

BEYOND THE MASK: OJI EMOTION LIFE LAB – WRAP UP REPORT TO PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for participating in the pilot with Oji Life Lab to test and provide feedback on a breakthrough emotional intelligence (EI) learning system, the Emotion Life Lab. The Section was interested in supporting the work of Oji since improvements in managing emotions and strengthening emotional resilience have been associated with improvements in patient outcomes as well as improvements in the work environment.

The objectives of the pilot were to:

1. **Demonstrate sustained EI learning benefits:** that the Emotion Life Lab could deliver lasting benefits to Ontario's Anesthesiologists' Members, supporting real behaviour change.
2. **Support Oji Life Lab in strengthening the Emotion Life Lab in preparation for rollout to a broader healthcare audience.** We agreed to pilot the app together with a couple of other healthcare sites in Canada.

The pilot ran from January to May 2019. At that time, data was gathered and processed with access to the app continuing to be offered to all pilot participants.

The purpose of this brief report is to provide participants with a summary of the data and next steps.

Process Overview

The pilot was announced at last year's Ontario Anesthesia Meeting. However, the start was delayed. Software delivery schedules are notoriously prone to delays and despite best efforts, the Emotion Life Lab was no exception. This delay led to a significant time gap between OA participant recruitment and the start of the pilot, translating to a loss of momentum.

When the pilot got underway in January, 39 of the 44 participants logged in (89%), and 29 (74%) responded to an initial pre-test. The results indicated that participants valued improving their EI **and** saw opportunities to achieve improvements in both their professional and personal lives.

Initial software defects led to a lack of on-phone reminders during much of the pilot. 15 participants made progress advancing past Level 1 of 10 (38%). The remaining 24 users did not progress past Level 1 (62%). Three users were near completion at the end of the pilot. Participants attended a total of 27 live sessions with Oji Coaches (available at Level 3), often joining from home outside of work hours.

Key Results

Results from the post-pilot survey are presented (19 participants—49%—responded) below, together with some anecdotes and observations collected by Oji.

Learning benefits were strong:

- 80% of respondents found the Emotion Life Lab helpful (average of 5.2 on a 7-point scale)
- 73% of respondents believe that their EI has improved as a result of the Emotion Life Lab (average of 4.8 on a 7-point scale)
- 90% of respondents report that their ability to recognize their emotions has improved as a result of the Emotion Life Lab (average of 5.6 on a 7-point scale)
- 70% of respondents report that their ability to regulate their emotions has improved as a result of the Emotion Life Lab (average of 4.8 on a 7-point scale)

Sustainability of the learning benefits is not as obvious:

- 42% (8) of respondents said they would rarely use the Emotion Life Lab moving forward
- 36% (7) said they would use it a few times a week
- 21% (4) respondents said they would use it daily

Strong support for rolling out the app to other Section Members but only one respondent willing to pay market value to get access:

- 89% believe that their team would work better together if they all used the Emotion Life Lab
- 89% recommended that the Section make this app available to all Members

However:

- 9 (47%) would pay \$0 for the app
- 9 (47%) would pay \$149 for the app
- 1 (5%) respondent would pay \$549

Oji's price point for the app is \$349.

Learners want additional engagement support:

Write-in survey comments indicate that there were two main issues in terms of making full use of the app: technology limitations and making the time in already busy schedules. Oji's experience with other pilot sites would indicate that additional support mechanisms e.g., regular meetings when part of an in-tact team, result in significantly higher levels of adherence and greater value being derived from the app.

Beyond the Data

Here are some OA pilot participants testimonials:

"I'm a totally different person than I was a year ago."

"I love this Oji Life Lab program. I loved the coaching sessions. I love to be able to identify my emotions on the mood meter. I am getting a little better at regulating my emotions and I am paying more attention to other people's emotions. It does take hard work and that is OK. I know it is important.... Thank you so much for this wonderful program."

"I love the mood meter. The coaching sessions — verbal and text were excellent in that they were on my schedule and were able to get to the point and focus on real time solution finding".

"It's been fascinating to realize something that 'should be so easy' like recognizing what you feel is actually really hard."

Oji Life Lab Coaches, based on working with some of the participants, observe that anesthesiologists love their work, in particular patient interaction. A significant source of dissatisfaction at work are difficult relationships. EI is the primary skill to improve these relationships. Having used the Emotion Life Lab, some participants describe themselves as being better able to address these issues and enlist strategies to achieve better outcomes. Some examples below:

- One OA participant recognized what triggered him into the red quadrant of the MoodMeter in the OR. He worked on being able to anticipate these situations and enlist emotion regulation strategies. Now, this participant is better able to avoid getting triggered, allowing him to be more focused on patient care.
- The Emotion Snapshot survey helped a participant become aware of a blind-spot regarding how she was perceived by others when frustrated. She was able to enlist strategies that she learned in the Emotion Life Lab to help close that gap and better manage frustration and stress.
- During a post-op team meeting, an OA doctor was able to recognize anger expressed by another member of the surgical team and understand the potential for "emotional contagion" among other team members. Using

skills gained in the Emotion LifeLab, the OA participant worked to co-regulate his emotions with the angry colleague, lowering the emotional intensity and guiding the team successfully towards a constructive conversation.

Results and Next Steps

1. Given all the helpful feedback provided, Oji has made and continues to make changes to the Emotion Life Lab and to the experience, such as: moving the first live learning session earlier in the overall program, creating additional engagement support such as reminder emails, and making lots of content refinement and updates, including improving the survey set-up.
2. Based on the survey results, the Beyond the Mask Steering Committee is not moving forward with conducting a further pilot or rolling the app out across the Section at this time. There is wide agreement as to the important role enhanced emotional intelligence can play in strengthening working relationships. However, the resources and structure are not in place in the Section currently to support the program at the level needed for it to gain more traction. There remain some challenges with the content and format of the app. Finally, it was never intended to make the app available at no cost to members and based on results, the appetite among members appears to be limited at the current market price point
3. The Steering Committee is continuing to work with Oji as refinements are made to the Emotion Life Lab. A direction setting initiative for the Section is underway, with an important conversation scheduled for the AGM during the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting on September 27, culminating in the introduction of a new five-year strategic direction in 2020. Many opportunities lie ahead to figure out how best to support members become more emotionally intelligent, including a possible role for the Emotion Life Lab.

Please contact Lindsay Kneteman, Section Coordinator, with any questions or queries at lkneteman@ontariosanesthesiologists.ca