



Be a Peacemaker.
Transform Your Relationships.™

INTRODUCING VALUES-BASED RELATIONAL WISDOM

Welcome to Relational Wisdom!

We are honored that you've decided to join us in exploring and practicing the relational principles that can change every area of your life.

As you'll see, relational wisdom is so simple that a ten-year-old child can understand it, and yet so profound that adults can spend the rest of their lives plumbing its depths.

We hope that you will visit our site often and take advantage of all the resources we've designed to help you grow in your ability to treat other people the same way you would like them to treat you.

Why?

Why do some people seem to have closer and more enduring friendships and marriages than others?

Why do they perform so well in the workplace and advance so quickly in their careers?

How do they maintain such a close and influential connection with their children and relatives?

Why do they seem to have less conflict, and when it does arise, why are they able to resolve it so quickly and completely?

Why are they so effective at helping others resolve their conflicts that their friends and coworkers call them peacemakers?

A Better Kind of Smart

Well, it's seldom because they've got a higher IQ than others. Studies have consistently shown that high intelligence quotients do not automatically translate into success at home or in the workplace.

There is another kind of smart, however, that correlates strongly with success in all aspects of life. It's called *relational wisdom*®, or simply *RW*. These timeless concepts can improve every aspect of our lives.

RW Definition and Paradigm

Relational wisdom®, in essence, is the ability to treat other people the way you would like them to treat you.

Relational wisdom may also be defined as *your ability to discern emotions, interests and abilities in yourself and others, to interpret this information in the light of your personal values, and to use these insights to manage your responses and relationships constructively.*

As you learn these skills, you can experience stronger relationships and less conflict at home and in the workplace, as well as improved team-building and better job performance.

The principles of relational wisdom can be organized in terms of six core skills or disciplines that are grouped into three pairs. One pair focuses on how we live out our *personal values*, another on how we relate to *ourselves*, and the third on how we relate to *others*.

Each of these three pairs has an “*awareness*” component (what we see and understand), and an “*engaging*” component (what we do and say). These skill sets may be described in the following terms:

- Values-aware, Values-engaging
- Self-aware, Self-engaging
- Other-aware, Other-engaging



These six skills are closely linked and reinforce one another in a circular direction (thus the “360” in our ministry name). The better we know and follow our personal values (values-aware, values-engaging), the more we will know and discipline ourselves (self-aware, self-engaging), which opens the way for us to better understand, relate to and serve our neighbors (other-aware, other-engaging).

Each of these skills is linked to and reinforced by the others. Thus, relational wisdom is a circle of interrelated skills that continually fuel one another.

Skills Defined

Each of these six skills can be described by common, everyday terms, such as *remember*, *faithful*, *humble*, *disciplined*, *compassionate*, and *serve*. This teaching can be summarized in the following definitions and synonyms for each of the six core skills of relational wisdom.

- **Values-awareness** (remember) is the ability to honestly identify your true personal values.
- **Values-engagement** (faithfulness) is the ability to consistently apply your values in real life.
- **Self-awareness** (humility) is the ability to discern your own identity, emotions, thoughts, values, interests and abilities.
- **Self-engagement** (discipline) is the ability to manage your thoughts, emotions, words and actions constructively.
- **Other-awareness** (compassion) is the ability to understand and empathize with the experiences, emotions, values and interests of others.

- **Other-engagement** (service) is the ability to love, encourage, serve and resolve differences with others in a mutually beneficial way.

Inside, Outside

When we live out our personal values faithfully, we can live *inside* the circle of relational wisdom. This generally results in peaceful and fulfilling relationships with the people around us.

But if we fail to live out our values, we are living *outside* the circle of relational wisdom. Instead of remembering our values, we forget them. Instead of being faithful, we are fickle. We become proud instead of humble, indulgent rather than disciplined, insensitive instead of compassionate, and manipulative rather than serving.

Thus, one of the best ways to live a peaceful, productive and happy life, is to learn and practice the six skills of relational wisdom.



RW and Emotional Intelligence

A Cousin to Relational Wisdom

Relational wisdom (RW) is similar to a psychological concept known as “emotional intelligence,” which is often referred to as “EI” or “EQ” (emotional quotient). Although there are major differences between RW and EI (as detailed below), both concepts encourage an understanding of the ways that human neurology affects our emotions and relationships.

Emotional intelligence has been defined as the ability to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups. This concept first appeared in psychology circles in 1920 and has been studied and refined ever since. It was popularized by Daniel Goleman in 1995, whose book *Emotional Intelligence* spent over eighteen months on the *New York Times* Best Seller List.

The concept has gained further exposure through Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves, authors of the best-selling *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* and founders of [TalentSmart, Inc.](#), a consulting firm that serves 75% of Fortune 500 Companies. Ken Sande has attended their training and qualified as an *Emotional Intelligence Certified Trainer*.

These three psychologists, Goleman, Bradberry and Greaves, describe emotional intelligence as being made up of four core skills that are similar to those in the relational wisdom paradigm: self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship-management (essentially the bottom two-thirds of the [RW paradigm](#)).



Although their EI models do not include a specific focus on values, these authors acknowledge that people's world view and values can have a significant bearing on the four core skills of emotional intelligence.

Extensive Evaluations, Proven Benefits

Through over 700,000 individual appraisals, Bradberry and Greaves have demonstrated that emotional intelligence is the single biggest predictor of workplace performance (a far higher correlation than IQ). More specifically, they've found that 90% of the top performers they've studied are high in emotional intelligence. Conversely, just 20% of bottom performers have high emotional intelligence.

Not surprisingly, people with high emotional intelligence also earn more money – an average of \$29,000 more per year than people with a low degree of emotional intelligence. High emotional intelligence has also been shown to correlate to enhanced empathy, higher stress tolerance, greater flexibility to change, and even better health and recovery from illness. ([Click here to learn of additional workplace benefits.](#))

Emotional Intelligence Has Downsides

Although emotional intelligence can be of great value in everyday life, we should be aware that EI can also have significant downsides.

As a growing number of [secular articles](#) indicate, high levels of emotional intelligence can actually contribute to several relational problems, including:

- Over analyzing people and situations, which can become emotional exhausting and paralyze decision making
- Excessive self-criticism
- An inclination to agree to questionable actions out of sympathy or excessive sensitivity to others' emotions
- Using emotions to sidestep questions and critical thinking by others
- Difficulty shifting our focus from single individuals and relating effectively to groups of people

Most importantly, since traditional teaching on EI lacks an objective moral compass, it often leaves people open to the temptation to manipulate others, either intentionally or unintentionally, for their own advantage (often referred to as "[the dark side of EI](#)").

Furthermore, since the primary motivation for improving EI is usually personal advancement (e.g., job promotions or increasing income), these relational skills can easily be used for selfish reasons rather than the good of others, which often requires personal sacrifice.

This is why RW360 has developed a model of emotional intelligence that encourages people to thoughtfully and deliberately integrate their personal value system with the skills of emotional intelligence.

RW Acrostics

When emotions rise, [rational thinking often plummets](#).

To help you recall and apply the basic principles of relational wisdom when emotions threaten to override your judgment, we have summarized the key principles of RW as simple acrostics. Here is a brief overview of these acrostics, along with some testimonies of how others have put them into action in order to get “upstream of conflict.”

To remember that relationships are always three dimensional ...

Practice the SOG Plan

- **S**elf-aware: How am I feeling and acting?
- **O**ther-aware: How are others feeling? How am I affecting them?
- **V**alues-aware: Am I living out my most important values?



As the following testimony shows, this simple acrostic can be literally life changing.

“Thank you for developing the SOV Plan. My husband has returned to school, so we’ve moved in with his parents to make ends meet. My father-in-law is a teddy bear and so easy to live with. My mother-in-law is not so easy. She means well but just can’t keep from making “little suggestions” about our marriage, parenting, spending ... you name it, she’ll try to control it. There’s days I just want to scream I feel so trapped.

“SOV has been a lifesaver. So simple and yet so powerful. It’s helped me to stay ahead of my emotions and head lots of hurtful words off before they leave my mouth. It’s also reminded me to put myself in her shoes and realize that she really is trying to help, clumsy as she is. Also to be more thankful for the many sacrifices she is making to help us through this tight time.

“Most of all, SOV helps to remember what my more important values are, love, kindness, patience, and treating others the way I want to be treated. The more I

seek to be faithful to these values, the easier it is to engage my mother-in-law in constructive ways.

To become more Values-aware and Values-engaging ...

Follow a Trustworthy **GPS** (Values Positioning System)

- **G**rade your values
- **P**ursue worthy values
- **S**erve others

Testimony:

"My boss is a difficult man to work for. He rarely gives clear instructions, seldom offers encouragement or praise, and criticizes me in front of other people. After a couple of years of this kind of treatment, I developed a very negative attitude toward him and began acting just like the rest of the people who work for him. I gossiped about him behind his back, did just enough work to keep my job, and laughed when others secretly made fun of him.

"Then I heard about the GPS principle. Boy, was I convicted. I realized I had been looking to my co-workers and my own selfish heart for guidance in this situation instead of seeking to live out my core values, the most important of which is to treat others the way I want to be treated.

"It took a while to change the bad habits I'd developed at work, but as I keep my core values front and center, I'm steadily gaining ground. My boss hasn't changed but some of my fellow workers have noticed how I've changed. When they ask me why, I tell them about the principles I'm learning through relational wisdom. Two of them are now studying the material themselves!"

To become more self-aware and self-engaging ...

READ Yourself Accurately

- **R**ecognize and name your emotions
- **E**valuate their source
- **A**nticipate the consequences of following them
- **D**irect them on a constructive course

Testimony:

"My teenage daughter knows exactly how to push my buttons. Even when I come to her with valid concerns, she rolls her eyes or uses a tone of voice that triggers my anger and throws me completely off course.

“READ is helping me to counter her tactics. Before I approach her, I think about the emotions she will try to trigger. I confess the pride, expectations, and desire to control that cause those emotions. I visualize how far off track we’ll go if I give into them. And then I think of how to do a “180” to go in the opposite direction, to be patient, gentle, and in control of my emotions (not her!).

“What a difference in those conversations! It’s almost funny to see the puzzled look on her face when her old tricks don’t work. She can still throw me off when she surprises me, but if I can handle planned conversations better and better I hope to soon be able to handle her ambushes too.”

To become more other-aware and other-engaging ...

SERVE Every Person You Meet

- **S**mile (Home, office, church, store, telephone)
- **E**xplore and Empathize (Show interest and compassion)
- **R**econcile (Be a peacemaker)
- **V**alue (Express appreciation and admiration)
- **E**ncourage (Give courage, inspire, put wind under their wings)

Testimony:

“Your RW material made me wonder if I was really called to be a manager. After reading your [Cinderella Man blog post](#), I realized I’d never learned how to read and empathize with people. I was always wrapped up in my goals and agenda and missing clues about their struggles and needs.

“But the SERVE concept has given me hope that I can change. It’s so simple even a manager can apply it!

“Every morning I spend time planning how to SERVE the people in my department. What a difference a little deliberate focus can bring. Several people have commented that something has changed in me. I use those opportunities to explain relational wisdom to them and encourage them to pursue this training themselves.”

When you need to negotiate an agreement ...

Practice the PAUSE principle

- **P**repare (pray, get the facts, seek wise counsel, develop options)
- **A**ffirm relationships (show genuine concern and respect for others)
- **U**nderstand interests (identify others’ concerns, desires, needs, limitations, or fears)

- Search for creative solutions (prayerful brainstorming)
- Evaluate options objectively and reasonably (evaluate, don't argue)

Testimony

"I share an office with two other agents. The three of us are in the process of hiring a replacement receptionist. Since there was potential for tension and disagreement, I consciously worked the PAUSE concepts into the discussion. As we started, I made a nostalgic comment about how much I had enjoyed working with both of them over the last three years. This gave us an opportunity to share a few memories that affirmed our relationship. As we went on, I sought to understand my partners' concerns about each candidate. This approach reduced almost all the tension we would have normally had in this kind of meeting and enabled us to comfortably agree on the person we would hire."

By practicing these skills in the ordinary interactions of life, you can steadily improve your ability to know and follow Values, to read and discipline yourself, and to understand and serve other people.

RW in the Workplace

The Value of Soft Skills

Relational wisdom can produce major benefits in any setting where people work together, whether in an office or warehouse, on a church committee or nonprofit board, or as a mission team in the field.

These benefits include improved productivity and team cohesiveness, better balance between work and family life, less conflict, reduced staff and volunteer turnover, higher customer satisfaction, and increased growth and profitability.

These benefits have been well documented in the workplace, although it took managers a while to see how closely connected they are to relational skills.

For years companies typically hired new employees on the basis of their "hard skills," which generally included their technical expertise, education, certifications, and experience—qualities that are usually related to IQ and can be listed on a resume.

Over time, however, corporate executives and human resource managers noticed that employees with impressive resumes were often difficult to work with, disappointing performers, and a detriment to the unity and productivity of their coworkers.

In contrast, employees with only average technical skills frequently proved to be the most respected, valued, and productive workers in an organization.

This pattern (and many related academic studies) led companies to realize that what often proves to be the primary factor in employees' value to a company is their "soft

skills.” These skills include abilities such as listening, empathy, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and conflict resolution—the fruit of relational wisdom.

This principle applies to churches as well. What makes most pastors (and other ministry workers) successful and able to serve a church for a long period of time is not the excellence of their exegesis, hermeneutics, or sermon delivery but rather their ability to relate to their people with genuine humility, love, gentleness and compassion.

To see some of these qualities in action—and the career-changing impact they can have—[watch how Will Smith handles a disastrous work interview.](#)

The Multiplication Effect

What makes relational abilities so valuable to working with a group is that every team member’s soft skills have the power to magnify – or diminish – the value of not only their own hard skills but also those of the people with whom they are working.

The interface between these two sets of skills is illustrated by the following diagram, in which the operator is not a “+” sign but rather a “x” sign, which signifies the multiplying (or diminishing) effect of every worker’s relational skills.



For example, if one member of a team is arrogant, insensitive, or insecure, and tends to discount or criticize others’ accomplishments or ideas, the cohesiveness and creativity of an entire team can be undermined ($100 \times 0 = 0$).

In contrast, if a worker (or better yet, an entire team) learns how to read others’ emotions and interests, encourage the inexperienced or insecure, applaud others’ innovation and accomplishments, and prevent or quickly resolve conflict, the unity, energy, creativity, and productivity of an entire team can be magnified.

Proven Performance Benefits

The value of strong relational skills is revealed by the corporate world’s growing emphasis on teaching “[emotional intelligence](#)” (also known as “EI” or “EQ”) to their managers. EQ is a secular version of relational wisdom. It does not address Values awareness or engagement but instead focuses on the four other skills of the [relational wisdom paradigm](#), which EQ writers refer to as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

Even without a Values-ward focus, increased EQ has proven to produce significant, measurable improvements in professional advancement and team productivity. As Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves write:

How much of an impact does EQ have on your professional success? The short answer is: a lot! We've tested EQ alongside 33 other important workplace skills, and found that it subsumes the majority of them, including time management, decision-making, and communication.

Your EQ is the foundation for a host of critical skills – it impacts most everything you say and do each day. EQ is so critical to success that it accounts for 58% of performance in all types of jobs. It's the single biggest predictor of performance in the workplace and the strongest driver of leadership and personal excellence.

No matter whether people measure high or low in EQ, they can work to improve it, and those who score low can actually catch up to their coworkers.... People who are low in EQ and job performance can match their colleagues who excel in both – solely by working to improve their EQ.

Of all the people we've studied at work, we've found that 90 percent of top performers are also high in EQ. On the flip side, just 20% of bottom performers are high in EQ. You can be a high performer without EQ, but the chances are slim....

Naturally, people with high EQ's make more money – an average of \$29,000 more per year than people with low EQs. The link between EQ and earnings is so direct that every point increase in EQ adds \$1,300 to an annual salary. These findings hold true for people in all industries, at all levels, in every region of the world. We haven't yet been able to find a job in which performance and pay aren't tied closely to EQ (*Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, pages 19-22).

Others studies have resulted in similar conclusions.

"The highest performing managers and leaders have significantly more 'emotional competence' than other managers.... The single most important contributor to the feelings of employee engagement, empowerment, and satisfaction is based on the relationship they have with the leaders of the organization.... Management practices that affect employee satisfaction can have bottom line results on productivity and profit." (Kenneth Nowack, Ph.D., [Leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Employee Engagement](#))

"A multitude of studies suggest that EI is a strong predictor of job performance.... A study found that partners in a multinational consulting firm who scored higher than the median on an EI measure produced \$1.2 million more in business than other partners did." (Natalie Shipley, [The Effects of Emotional Intelligence, Age, Work Experience, and Academic Performance](#))

"When companies invest in the physical and relational wellness of their workers, returns on investment can range between \$1.50 and \$6.85 for every dollar spent on these types of programs." [Relational Wellness: Corporate America's Business](#)

Read [Employers Reap a Double Benefit with RW Training](#) to learn how providing relational skill training to employees can improve their family lives ... and then loop back to increase a business's financial profitability, with up to a \$6.50 return on every one dollar spend on such training.

Click [100 additional articles](#) to learn more about the documented benefits of emotional intelligence in a variety of settings, including business, health care, education, athletics, and the military.

To learn how emotional intelligence and your personal value system affect your ability to resolve conflict, see [Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution](#).

To begin developing these skills in your life, register for our online course, [Exploring Relational Wisdom](#), today!