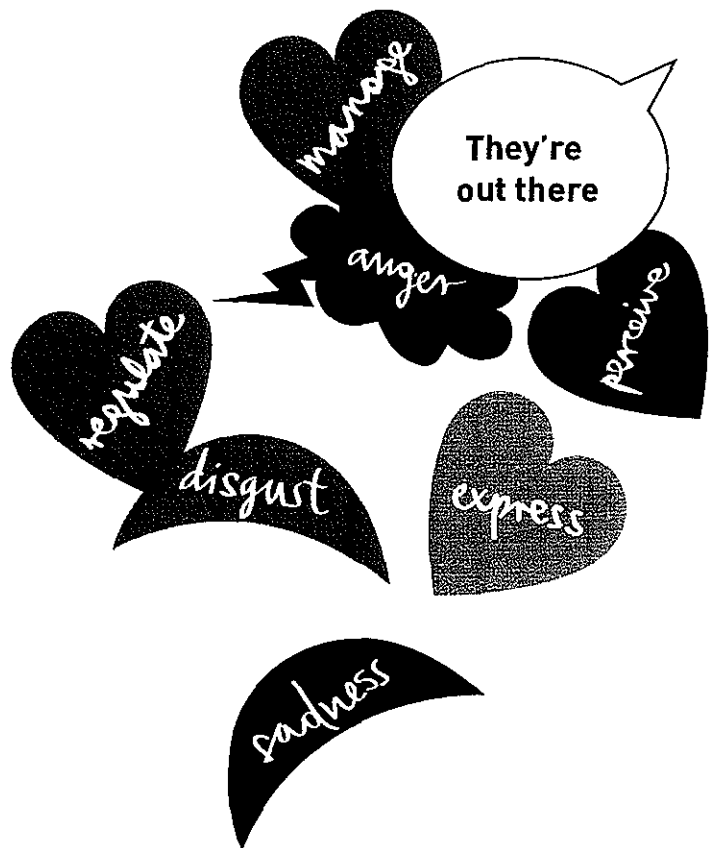




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FLOW STATE – A POTENTIAL OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Almeida Correia Ana¹, Veiga Branco Maria²

(1) Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas - Universidade Nova de Lisboa,

(2) Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Portugal

This study sets off from the construct of "flow activity or experience" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982, 1990, 2000), or "optimal experience" to know the living activities that can provide this state. According to the author, they occur when the energy of an individual is focused on experience: thoughts and mixed feelings disappear, one loses track of time and space. He also argues that work can trigger the flow, a phenomenon confirmed by (Veiga Branco, 2004 a, b; 2007, 2010 Agostinho, 2009), although it can be achieved by any activity.

Objective: To understand the activities leading to "flow state" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982, 1990, 2000), according to the perception of a sample of preschool, primary and lower secondary school teachers.

Method: A transversal, descriptive and qualitative study, using "grounded theory" methodology, with semi-structured interviews conducted from January to March 2011 in a purposive sample of 60 subjects: 7 preschool teachers and 53 primary and lower secondary school teachers, aged 22 to 59, within 4 to 30 years of working experience. The obtained discursive contents were subjected to a content analysis, generating a "categorical tree" with 3 generations, built around the activities that provide the "flow state" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1982, 1990, 2000).

Conclusions: The study of the "flow state" includes a tree of 13 categories, which will be presented in descending order according to the number of discursive units: "Love" composed of 97 discursive units; "Friends" (93); "Experiencing Nature" (84); "Family" (63); "Fare Niente" (59); "Travels" (53); "Musicality" (46); "Sleep" (35); "Reading" (32); "Loving your job" (27); "Socialising" and "Having a Bath" (23); and finally "Having Money" consisting of 22 discursive units.

Keywords: flow, personal enjoyment