at this skill, ask yourself: “How do I feel when I’m frustrated? Sad? Anxious?”

Also, explain how a face shifts when it’s happy, sad, afraid, disgusted. Add everything you can think of.

This might sound basic, but taking extra time to consider these nuances in the people’s faces can help you act better when you spot agitated folks. Also, it can help you ask the critical question: “What’s actually underneath this anger/sadness/jealously?”

A sheet of lined paper with 21 horizontal lines for writing.

EXERCISE #2: THINK ABOUT YOUR EMOTIONS

Since emotions are the things that decide how we respond to most of the situations we encounter, it makes sense to spend more time observing them.

Yes, taking the time to consider how you feel might sound too girly for some adults, but it's a great way to better assess yourself. If you fail to do so, you might reach a state of emotional flatness - called alexithymia. Or as Daniel Goleman writes, "Such people lack words for their feelings. Indeed, they seem to lack feelings altogether, although this may actually be because of their inability to express emotion rather than from an absence of emotion altogether."

How do you start? Simple, think about recent events that made you unstable, sad, agitated, excited. What was the root cause of these feelings, and why do you think they have appeared before anything else?

EXERCISE #3: UPGRADE YOUR ARSENAL OF RESPONSES

We always have a choice about how to respond to a certain situation. But since we're hardwired to feel and respond before we adequately evaluate what's happening - apply intelligence to our actions - we usually act impulsively. This, as you can imagine, can often lead to some nasty consequences - saying something inappropriate, shouting to others, etc.

Crafting smart responses to potential future situations can make your life richer. But how do you approach this?

Self Science, a leading curriculum that teaches children of emotional intelligence, can guide us. The following is part of the program's final exam: "Socratic examination, an oral test in Self Science. One question from a recent final: "Describe an appropriate response to help a friend solve a conflict over someone pressuring them to try drugs, or over a friend who likes to tease." Or, "What are some healthy ways to deal with stress, anger, and fear?"

Consider answering these questions (or modify them slightly to match your life) so you can prevent emotional pitfalls and better prepare for the future:

EXERCISE #4: HANDLING DEPRESSION

“International data show what seems to be a modern epidemic of depression, one that is spreading side by side with the adoption throughout the world of modern ways. Each successive generation worldwide since the opening of the century has lived with a higher risk than their parents of suffering a major depression—not just sadness, but a paralyzing listlessness, dejection, and self-pity, and an overwhelming hopelessness—over the course of life.” Daniel Goleman

The likelihood of experiencing depression is increasing with each year. And while the reasons vary, a major role in adopting a negative outlook is how we see failure. If you see mistakes and setbacks as lasting and unchangeable, this will lead to hopelessness.

The solution is to adopt a larger perspective. When disappointments occur, it’s vital to have a supportive group of people and accept the concept that you have a say in what happens next.

So, are you the type of person who says, “I’m stupid” when things are not going as planned or are you someone who says, “If I work harder and smarter I can make this work!”?

EXERCISE #5: INCREASE YOUR FEELING AWARENESS

Poor awareness of how you feel will make you react equally to different feelings. Why is this a problem?

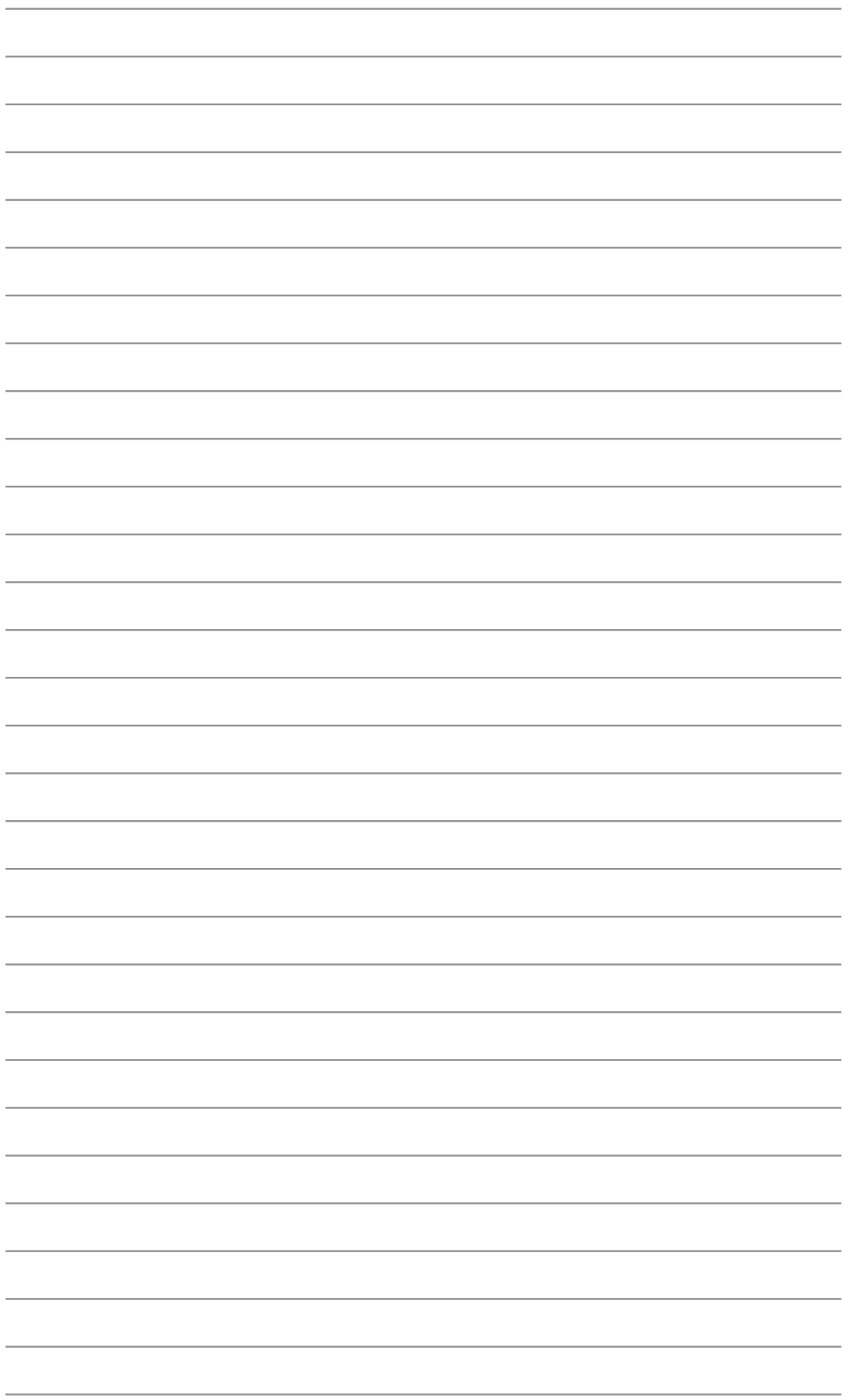
As stated in the book, “Some obese people are unable to tell the difference between being scared, angry, and hungry, and so lump all those feelings together as signifying hunger, which leads them to overeat whenever they feel upset.”

There is a difference between eating when you’re hungry and eating when you are bored or when you’re sad. If we are unable to distinguish between the different sensations we are experiencing, we teach ourselves to consume food (or alcohol, or drugs, etc.) every time we feel unpleasant.

The solution seems simple: learn to differentiate your feelings.

But it’s not that easy in practice.

Based on the above, think about the following: How do you primarily react when you’re sad? A lot of people drink, eat, smoke, etc. How can you react better? (For example: exercise, write, call a friend...)



THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 04:

REFLECT AND NEXT STEPS

Instructions: The added space after each question is giving you the opportunity to express yourself, to talk to yourself - uninterrupted. This creates a moment in which you are able to plan your future steps.

Anger outbursts are common residents in our lives. When we explode, we don't think straight - literally. The center in the limbic brain is blocked, and thinking is not an option. This is called neural hijacking. One of the best ways to handle these animal-like reactions is by waiting for the moment to pass or by changing the scenery (e.g., exit the room). What are common situations that make you act like an angry beast? How can you react better next time?

The decisions we make are often suboptimal not because our IQ is low, but because we are emotionally weak. Talent and smartness doesn't equal fame and/or riches. You can still make disastrous choices in business, life, etc., even if you are often called brilliant. To keep moving forward, think of ways (in advance) that will keep you motivated so you can persist even in the face of frustrations. For example, think about: "How can I stay engaged with my long-term goal when my plan is not working as I expected?" Or, "How to keep working when I'm feeling down?"

The ability to control your impulses has a direct correlation with how your life will unfold. Put in a 21st-century language, don't check social media when you have work to do. And, don't eat sweets when you're on a diet.

Based on this, think about what are your go-to bad activities? The things you automatically do (constantly checking social media, eating a lot, shopping, other)?

Then, consider this: Usually, we are doing the above not because we are hungry or craving the social channels, but because we feel bored. The question then becomes: How can you better handle boredom?

Write a short, break-in-case-of-emergency type letter to yourself. A supportive note where you include the list of things you've accomplished in your life. This will help you feel hopeful when everything seems lost and when your self-esteem is low.

THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 05:

TAKEAWAYS

Instructions: Capture what you currently think is most important before the vague ideas and concepts disappear from your consciousness forever. I'll share mine first. Then, you share yours.

TAKEAWAYS:

My key takeaways:

- Taking the time to think about my emotions will help me spot bad patterns in my life. Plus, allow me to craft better responses when disturbing feelings arise.
- Thinking about the feelings of others is not only the best way to understand them. It's also the best way to soothe them. The best way to connect with them and improve our relationship.
- Obsessing over a breakup or being rejected is not helpful. It's unavoidable, but not something that will make me feel better. Instead of self-pitying, think about, "Why this change is good for me?"
- Sharpening my resisting-temptation skills will make me more productive, thinner (finally stop eating sweets), and more organized.
- A good way to deal with emotionally intense situations (anger, sadness) is by waiting. Think about, "Why do I feel angry? What's the root cause?"
- Feeling hopeful and optimistic even amidst turbulent times is the best way to keep going. A list of things that boost my mood should always be within reach.

TAKEAWAYS:

Your takeaways:

THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 06:

READING MATERIAL

Instructions: Consider reading the book this workbook is based on. Or, the summary on my site. Focus on associating the newly acquired knowledge with your existing knowledge.

WHAT TO READ:

This workbook is based on the following book:

- Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman: [/link to book;](#) [link to book summary/](#)

Other recommendations:

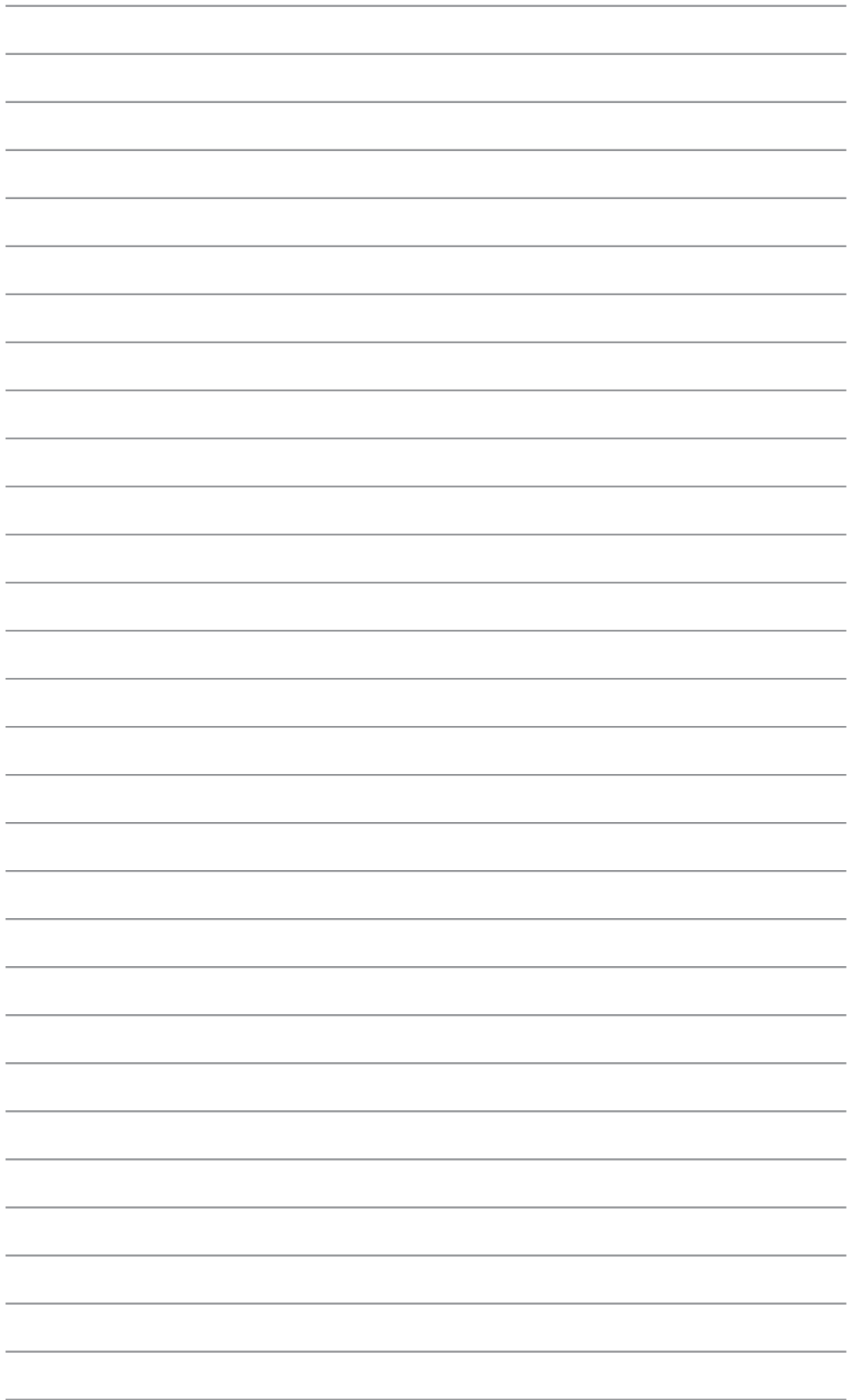
- The Virtue of Delayed Gratification [/article/](#)
- Emotional agility: how to build resilience in times of crisis [/article/](#)
- Amygdala hijack [/article/](#)
- How Emotionally Healthy Are You? [/video/](#)
- Goleman Introduces Emotional Intelligence [/video/](#)

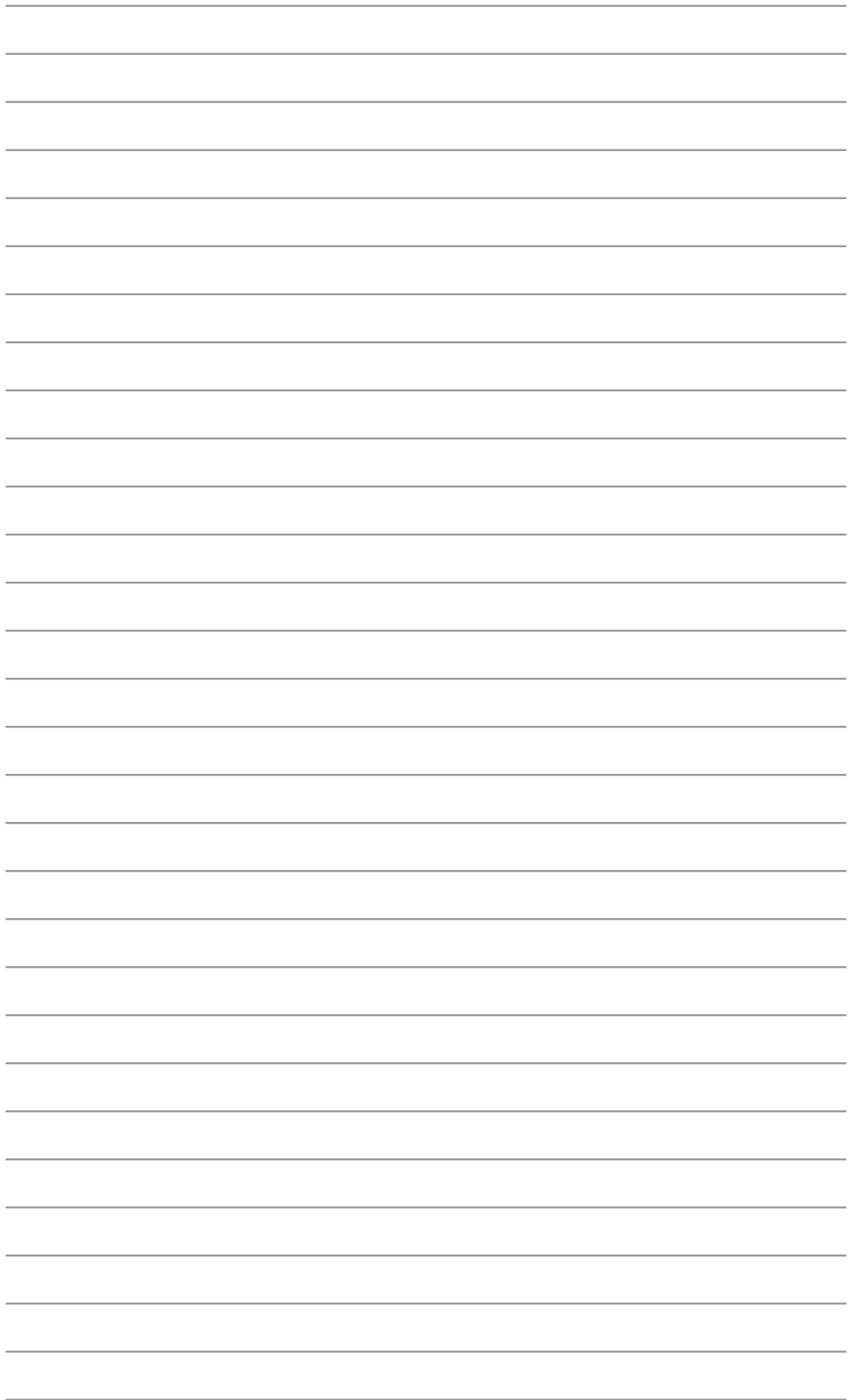
Keep in mind that you don't necessarily have to read/watch everything. The idea is to get a wide understanding of this single topic, so you can later better apply the concepts to your life.

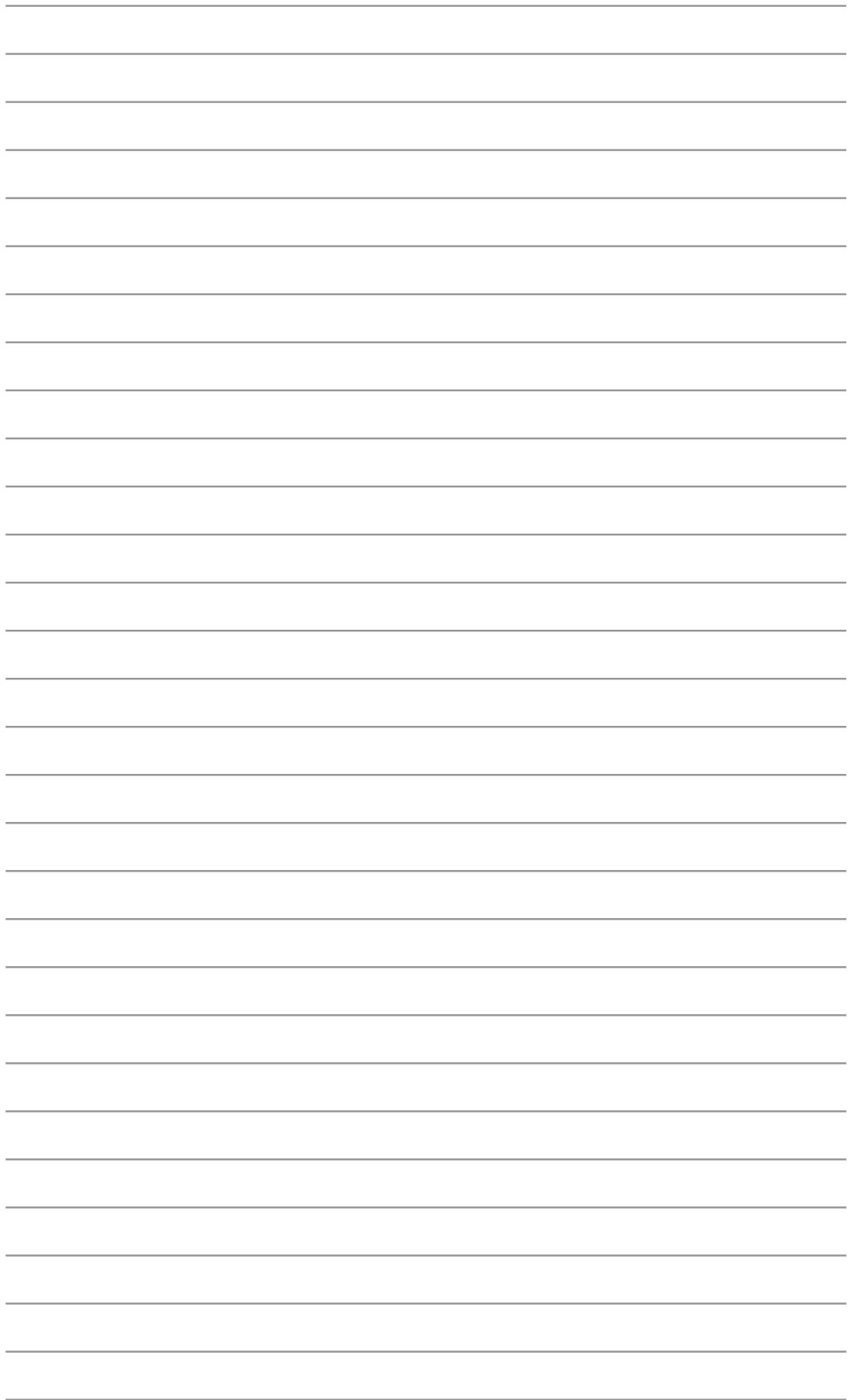
THINK WORKBOOK | SECTION 07:

NOTE-TAKING

Instructions: The best way to start engaging with any form of content is to take notes. Print the following pages as many times as you want to take notes. Or, simply use a notebook or an online app to capture your insights.







END

All the mentioned ideas are offered only as a starting point. The main goal is to slow down and actively think about the content. This self-reflection will help you develop the skills you need to operate effectively.

Till next time!