

Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment: Too Little, Too Much, or Balanced

Read the article first. This self-assessment accompanies [Emotional and Social Intelligence as a Living Balance | A Map for When You Want to Grow](#) at ThoughtsFromATherapist.com, which describes each capacity, what it looks like at both ends, and what balance asks of it. Search “emotional and social intelligence” on the site to find it.

Each capacity of emotional and social intelligence sits on a spectrum. Too little creates rigidity, and too much creates chaos. Balance is not a fixed midpoint. It moves with context, and the same capacity can sit in balance at work and drift at home. This is a reflection, not a test. There is no score and no type. We read it by degree and by context: where am I balanced, where do I drift, and in which relationships?

BEFORE WE START

Name two contexts

Choose two places or relationships that ask different things of us: at work and at home, with a partner and with a parent, an ordinary day and a hard week. Each capacity gets marked twice, once for each context.

THE MARKS

Too little, balanced, too much

Each row runs from the under-expressed end on the left to the over-expressed end on the right. The larger middle dot is balance. Mark an O on the dot that fits context one, and an X on the dot that fits context two. A mark near the middle means mostly balanced, with some movement.

READING IT

Drift, context, and pairs

Look for three things. Capacities that drift in both contexts. Capacities that sit far apart between the two contexts, which tells us the drift belongs to a setting more than to us. And paired drifts, where one capacity running high travels with another running low.

Where am I balanced, and where do I drift?

Which capacities change most between my two contexts?

Which high mark seems to travel with which low one?

HOLDING IT

Over-expression was once adaptive

A capacity running too high is usually a strength that once protected us and stayed on after the conditions changed. The work is not in achieving perfect balance. It is in learning how each capacity moves in us and what it asks of us in different contexts.

A WORKED EXAMPLE: COMPASSION AND SELF-ADVOCACY

THE CONTEXT

A conversation about pay or recognition with someone we care about, where power, money, or recognition are involved.

TOO MUCH

Compassion. We read every flinch of discomfort in the other person and move to soothe it before a word is spoken. We apologize for existing in tension.

TOO LITTLE

Boundaries and self-advocacy. Guilt and worth are the first emotions to surface when a boundary needs to be drawn.

THE PAIR

The very sensitivity that makes us valuable becomes the reason we hesitate to advocate for that value.

BALANCE

“I appreciate how much this conversation brings up for both of us. My intention is to find an arrangement that honors us equally.”

Self, others, and the relationship between

Mark O on the dot for context one and X on the dot for context two.

MY TWO CONTEXTS

Context one (O): _____ Context two (X): _____

SELF-ORIENTED CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE	BALANCED	TOO MUCH
Self-awareness	We react automatically. Old patterns take over.	☐	☒	Self-monitoring. Ease disappears and attention turns into tension.
Self-compassion	We minimize, dismiss, or judge our emotions.	☐	☒	We over-identify with feelings. Every emotion becomes a directive.
Acceptance	We fight against reality and resist what already exists.	☐	☒	We stop advocating for ourselves. Difficult situations are tolerated.
Discipline	Goals stall. Choices follow emotion instead of intention.	☐	☒	Structure becomes rigidity. Rest is overridden.

Filling this in on a screen: click a dot and type the letter for the mark.

OTHER-ORIENTED CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE	BALANCED	TOO MUCH
Empathy	Emotional information is missed. We rely on literal content.	☐	☒	Boundaries blur. Other people's emotions feel like our responsibility.
Compassion and kindness	Distant, dismissive, or overly cognitive.	☐	☒	We overextend and absorb burdens that aren't ours.
Capacity for repair	We bypass conflict or pretend nothing happened.	☐	☒	We apologize excessively or fix tension that isn't ours to fix.
Boundaries and leadership	We collapse into compliance. Boundaries soften.	☐	☒	Leadership becomes control. Boundaries turn rigid or punitive.

RELATIONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE	BALANCED	TOO MUCH
Relational timing	We push conversations faster than the relationship can hold.	☐	☒	Overly cautious, waiting for perfect moments that never come.
Attachment integration	Defended or disengaged. Connection feels distant.	☐	☒	Over-attached, overly responsible for the relationship.
Contextual judgment	One relational style regardless of context.	☐	☒	We overthink the moment and lose spontaneity.

WHERE THE MARKS SAT FAR APART

Which capacities moved most between my two contexts? What does each context ask of me?

Mind, body, values, and meaning

Same two contexts. *O* for context one, *X* for context two.

COGNITIVE-EMOTIONAL CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE			BALANCED			TOO MUCH
Wisdom and dialectic maturity	Rigid thinking. Simple explanations for complex problems.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Everything becomes relative. We struggle to commit.
Knowledge and curiosity	We rely on assumptions. Emotional information stays unexamined.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	We analyze when we should witness.
Playfulness	Life feels heavy or overly controlled.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Play becomes a distraction or defense. Serious issues are minimized.
Response flexibility	Reactions replace responses.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	The pause becomes over-analysis. Decisions stall.

SOMATIC AND EMBODIED CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE			BALANCED			TOO MUCH
Somatic awareness	We miss early signs of activation.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Every shift in sensation reads as meaningful or a problem.
Somatic regulation	States escalate quickly. Stress lingers.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Regulation becomes control. We override authentic emotion.
Stress and arousal	Easily overwhelmed or easily depleted.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	We stay activated even when safety has returned.

ETHICAL AND MORAL CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE			BALANCED			TOO MUCH
Grounded hope	Resignation. Challenges feel permanent.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	We minimize harm or cling to unlikely possibilities.
Values discernment	We follow external expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Rigid or moralizing. Values turn into rules rather than guides.
Integrity	We act against our values. Self-trust weakens.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Standards that leave no room for humanity, error, or growth.

EXISTENTIAL AND ECOLOGICAL CAPACITIES

		TOO LITTLE			BALANCED			TOO MUCH
Meaning	Life feels flat. Accomplishments feel hollow.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Purpose becomes pressure. Every moment must be meaningful.
Ambiguity and paradox	We grasp for certainty and resolve tension too quickly.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	We drift into vagueness. Decisions stall.
Ecological awareness	We overlook the systemic forces shaping our lives.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	Responsible for the state of the world. Our own needs get lost.

WHERE THE MARKS SAT FAR APART

Which of these moved most between my two contexts?

Reading the map

No totals. We look for patterns, and every pattern is read by degree and context.

DRIFT

Where I drift in
both contexts

Which capacities sat away from the middle both times? Which way, too little or too much?

CONTEXT

Where the setting
matters

Which capacities sat far apart between my two contexts? What is it about that setting or relationship?

PAIRS

Drifts that travel
together

Which high mark seems to travel with which low one? (Compassion high with boundaries low is a common pair.)

ADAPTATION

What the high end
once protected

Pick one capacity running too high. When did it help? What was it protecting me from then?

ONE CAPACITY THIS WEEK

Small is fine. Balance here means a little less of one end, in one context.

THE CAPACITY, AND THE CONTEXT:

WHAT BALANCE WOULD LOOK LIKE THERE, IN ONE SENTENCE:

WHO OR WHAT HELPS ME NOTICE WHEN IT DRIFTS:

These capacities are skills we grow into slowly and with intention, not traits we are born with or without. This isn't a checklist to conquer. It is a shared language to return to when things feel off.