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7 Ways to Boost Your Emotional Intelligence



When it comes to talking about intelligence, someone's intelligence quotient (IQ) is usually what comes to mind; however, there is another type of intelligence that's often overlooked but equally important: your emotional intelligence (EQ).

Your EQ is a key component of building any professional or personal relationship. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage your emotions and other people's. It is important for navigating your relationships with your boss, colleagues, friends, family, and your significant other.

According to **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**, a neuropsychologist and faculty member at Columbia University, there are three primary pillars of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, motivation to rationally look at a problem and find a solution, and the ability to develop social skills. Luckily, you can constantly work on these three pillars to boost your emotional intelligence so you can develop a stronger self-awareness, which will impact your ability to interpret and respond to other people's emotions and your own.

Here are seven expert tips to help you boost your emotional intelligence.

1. Interact Often

Dr. Julie Gurner, a business consultant with a doctorate in psychology, suggests that you incorporate more social interactions into your day. She recommends adding more small talk to your routine. For example, instead of listening to music, texting, and checking your email while walking to work, seek out genuine interactions with the barista at the coffee shop or the person you see as you walk by the dog park every morning. According to Dr. Gurner, "Small, brief social interactions outside our office helps us to connect better with others inside our office."

2. Keep a Journal

Dr. Danielle Harlan, the founder and CEO of the Center for Advancing Leadership and Human Potential with a doctorate in political science and a masters degree in education, emphasizes the importance of journaling regularly in order to identify our emotions. "Part of being emotionally intelligent involves knowing what you are feeling at any particular point in time," she says. Harlan explains that, "Journaling (especially after emotionally charged interactions) helps people to better understand what they were feeling and to recognize patterns of behavior in themselves and others."

GLAMOUR

glamour.com

Every Strategy I've Tried to Stop Picking My Cuticles, Ranked



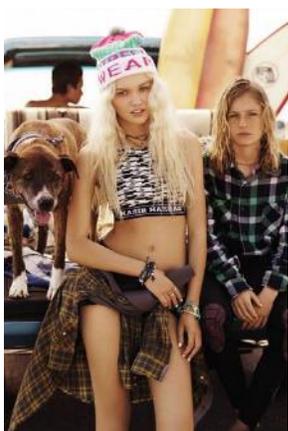
I am a cuticle picker. This is a point of shame, both personal and professional. After all, I'm a beauty writer—people pay me to know about grooming and how to make everything, including my [nails](#), look presentable. And, yet, my hands always look slightly mangled and sad. Any time I'm in a situation where I want to look like I have my life together, like meeting a new client for the first time or a wedding I'm going stag to, I suddenly get all self-conscious about the state of my hands.

There's one thing I'm proud to report they aren't, though—bloody. This seems to be an important distinction when I checked in on the topic with Manhattan-based neuropsychologist [Dr. Sanam Hafeez](#). She started by telling me, “Compulsively picking your cuticles is medically known as Onychophagia. It's currently classified as an impulse control disorder and is also sometimes referred to as a body-focused repetitive behavior.”

Wait, what? *I have a disorder?* The urge to pick grew with each word Dr. Hafeez said...until I asked about my situation specifically. I mostly pick at my cuticles with my fingers, with an occasional bite here or there. And I only reach the point of raw spots when I'm really stressed out or in the dead of winter when my hands start to resemble alligator claws. She relaxed. “If you are just picking your cuticles and not drawing blood

www.teenvogue.com

12 Doctor-Approved Reasons Why Dogs Are Good for Your Health



One of the best things about having a dog is knowing you have backup when your mom makes something really gross for dinner. (Sorry, Mom!) But turns out, there are lots of other reasons why having a dog is good for you, many of which actually have to do with your mental and emotional health. In honor of National Puppy Day, here are 12 reasons why dogs rule.

They may help against allergies and asthma

"This one may sound counterintuitive, but children who grow up in homes with furry friends are actually less likely to develop common allergies," **says Sanam Hafeez, PsyD, a Manhattan neuropsychologist.** "Studies have shown that children who were exposed to two or more dogs or cats as babies were less than half as likely to develop allergies, including dust, grass, ragweed and pet allergies, and were at a lower risk for asthma. Allergies can cause people to become lethargic, apathetic, and suffer from insomnia, which can make them more vulnerable to mental health issues, such as depression."

CBS New York





consumersdigest.com

How yoga helps ADHD



Amid constant budget cuts in child services, such as those that were proposed by North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple in February 2016, parents and school administrators turn to so-called mindfulness practices as a budget-friendly way to help relieve everyday struggles of children who have inattentive attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), which was known as attention deficit disorder (ADD).

Doreen Foxwell, who is the owner of The Children's School of Yoga, tells Consumers Digest that her company has seen schools incorporate on-staff yoga instructors.

Mindfulness focuses on breath awareness through yoga to teach students to control and channel their emotions.

Some mindfulness exercises might produce chemical changes in the brain, which might result in a sense of focus and control, says Dr. Khalid Afzal, who is the director of child psychiatry at University of Chicago.

Dr. Sanam Hafeez, who is the clinical director of Comprehensive Consultation Psychological Services, believes that mindfulness can treat all levels of inattention. However, it has to be calibrated to the child's age and ability to understand and comply.

"It is best to incorporate this kind of therapy on a daily basis," Hafeez says. "For children, it is more of an experience and needs to be practiced before they can learn it. Some techniques used, such as breathing exercises, can help reduce stress and promote self-acceptance, which, in turn, allows mindfulness to be more effective."

Cracking the suggestive 'code words' of the GOP hopefuls

Say what you mean, and mean what you say, man — but do it in code.

Hiding one's true political opinions behind a barrage of highly suggestive “code words” and stories is nothing new in politics, but some in this year's crop of 2016 Republican candidates appear to be engaging in the age-old practice with unprecedented fervor.

From the personal, narrative-oriented stump speeches of Sens. Marco Rubio of Florida and Ted Cruz of Texas to the relentless bombast of Donald Trump, the implied content of each candidate's remarks on the campaign trail is no accident.

Politicians, by nature, obfuscate their authentic positions on issues. But how they do so differs from year to year. So what are they actually saying? Here are a few translations of language this year's slate of candidates is telegraphing to their fans — and their opponents.



TED CRUZ

The Skinny:

As the son of a Cuban immigrant father and as someone who graduated cum laude from Princeton and worked his way through Harvard Law School, Cruz frequently likes to draw heavily on his personal story, making good use of the American Dream. Cruz, nevertheless, opposes a pathway to citizenship for immigrants who are in the U.S. illegally.

The Texas senator, a champion debater in college, also makes heavy use of dry — sometimes bad — jokes on the stump.

“I spent most of last week in Washington, D.C.,” Cruz told an Iowa audience that had come to see him at a Beef, Bread and Brew restaurant. “So it is great to be back in America.” He has also frequently trotted out a mediocre Homer Simpson impersonation.

Translation:

Cruz is “just plain folks,” just like the voters he's courting. He's saying he worked hard from the bottom up, and so he's not an elitist. And he's certainly not a Washington insider.

“These stories help create a ‘presidential’ image that is both authentic and relatable,” Jennifer Sclafani, an associate professor at Georgetown University who studies the role of language in building political identity, told the Daily News about Cruz's emphasis on personal narrative.

“The appearance of a candidate's authenticity and relatability are important factors that voters take into account in the ballot box — especially in the primaries, in which candidates compete against several other members from the same party who hold similar political stances.

“By telling a personal story that aligns with the national narrative of the American Dream, candidates create an image of themselves that is not only consistent with the identity of the nation, but that is also relatable to a wide swath of the electorate,” she added.

The dissonance between Cruz's immigration-focused narrative and his position on immigration, however, “is actually not relevant” to most voters, Sclafani explained, and most candidates don't feel a need to link the stories to their stances.

When it comes to his corny jokes, Cruz is using “humor to come off as relatable to the American public, and to counter (his) image as a stuffy career politician.”

“Cruz is doing the same thing with the Simpsons impersonations: He’s trying to come off to voters as relatable and not overly serious, just a regular guy,” Sclafani said.



MARCO RUBIO

The Skinny:

Like Cruz, Rubio is also of Cuban immigrant descent. His mother and father came to the U.S. in 1956 and worked as a bartender and housekeeper, respectively, to provide for their family. He shares his personal story in great detail and with great frequency, as well.

“Both of my parents were born to poor families in Cuba. After his mother died when he was 9, my father left school to go work. My mother was one of seven girls raised by a disabled father who struggled to provide for his family,” Rubio said during a recent campaign event.

Rubio often likes to draw comparisons between the way he grew up and the way others did — despite the fact that he has since become

a millionaire U.S. senator. He emphasizes the American Dream over his success in America.

“I live in an exceptional country where even the son of a bartender and a maid can have the same dreams and the same future as those who come from power and privilege,” he said recently.

Translation:

Rubio, who receives a lot of support from establishment Republicans and fund-raisers, may be telling his story to impress his “ordinary guy” credentials upon the electorate as well.

“A key characteristic” in electoral success and personal appeal “is that the most liked or popular presidential candidate cannot come across as elitist,” said **Dr. Sanam Hafeez, a New York neuropsychologist who writes about political psychology.** “Being able to connect with the common man, being relatable and having an earnest face and demeanor, goes a long way with voters.”

In fact, Georgetown’s Sclafani added, Rubio is likely going out of his way to contrast himself to those from “power and privilege” to deliver an “implicit jab at specific candidates.”

“You might even say (it’s directed toward) both Republicans,” like Jeb Bush and Donald Trump, “and Democrats” like Hillary Clinton, she said, which could help “regular guy” voters decide to pick the person they see as being like them and therefore sympathetic to their struggles.



JOHN KASICH

The Skinny:

The Ohio governor has barely made a dent in national polls, but he attracted widespread attention last week when he suggested that, if elected, he would create a federal agency to promote “Judeo-Christian” values, getting the attention — and piquing the curiosity — of people in both parties to question what that even means.

My teenage son said he wanted to commit suicide

www.sheknows.com



A mom's struggle to find answers after her son contemplated suicide

It was the one phone call I never expected. My child's high school counselor was on the other end of the line, explaining to me that my son had told his friends that he was thinking about suicide. I didn't know how to respond. His counselor told me that she'd spoken with my son and that he had admitted to her he'd talked about committing suicide, but that he didn't have a plan.

"Why don't you come pick him up today and see about getting him some help," she said.

I was completely thrown. How could this have happened without me seeing the signs? Immediately I called my husband, while rushing to get dressed.

"What? He was so happy this morning," he said.

"I know; I don't understand either."

When I arrived, I hugged my son and escorted him to the car, then drove directly to the nearest emergency room to admit him for a psychiatric assessment as his counselor had advised. For 10 hours, we waited in a small room for a qualified professional to arrive and decide whether or not my son was truly at risk. The entire time I sat with my son, listened to his frustrations and tried my best to understand what had motivated him to tell his friends that he was contemplating suicide.

What I learned wasn't completely new, but some of it was surprising.

For months, I knew my son had been feeling isolated and lonely. His classmates and friends weren't always supportive and many times, he felt as if no one at school liked or accepted him. That wasn't the only thing

— a few weeks earlier, he also saw the outpouring of love and support when his closest friend was hospitalized for threatening to take his own life.

“I knew I would never do it,” my son assured me. “It’s just that sometimes I wish people were nicer to me. And ever since my friend went to the hospital, everyone’s been really caring towards him. It made me think that suicide was a way to get people to see I was hurting, too.”

Eventually, a licensed clinical social worker arrived and declared my son healthy and mentally stable enough to return home. He told me privately that sometimes teenagers could be influenced by other children who attempt suicide, and that he didn’t feel our son was intent on harming himself.

Even with medical clearance, the experience left me shaken. I didn’t want to leave my son alone, for fear he was saying the right thing to distract us. I made sure to spend lots of one-on-one time with him each day, listening to his concerns and reminding him of how deeply he was loved.

I also felt moved to research the idea that people can be influenced by suicide, and found a piece in The New York Times that explained how suicide rates among young people increased nearly 5 percent when someone they knew, or knew of, committed suicide.

For further understanding, I reached out to Dr. Steven Schlozman, the associate director of the Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds at Massachusetts General Hospital, about this phenomenon of “suicide contagion” and how it impacts teenagers.

“Suicide contagion happens when someone well-known in the community commits suicide, and it leads to an increase in suicides from others who may or may not have known the person,” he explained. “It can even be a fictionalized suicide of a character in a movie or book that triggers this response. What’s statistically significant is that this effect seems to last two weeks.”

According to Dr. Schlozman, it is not uncommon for those in the medical profession who work with children to hear, “I’ve been thinking about suicide.” Youth-risk surveys have illuminated how common suicidal thoughts are among teenagers: Approximately 15 to 30 percent of teens surveyed admit to seriously contemplating suicide, and with higher stress, those numbers can climb as high as 40 to 50 percent.

“Between the ages of 12 to 17, through social and peer influence, thoughts of suicide can be introduced, and the teenager can begin toying with the idea,” explained **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**, director and neuropsychologist at Comprehensive Consultation Psychological Services in New York City and faculty at Columbia University.

According to Dr. Hafeez, most teenagers have one thing in common: a need to fit in and be accepted. Those who feel unpopular or unaccepted by their peers may see talking about suicide as a way to get noticed.

“Negative attention is still attention,” she noted, warning that it is important for parents to reach out and comfort their children, offering them professional help if they or someone they know is experiencing thoughts of suicide.

FOX & friends



www.foxnews.com/on-air/fox-and-friends/



Depressed With Psoriasis? You're Not Alone



Psoriasis is a skin disorder, but for some, it can go deeper and impact your emotional health, too. In fact, depression is more common among people with psoriasis than it is among those who don't have the skin condition, according to a study published in *JAMA Dermatology* in January 2016.

The finding is significant because the chronic stress of a health condition like psoriasis can lead to depression — and, in turn, stress and depression might trigger or exacerbate psoriasis flares, according to the National

Psoriasis Foundation (NPF). Still, the relationship between psoriasis and depression needs to be explored further, notes Ho and his fellow researchers.

Psoriasis causes thick, red, silvery, and scaly patches on the skin that are very visible, especially when they're on the face, arms, or legs — and the unsightly appearance of these patches may contribute to a person's depression, Ho says. People with psoriasis could be worried that others who don't know much about psoriasis will believe it's contagious and react unfavorably toward them.

"The stress of anticipating a negative reaction or feeling embarrassed or stigmatized based on their appearance can contribute to a great psychiatric burden, driving a psoriasis patient's depression," he says.

That proved true for Karen Brennan, 49, of Boulder, Colorado, whose depression was fueled by the fear of people's reaction to her appearance. As a high school and college student, she became withdrawn, "afraid to speak because it would draw attention to me," she admits. Even when her skin cleared, she was anxious her psoriasis would return.

Other factors associated with psoriasis might spark depressive symptoms as well, Ho says.

For example, he explains, psoriasis lesions can be itchy and tender and interfere with your daily activity and functioning, especially when the lesions are on your hands. Dealing with the pain and discomfort can be overwhelming at times and cause you to want to isolate yourself by staying at home, Ho adds.

That can be counterproductive, however, because isolation and physical inactivity can increase your risk for depression, notes **Sanam Hafeez**, PsyD, clinical director of Comprehensive Consultation Psychological Services in New York.

Too Loyal? Bill Cosby's Wife Refuses To Believe He Is A Rapist Despite Damning Admissions

Radaronline.com

Bill Cosby has admitted that he used powerful tranquilizers to “seduce” women, but he continues to go on as if he’s done nothing wrong. Now several renowned psychological experts reveal to RadarOnline.com that the monster comedian is in “sociopathic denial” over his sex crimes. “He is grandiose, narcissistic and a sociopath,” blasted **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**, who has not treated 78-year-old Cosby. “He sees these women as conquests, and conveniently excludes the memory of what he had to do to ‘conquer’ them!”

Dr. Mark Goulston agreed. “I hate to use the word ‘psychopath,’” said the expert, who has not treated Cosby, “but psychopaths do whatever they want — and feel their actions are above the law!”

The experts all pointed out to Radar that Cosby’s past and present actions indicate that his disturbing psychological issues cover a wide and frightening range.

“He likely doesn’t see [his] actions as rape,” said Dr. Hafeez. “He has been exposed as a grandiose and narcissistic man who thinks he’s entitled to sleep with any woman he wants to. His ego will not allow him to take ‘no’ for an answer.”

As Radar reported, many of the almost 100 women who claimed Cosby molested them noted he enjoyed having control after slipping them drugs.

That sick behavior is common among criminal predators, according to the experts. “Men who commit these kinds of crimes use sex as a way to gain power and control over women,” said Dr. Rachel Needle, who also has not treated Cosby.



www.webmd.com

How to Talk to Your Child About Weight

“Am I fat?”

They’re three words no parent wants to hear. But your child may say them -- or ask another weight-related question -- at some point.

The truth is, most kids think about weight. Girls as young as age 6 worry about being “too fat.” And research shows most adolescent and teen boys are worried about the way they look, too.

“Whether your child is overweight or simply thinks she has a weight problem, it’s a common concern. And as a parent, it can be a tricky thing to address,” says Rosa Cataldo, DO, director of the Healthy Weight and Wellness Center at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital in Stony Brook, New York.

No matter your child’s size, there are a lot of ways you can talk about weight without hurting his feelings and help him find ways to be healthy. Here are six smart strategies every parent should know.

Don’t try to have a “big talk.”

If your child comes to you and wants to have a long discussion, great. But most of the time, “it’s probably going to come up in bits and pieces. And that’s OK,” Cataldo says. If you don’t make a big deal out of it, it’s more likely she’ll feel comfortable talking to you. “Kids like it when they feel like they can guide the conversation.”

That’s also true if you suspect your child is overweight. If she doesn’t bring up her size with you, “Consider scheduling a checkup for her with her doctor,” Cataldo advises. A health professional can tell you if her weight actually puts her health at risk and, if so, what you can do about it.

Swap statements for questions.

Your instinct might be to reassure your child. But statements like “You’re beautiful just the way you are” and “Everyone’s different” may feel “fake” to kids, says **Sanam Hafeez, a school psychologist and neuropsychologist in New York City**. “Even if you believe it, it isn’t specific to their situation.”

A better approach? Ask him how he feels about his weight or why he’s thinking about it. “A lot of times, children aren’t going to come out and say what they’re feeling until you ask,” says Kristi King,

11 Habits That Can Fight Off Anxiety To Do Every Day



When it comes to anxiety, most of us are no stranger to the sensation. Although some of us get it just from time to time, others suffer from the disorder constantly. Everyone's course of treatment is different, but there are a number of daily habits that can help reduce your anxiety, and incorporating these activities into your life can help reduce your symptoms overall. Considering 18 percent of the American population has anxiety disorder, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, it's important to know how we can take the proper steps to help eradicate the issue with some simple lifestyle changes.

"If we don't make time for self-care on a regular basis, our anxiety level goes up," says mental health professional Yulia

Sauter to Bustle over email. "This can look different for everyone and doesn't always have to be yoga and meditation. "If we don't de-stress on a regular basis, our anxiety level will slowly build up."

As tempting it is to sit in your room all day and watch a movie as stress relief, staying inside all day, remaining inactive, and isolating yourself can actually make your anxiety worse. If you want to reduce your anxiety and improve your overall mental well-being, consider adapting these 11 daily habits that can help naturally calm you down.

1. Exercise

"Exercise is an incredibly important component of treating anxiety, and a lack of exercise is possibly one of the main reasons that anxiety numbers have increased over the past several decades," says NYC neuropsychologist **Dr. Sanam Hafeez** over email. Numerous studies show that regular exercise is effective in reducing anxiety, as physical activity can reduce stress hormones, improve your self-image, and even give you more energy to reach your other goals, according to Harvard Health.

2. Meditation

If you don't have a regular meditation routine, it's time to start now. Studies from the Journal of Psychiatric Practice show that mindfulness-based meditation have both antidepressant and anti-anxiety effects, and can decrease general psychological distress. Take five minutes in the morning or try to unwind before bed, and you might be surprised at the impactful results of tuning out temporarily.

3. Having A Good Laugh

As if you needed any more excuses to watch a funny YouTube video, laughter is a good antidote to anxiety. Even if it seems as if there is nothing to laugh about, somehow finding relief through humor can help cool your body's stress response by lowering heart rate and blood pressure, releasing endorphins, and even relaxing your muscles and improving your circulation, according to Mayo Clinic.

4. Cleaning

The thought of having to do some cleaning might stress you out in theory, but the action of cleaning can actually be beneficial to your well-being. Most obviously, cleaning reduces clutter, which can be a source of anxiety. Additionally, activities such as dishwashing can be meditative and help you relax, according to the journal Mindfulness.

5 Types of BFFs You NEED in Your Life



Studies show that you become like the five people you spend the most time with, which basically means that having a well-rounded group of amazing gal pals can totally help make you a happier and more successful person. Since no two besties are alike, we talked with psychologist and Columbia University Faculty **Dr. Sanam Hafeez** to come up with a list of the greatest types of friendship bracelet-worthy BFFs out there. Surround yourself with these types of ladies, and you'll have a squad as solid as T-Swift's growing group.

THE CONFIDANT

Dr. Hafeez tells us, "The Confidant is a friend who truly understands and values discretion. She's the one you go to when you need to get something heavy off your chest, ask questions that might be silly or embarrassing, or just when you're in need of someone to confide in — and she'll always keep your secrets." This friend not only has 100 percent of your trust, but inspires you to become a better person and less gossip-y friend yourself.

THE FUN ONE

Everyone needs a friend who loves to have fun! Dr. Hafeez says, "Your fun friend is the first person you go to when you want to forget about a problem, as she has a unique power to help you stop stressing or wallowing and find a more positive headspace." The fun friend is

Life With Bipolar Disorder: Suzy Favor Hamilton's Journey From Olympian to Vegas Escort — and Finally, Recovery

Yahoo.com



Olympic runner Suzy Favor Hamilton shocked America with news that she was leading a secret life as a high-priced prostitute in Las Vegas. Now, she's telling her side of the story. (Photo: Getty Images/Brian Lowe)

In December 2012, three-time Olympian Suzy Favor Hamilton was receiving a stream of hate mail after The Smoking Gun published the shocking — and true — story that the former elite athlete, wife to a Wisconsin realtor, and mother of a

young daughter was leading a double life working as a high-priced prostitute in Las Vegas.

Recently, however, Favor Hamilton has been receiving notes thanking her for finally talking about the mental illness that led to her bizarre behavior — behavior that she now understands were part of manic episodes. In her memoir *Fast Girl*, released this week, Favor Hamilton candidly shares the heartbreaking, and ultimately redeeming, story of life with bipolar disorder.

Former Olympian Suzy Favor Hamilton Reveals Secret Life

The three-time Olympic athlete speaks out live about her mental illness and life as a high-priced Las Vegas escort.

Olympian Suzy Favor Hamilton talks about bipolar disorder and her life as a Las Vegas escort on "Good Morning America." (Video: Good Morning America)

By its most basic definition, bipolar disorder is characterized by periods of frenzied high energy (known as manic episodes) alternating with deep depression. But calling a manic episode "a period of high energy" is kind of like calling the Tasmanian devil "feisty."

"[During a manic episode] I feel like I'm sparkling and in a tunnel of light, and everything around is magnified to an incredible intensity," Favor Hamilton tells Yahoo Health. "I felt on top of the world."

It's like you're walking through this room and you just feel so grand, so important," she says of the year she spent as an escort for high-profile clients in Las Vegas, from roughly December 2011 until December 2012.

After *The Smoking Gun* revealed her secret identity to the public in a post on December 20, 2012, Favor Hamilton seriously considered ending her life. She was admitted to the hospital and heavily medicated for two weeks. It ended up being a turning point for Favor Hamilton, who for the first time received a proper diagnosis of bipolar disorder. It was also a monumental time for her family, who could finally start to understand the origin of her bizarre, risky, and unpredictable actions over the past few years.

Related: Olympian Suzy Favor Hamilton's Husband: Why We Stayed Together When She Became a Las Vegas Escort

Favor Hamilton's journey from Olympian to escort to mental health activist is singular. But her experience with bipolar disorder isn't drastically different from the six million American adults who also live with the condition.

"People with bipolar disorder often go undiagnosed for years with volatile relationships, poor boundaries, unpredictable reactions to events, situations, and loved ones, and dissatisfaction with themselves, while never quite understanding why," says **clinical psychologist Sanam Hafeez, PsyD, clinical director of Comprehensive Consultation Psychological Services in Forest Hills, New York, and a faculty member at Columbia University's doctorate program of clinical psychology.**

Manic phases may include seductive, provocative, and socially inappropriate behaviors, Hafeez tells Yahoo Health. "Hypersexuality is also a common and often-missed symptom."

In the midst of mania

While she was working in Las Vegas, Favor Hamilton's husband Mark was aware that his wife was working as an escort, and he warned her to be discreet. But she was becoming more reckless. When the thrill of sexual experimentation started to fade, she revealed her true identity to a handful of clients.

In retrospect, Favor Hamilton clearly realizes that her actions were out of character, she tells Yahoo Health. "It's so easy now to look back and say, 'Oh my gosh, how could that have ever happened? How could I as a person do that?'"

But at the time, she had no idea. "I didn't see it at all when I was in Vegas. I didn't know that I had bipolar disorder at all," she says with a tone of slight disbelief, free of defensiveness.

Related: 45 Truths People with Bipolar Disorder Wish Others Understood

"People with bipolar disorder feel like they can do anything, and they lose contact with standard rules of behavior," explains Susan Heitler, PhD, a Denver-based clinical psychologist who specializes in helping couples. "They feel they can do anything, and lose contact with standard rules of behavior. Even the rules of nature, like that you can't walk on water, can get abandoned," she tells Yahoo Health.



DR. SANAM HAFEEZ

Neuropsychologist

Dr. Sanam Hafeez PsyD, is an authority in the field of neuropsychology and neuropsychological assessment. She is a New York State Licensed Neuropsychologist and School Psychologist, and the founder and director of [Comprehensive Consultation Psychological Services, P.C.](#) She is also a teaching faculty member at Columbia University.

Since 2003, Dr. Hafeez has devoted both her time and energy to providing neuropsychological educational and developmental evaluations to both children and adults in her practice. She also works with individuals who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), learning disabilities, autism, attention and

memory problems, trauma and brain injury, abuse, childhood development and psychopathology (bipolar, schizophrenia, depression, anxiety, etc.) In addition, Dr. Hafeez serves as a medical expert and expert witness by providing full evaluations and witness testimony to law firms and courts.

Dr. Hafeez immigrated to the United States from Pakistan when she was twelve years old. She is fluent in English, Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi (Pakistani and Indian languages.) She resides in Queens, New York with her husband and twin boys.

Briefly, what is neuropsychology in your words?

Technically, Neuropsychology is a specialty within Psychology that deals with brain injury, more complex and higher cognitive processes such as memory, executive functions and learning. However, I feel that my brand of Neuropsychology is a combination of clinical and school psychology with neuro-executive assessment tailored to each patient. I always say that my job is to find the missing piece and provide answers not only to the patient but the other treating medical professionals. If I do a standard neuropsychological evaluation that is not warranted, and cannot tell you what's causing the problem or how to remediate it, I have failed.

Why do you feel the field of neuropsychology is gaining interest and greater recognition?

I think because people are recognizing the value in something beyond an MRI or CT scan, which often tells you nothing other than everything is intact. Sometimes, we need to know the more complex processes that impact our functioning but are not grossly impaired, and thus will not show up on a computerized or an imaging test. Neuropsychology when practiced properly, is a marriage of neurology, psychiatry and behavioral health and can set many wheels in motion and finally help design a viable treatment plan.

How are patients evaluated and treated?

I get referrals from schools, parents and other doctors for children or teenagers, suspected or having difficulty with learning, behavioral problems, ADHD, speech and processing, as well as psychiatric issues



newyork.cbslocal.com

NEW YORK (CBSNewYork) — Numerous teens across the United States have posed as professionals, and in many cases, have been successful for a matter of days, or even months.

These teens have no degrees, no licenses, some haven't even graduated high school, yet they've managed to pose as working employees.

Training to be a doctor can take years, but not for Malachi Love-Robinson.

For a full month, police said the Florida teen pretended to be a physician at a hospital. He posted apparent medical licenses online, performed a physical exam and offered medical expertise.

When finally found out, Love-Robinson was arrested and charged with practicing medicine without a license.

But bizarrely, he isn't the only teen to pose as a professional.

"No one ever pretends to be a plumber. It's always someone in a position of real authority," **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**, a neuropsychologist, told CBS2's Dick Brennan.

Izaha Akins, 18, not only posed as a senator, but guest spoke at an Ohio high school for 45 minutes on the importance of advocacy.

"He had a local car dealership give him a car to chauffeur him to the high school," Hafeez said.

School officials seemed shocked to find out he had lied.

"We're going to tighten that up and be more diligent in verifying who people are," a school official said.

And there have been many other cases. One teen posed as an FBI agent. At just 14 years old, another teen claimed to be a cop, spending several hours patrolling Chicago in a police cruiser.

"There is a certain similarity in all of these teenagers. They are all somewhat bright," Hafeez said. "There's a sense of that thrill-seeking, rule-breaking kind of behavior. Let's see what happens if I do this, can I get caught?"

But this "Catch Me If You Can" behavior not only gets the teens caught, it could also land them in jail, potentially ruining their future chances of really fulfilling their dreams.

Hafeez said people don't like to question authority, even if that authority looks too young to be true, further helping teen imposters carry out their con.

FASHION TIMES

fashiontimes.com

Social Media & Self Esteem: How To Build Confidence And Love Your Looks



Body image issues seem to be magnified in this new digital age of social media and **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**, a New York City neuropsychologist, agrees. "To some extent our body image is idealized based on how we would like to look," she said. As a woman, Dr. Hafeez understands the perils that women fall into in on Instagram, Facebook and within our Photoshop society. If you're ever finding it hard to embrace you body as it is, check out some of the tips from Dr. Hafeez shared with us on how to love ourselves more.

Put body image in perspective. Instead of spending so much time obsessing over your outer self, consider focusing your attention on education, hobbies and socializing with your friends. Dr. Hafeez stresses that keeping your mind engaged will help you notice others with the same interests.

Know your body and accept it. Perhaps you inherited your mother's larger hips or your father's height and broad shoulders. Our genetics are a strange cocktail that are unique to every person and learning to love your body is the first

step in working with your particular body size and shape. "Don't diet to fit anyone else's expectations. It is your body, your health and you are the only one who has the right to dictate what is right for you," Dr. Hafeez told us.

Celebrities are not "average" people! Remember that most celebrities are paid based on how they look on camera. They have an entire team of people who make sure they eat right, exercise and take care of their skin and hair. When they become pregnant or go through a tough time, they have a team of people who help them drop the weight fast and get back to "camera weight," without the distractions the average person has. Many celebrities have spoken out about suffering for years with eating disorders, emotional problems and drug addiction to maintain their public image. Things aren't always what they seem!

gillie's **first time**
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The Pressure of Perfection

Guest author, KMR Communications



Our relationship with social media is definitely a love/hate one. As much as we enjoy seeing what's up with our friends and our favorite celebrities, it also takes a toll on our self-esteem. New moms see celebrities shedding baby weight within a few weeks; fitness models that further promote their tight abs, cellulite-free, stretchmark-free bodies. Then you have friends competing with one another there's Stephanie with her workout selfie, in yoga pants and sports bra, stroller jogging with the baby. She has 300 likes and 30 "Go girl!" comments. You still struggle to lose the muffin top and it's been 6 months since you gave birth. It's pressure!

Pregnancy, particularly the first one, can leave some women's bodies virtually unrecognizable, and the attitude that women have to look perfect during and immediately after it, is widely perpetuated by celebrities and #instagramfamous new mommies. "Seeing beautiful, perfect women all over their newsfeeds can create serious self-esteem and anxiety issues in new mothers," says New York City neuropsychologist Dr. Sanam Hafeez Psy.D, professor at Columbia University. "After pregnancy, hormones are still raging, the woman is going through a roller coaster of feelings and adjusting to a whole new lifestyle; the added pressure to look perfect right away can be very emotionally disruptive," she adds.

It's common for women to become concerned that their partner will no longer find them attractive compared to the girls on

their own newsfeeds. "While a little insecurity is normal, fretting over keeping your partner's attention is counter productive," says Hafeez. "You should focus on feeling healthy and strong again, and especially bonding with your partner and your child. The feel good chemicals your brain releases while making a connection with your new baby and adjusting to life as a family will boost your mood and stave off bad feelings."

Some new moms might be motivated to "fix" their new body with surgery. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons the demand for "Mommy Makeovers" has grown dramatically over the past 10 years; the most popular procedures, breast lifts and tummy tucks, have increased by 70% and 85% respectively. These surgery packages aim to combine a number of procedures in one surgery with one recovery period, meaning a woman can choose to undergo a breast lift, liposuction and tummy tuck in one go.

These packages can also include reconstructive surgeries, different from cosmetic surgeries in that they seek to improve the function of the body, rather than alter it for aesthetic purposes. The most popular is vaginoplasty, which tightens the vagina, and some say even heightens sensitivity. Since 2010 interest in vaginoplasty has increased by 45%, possibly more according to various reports.

Good Housekeeping

goodhousekeeping.com

Moms Who Post a Lot on Facebook Are More Likely to Be Depressed
A new study says that the social network is making life tougher for new mothers.



Giddy with excitement, you announced your pregnancy on Facebook with a sonogram photo. You kept friends and family informed in those oh-so-blissful months that followed, posting pictures of your growing belly, and a smattering of sweet shots from your baby shower. And of course, once Junior arrived, you couldn't help but post photo after photo of your brand-new addition — and you're certainly not the only mom to take her baby business to social media.

But, new research reveals that the more frequently a new mom posts to Facebook, the more likely she is to suffer from depression after nine months of parenthood.]

According to a new study published in the journal *Sex Roles* that looked at the Facebook habits of women who had recently had babies, the popular social network is a place that "undermines well-being," and "those who felt societal pressure to be perfect moms ... posted more frequently than others to Facebook." Researchers also found that new moms who were more concerned with "external validation" went to Facebook to receive it — whether through posting statuses or uploading photos.

Because the sample size was small (127 mothers from Ohio) and homogenous (85.7% were white; 87% were married; almost 80% completed college; and about half were employed), the researchers from Ohio State University conceded that their findings may not be relevant to all new mothers, but added that the results do back up other studies that show Facebook can add to the stresses of being a new parent. "If a mother is posting on Facebook to get affirmation that she's doing a good job and doesn't get all the 'likes' and positive comments she expects, that could be a problem. She may end up feeling worse," said lead researcher Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan.

Facebook, of course, has other ways of making a new mom feel inadequate, too. Kelly, from Orlando, FL, says she freaked out every time an ad for all-natural baby products popped up on her Facebook feed, because she couldn't afford them. "There I was obsessing at 2 a.m. over whether or not the diaper my newborn was wearing was filled with chemicals and burning her skin. My husband would have to calm me down."

Experts say that while lots of "likes" and upbeat comments may give a new mom a boost in the short run, it's best to take a social media break in the months after giving birth. "Social media is no substitute for human contact," says Dr. Leah Klungness, author of *The Complete Single Mother*. "Daily 'real life' contact is essential for new moms. Simply talking to other adults — in full sentences — and seeing other moms struggle with the unexpected diaper change puts all the 'perfect' social media postings in perspective. Social isolation breeds sadness and loneliness." Dr. Klungness warns that constant posting can signal other issues, too, like insecurity or intense competition within families or social groups.

However, some new moms disagree with the study's findings, like Elissa, from Wayne, NJ. "I use Facebook to keep up with relatives' and friends' lives — and to share pictures of my children with relatives who live far away," she says, adding that she recently used Facebook to find used baby and toddler toys and furniture. Jenna from Great Neck, NY also sees no harm in over-posting: "I love posting everything about my baby — and it's even better when the memories pop up," she says. "Facebook is a virtual scrapbook!"

Dr. Sanam Hafeez, a New York City-based neuropsychologist, says it comes down to recognizing your issues. "Mothers who already are dealing with anxiety and obsessive tendencies are more likely to obsess over pictures, posts and articles on Facebook, thinking about what they should be doing, what they're doing wrong, and feeling increasingly depressed about it," she says. So if that sounds like you, step away. "Facebook, just like other social media, has a way of pulling you in and engaging a new mother nonsensically for long periods, when she really needs downtime to sleep, to go out and get fresh air, or to interact with her baby — none of those needs are met by being on Facebook," says Dr. Hafeez. "Facebook takes time away from the new mother experience of bonding and getting much needed sleep."

10 Ways Stress Is Written All Over Your Face

by **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**



Stress is written all over our face and can result in looking years older when stressed for prolonged periods of time. My expertise is in understanding neural pathways as they respond to anxiety, stress and trauma explains that how we think directly impacts how we age and how youthful we appear. The routine stressors in our lives really impact how fast or slow we age. When stressed, we see it in our skin tone, texture, elasticity, and over all glow.

When someone is under stress they can appear up to 5 years older, 10 years if they don't manage stress or make changes to their lives. Stressful relationships and careers age people. I have seen patients end relationships or get new jobs and look 10 years younger within days. People are spending money on creams, facials and cosmetic procedures but if the stress is still there it will still show in their face.

Woman's Day

womansday.com

Moms Who Post a Lot on Facebook Are More Likely to Be Depressed



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thekitchn.com

5 Tips for Making the Most of Your Vacation Days



It's safe to assume we all look forward to vacation days, whether you're planning to spend them on a beach with a frosty drink in hand or at home, sleeping in and catching up on Netflix. But did you know that taking time off has real benefits for our mental and physical well-being? "A great vacation changes up your routine, renews your energy, improves your outlook, and helps you re-engage with your life," says Dr. Andrew Shatté, a psychologist and research professor at the University of Arizona. Still, not all vacations are great, as many of us can attest to. Who hasn't come back home feeling like you need a vacation to recover from your vacation? Step one is just to take the time off; only 25 percent of us are actually taking advantage of all our hard-earned vacation days. Next, follow these tips for getting the maximum relaxation and

break for your brain.

1. Consider a shorter trip.

The length of the optimal vacation varies depending on personality type. For some, an extended absence from work — a week or longer — and the constant worry of an overflowing email box and a lengthy to-do list when you return will actually increase stress. But don't worry — according to Dr. Shatté, the key is to get at least two to three days that are a true oasis from the workplace. In other words, it's better to take a shorter, real vacation than a lengthier one during which you work, or fret about work, at the same time.

2. Commit to no connectivity.

"Don't kid yourself that you can do that morning or evening conference call from a beach and still relax," Dr. Shatté says. A real vacation means no emails, no work calls, no texts, and no social media. You can show off your fun pictures when you get back!

3. Plan ahead at work.

In order to completely unplug and feel confident that everything is handled while you're away, it's a good idea to do some advance planning. As soon as you have the dates of your vacation planned, alert your team so they can prepare for your absence. Do as much work as you can beforehand and delegate any work that simply must get done during that time period. "Assign someone on your team to handle urgent matters while you are away," says **Dr. Sanam Hafeez**, a New York City-based neuropsychologist. "Anything non-urgent can wait until you return."

Finally, set up your email with an out-of-office reply. If clients and colleagues know that you'll be on vacation, they'll be much less likely to email or call you about non-urgent matters.

4. Hire a travel agent.

If the thought of booking flights and trains and hotels gives you a headache, hire someone to do it for you. Knowing everything's taken care of may help you breathe a little easier and enjoy yourself more. A specialized travel agent who is familiar with the destination you're interested in can also often get you better deals or better access.

5. Think about leaving the kids behind.

Of course, there's a time and place for family vacations, but sometimes a break from the kids is just as important as a break from work. "Kids like to see their parents connected, in love, and having fun," says Dr. Hafeez. "It makes them feel secure." Plus, they might actually have just as much fun staying with the grandparents for a few nights.