

Teap.

Everyone deserves a little couch-time.



Monthly Wellness Seminar

**Emotional Intelligence in Action:
Reading the Room & Responding, Not Reacting**

Presented by
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ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Douglas E. Noll, JD, MA

- Lawyer and Peacemaker
- Author and Professor
- Internationally-Recognized Mediator
- Mobius Executive Leadership
- California Lawyer of the Year
- Best Lawyer In America Lawyer of the Year
- Co-Founder, Prison of Peace Project
- Encore Fellow since 2014



Why Are We Here?

- **Workplace tension often starts with missed cues, unmanaged reactions, and poorly timed communication.**
- **Emotional intelligence helps reduce escalation and improve day-to-day interactions.**
- **We are here to strengthen three core skills:**
 - Recognizing verbal, nonverbal, and situational signals of stress or defensiveness.
 - Applying simple, evidence-based regulation strategies to shift from reacting to responding.
 - Using emotionally intelligent language and timing to improve outcomes in difficult conversations and high-stakes moments.



“Emotional intelligence is the ability to use emotion to think more effectively.”

— John Mayer

What Emotional Intelligence Really Is

It's not suppressing emotion.
It's not being "soft."
It's not avoiding conflict.

It is:

- Awareness of emotional climate
- Regulation of your internal response
- Intentional communication
- Strategic timing



Psychoeducation: Why We React

When we feel challenged, dismissed, or overwhelmed:



The brain activates a threat response (amygdala)



Heart rate increases



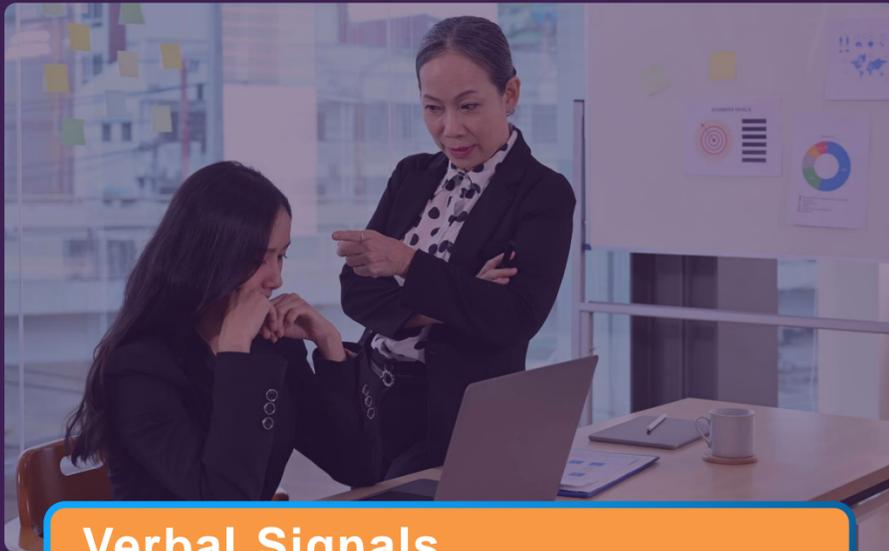
Thinking narrows



We default to fight, flight, or freeze

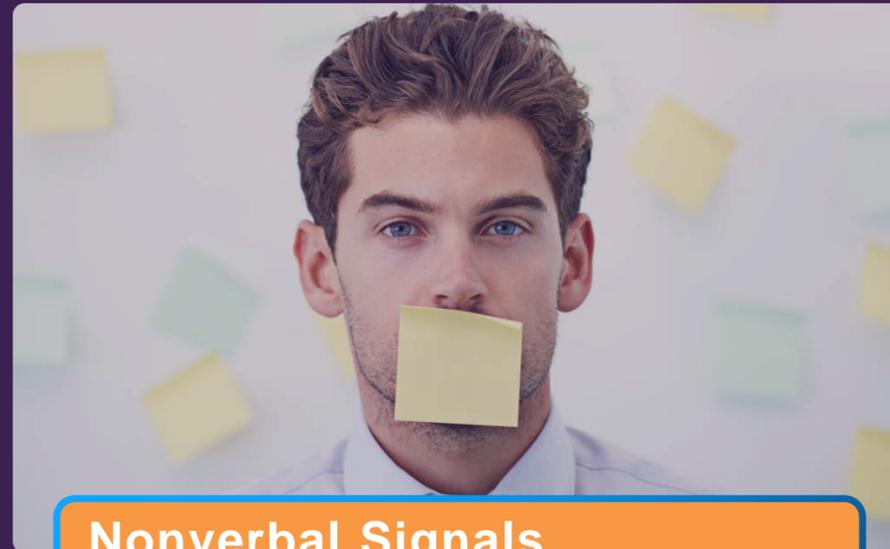
Regulation re-engages the prefrontal cortex, responsible for reasoning, empathy, and decision-making.

Recognize Emotional Signals



Verbal Signals

- Short responses
- Increased volume or sarcasm
- Defensive tone
- Repeated objections



Nonverbal Signals

- Crossed arms
- Avoiding eye contact
- Tight facial expression
- Sudden silence



Situational Signals

- Tight deadlines
- Miscommunication
- Unclear expectations
- Group tension in meetings

Reading the room is a skill, not guesswork.

Poll #1

When tension rises at work, I tend to:

- A. Speak up immediately
- B. Withdraw or go quiet
- C. Try to smooth things over
- D. Stay calm and ask clarifying questions



Shift from Reacting to Responding

The Pause Principle

- 01 Slow exhale breathing (longer out-breath)
- 02 Label the emotion (“I’m feeling frustrated.”) *Affect Labeling*
- 03 Count to six before speaking
- 04 Ask one clarifying question

These strategies reduce physiological reactivity.



Shift from Reacting to Responding

Responding vs Reacting

Reacting:

- Impulsive
- Emotion-driven
- Defensive
- Immediate

Responding:

- Intentional
- Curious
- Professional
- Timed appropriately



Poll #2

When I feel triggered, my biggest challenge is:

- A. Staying calm physically**
- B. Not interrupting**
- C. Choosing neutral words**
- D. Waiting before responding**



Use Emotionally Intelligent Language & Timing



Language Shifts

Instead of:

- “That’s not what you said.”
- “You’re wrong.”
- “This makes no sense.”

Try:

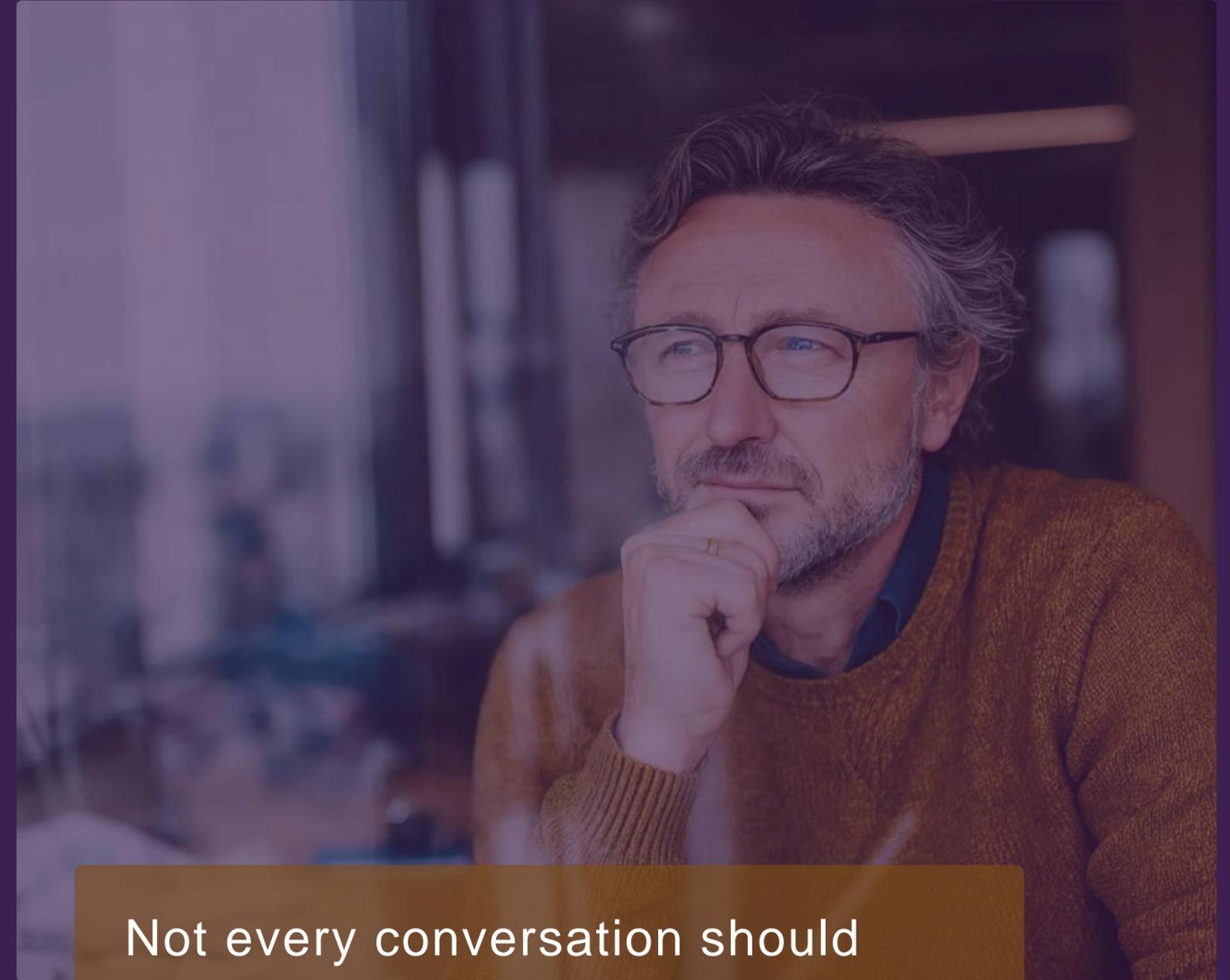
- “Can we clarify expectations?”
- “Help me understand your perspective.”
- “What outcome are we aiming for?”

Language influences tone and outcomes.

Use Emotionally Intelligent Language & Timing

Professional responses may include:

- “Let’s revisit this after the meeting.”
- “Can we schedule time to discuss this further?”
- “I want to give this thoughtful consideration.”



Not every conversation should happen in the heat of the moment.

Case Study

During a team meeting, one employee questions another's work in front of the group. The employee being questioned feels embarrassed and becomes defensive. The conversation becomes tense, and others disengage.

Discussion Questions:

What emotional signals were present?

What regulation strategy could have been used?

Where did reactivity show up?

What would an emotionally intelligent response sound like?

Example Response

“I’m open to feedback. Can we clarify the concern so I can address it directly?”

Why it works:

- Maintains professionalism
- Slows escalation
- Invites clarity
- Protects working relationships



Poll #3

Which area would most improve your work experience?

- A. Managing my reactions**
- B. Reading others more accurately**
- C. Improving communication tone**
- D. Handling conflict calmly**



Emotional Agility at Work

When employees respond intentionally:

- Conflict decreases
- Trust increases
- Collaboration improves
- Stress reduces



Thank You



For information about workshops and coaching contact me at:



www.dougnoll.com



<https://dougnoll.co/LetsTalk>



doug@dougnoll.com



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EAP Benefit Spotlight – Flourish Features

Resources For Total Wellbeing

AWARE: A MINDFULNESS PROGRAM

FEATURES:

- Six telephonic sessions with an Aware specialist who is trained in mindfulness.
- An individualized practice plan, tailored to your needs.
- Opportunity to experience and learn mindfulness exercises within each scheduled session.
- Electronic resources such as a practice plan journal, guided practice exercises and an additional resource guide.



The Aware mindfulness program helps you live in the present moment. It offers a research-based program which is derived from some of the world's leading mindfulness experts.

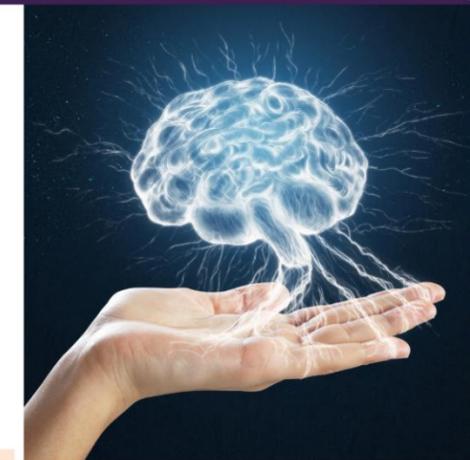
A specially trained Aware specialist will guide you through the process to learn the skills you need to reduce stress and establish greater mind-body balance and in

Resources For Total Wellbeing

COMPUTERIZED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

KEY BENEFITS OF THE CCBT PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- An alternative way of receiving counseling, ideal for people used to accessing services online.
- Effective for mild to moderate levels of stress, anxiety and depression.
- Helps to improve quality of life, both in and away from the workplace.



You now have a new way to obtain counseling through your Employee Support Program. For support with issues such as anxiety, stress, and depression, you can access computerized Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (cCBT). Weekly, online interactive sessions teach you how to apply CBT concepts to change the way you think about and perceive events, resulting in an improvement to your personal well-being, family relationships, and work and social roles.

The confidential cCBT program* comprises seven sessions offered online over seven weeks. A qualified counselor will track your progress and guide you throughout via email and telephone support. Easy to use, with a personalized registration and login, this seven-week program utilizes video and multimedia to enhance your online experience.

Call or e-mail us now to get started.

* Prior to accessing cCBT, an assessment is made to ensure clinical appropriateness. In some cases, short-term face-to-face or telephone counseling, or other support/resource options may be more appropriate.

Employee Assistance Program

LIFE COACHING

FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Have convenient telephone conversations with your Life Coach.
- Establish your vision, set goals and create an action plan in your very first meeting.
- Engage in up to 5 follow-up meetings to help recalibrate, refresh, and progress with your goals.



PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS IS NOT ALWAYS CLEAR

... through a thought-provoking, creative process to maximize your potential and

