



THE **EI** EVOLUTION

Weather Mapping

How to uncover real emotions for your journey maps

Section One: An introduction

The Background

‘We have to include emotions’

We all know that humans are emotional creatures and we continue to look for ways to incorporate emotion in our ‘customer experience’ work.

For example, how often do we create customer or employee journey maps with columns or rows for their emotions?

Those rows or columns might include words that describe emotions like happy, sad, frustrated or angry or we may include emoji's to express the emotion we **perceive the person might be experiencing** at a specific moment.

We could also include an emoji to describe the type of emotion **we want our customers or employees to feel** when we are in the process of designing new journeys.

While it's great that we are acknowledging emotions, recognising the connection between emotion and behaviour and we are attempting to connect the experience the customer/employee is having or we want them to have, with emotions, this practice could be creating more harm than good. Here's why....



The Science

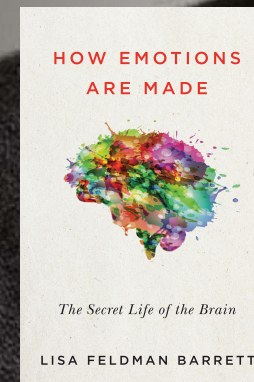
‘Emotions are a simulation an individual creates’

Lisa Feldman Barrett is a neuroscientist, pictured right. She has published books and given TEDx talks about how emotions are made.

You might be surprised by the science she shares.

Lisa says that our emotions are a simulation. Every individual creates their own simulations in every situation they find themselves in. These simulations are shaped by our **socialisation** (the values and beliefs we have adopted from significant adults as we have grown up), our **experience** (the range of things we have done and the meaning we have attached to them) plus the **context** at that moment in time (what's going on 'around' this situation)

This means that our emotions are unique to us. How we feel about something is shaped by our individual influences and it's impossible for us to predict or guess how other people are feeling or how they are likely to feel as they may not even know yet themselves.



© The Ei Evolution 2021

So what?

‘Do we really know how our customers/employees tick?’

Very often we exclude customers/employees from our journey work. We perceive that we have all of the insight we need from our research findings and the information we have collated from transactions and conversations. We believe that these inputs give us the detail we need to ‘understand how customers/employees tick’ - but how true is that?

Do these sources really help us truly understand what is going on? How people feel? Why they behave the way they do? Psychologists argue that the way we ask people how they feel gives us an inaccurate response. Can we really categorise **an emotion by a number the respondent has selected in answer to a question** or how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement?

Humans do have the capacity to describe how they feel about something, they can explain their emotions with varying degrees of detail, but often they can only do this when you give them an abstract exercise to work on. **This is where weather mapping comes in.**



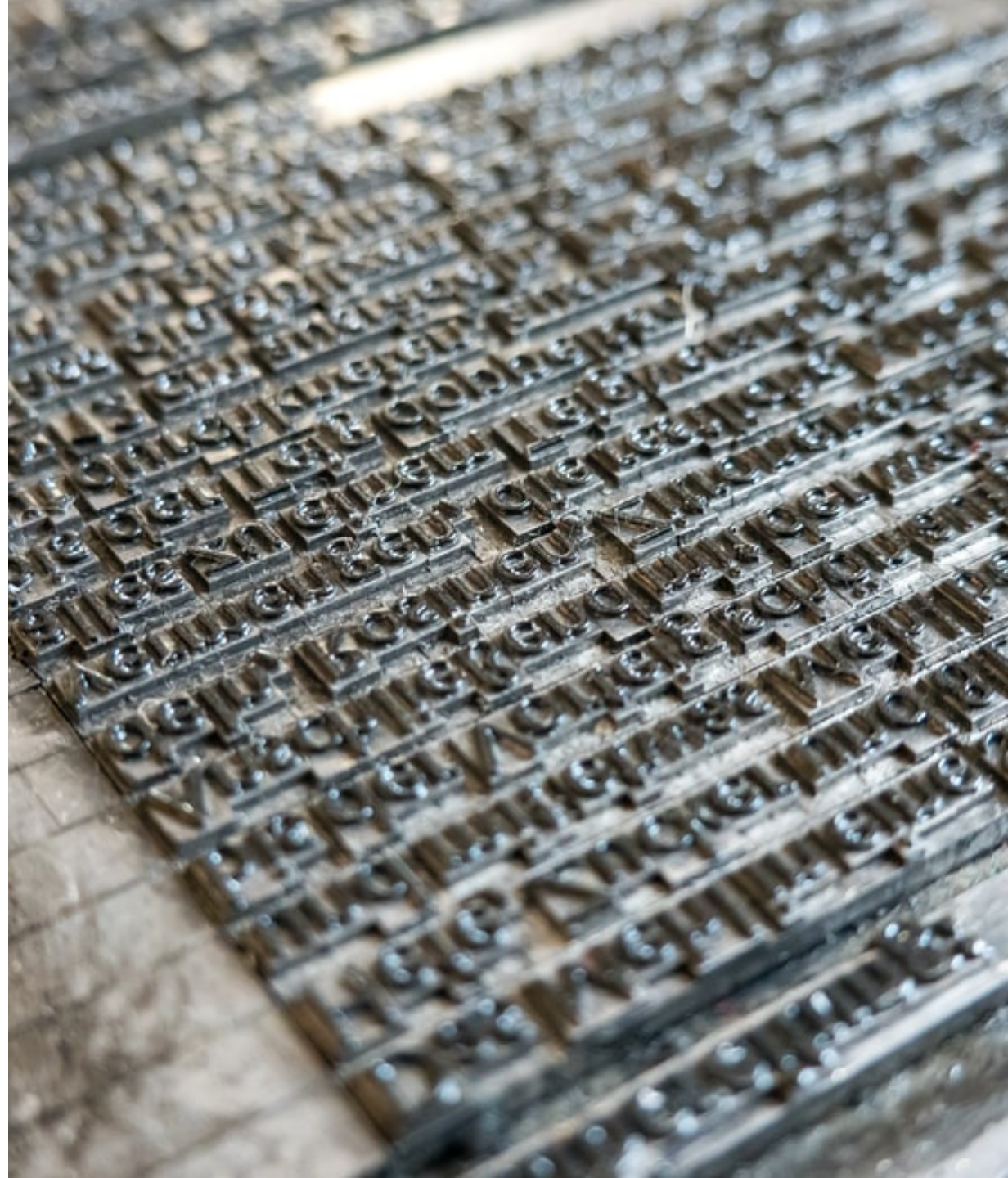
Emotional Granularity

‘Helping people describe their emotions’

Ask anyone how they feel and their response will be dependent on their level of **self awareness** (the extent to which they are tuned into how they are feeling), how **safe they feel** to give you an honest response and their level of **emotional granularity** (their ability to use a range of words and signals to describe their feelings).

Lisa Feldman Barrett explains that people who read, watch movies, travel and listen to a range of media have a wider range of words they can use (known as a lexicon) to describe how they are feeling. This is a skill called Emotional Granularity. The more detail people can give us about how they are feeling, the more likely it is that we can understand them better. People are often ‘held back’ from understanding their own emotions, the emotions of others and describing how they feel due to their limited lexicon.

Using the ‘weather mapping technique’ as the **first part of your journey mapping** development enables customers & employees to describe their emotions more easily. It also empowers staff working on the journey to understand the emotional impact of the experience too.



What are weather maps?

They help us uncover real emotion which influence our journey maps

Basics

A weather map is a sheet of paper a person populates with a series of symbols, drawings or images to describe their feelings along a pre-defined journey. They use one symbol per step.

The purpose of the weather map

The weather maps help you to uncover the emotions involved in the journeys people take with us. This weather map workshop should take place before you host your journey mapping exercises.

When customers or employees are compiling their weather map they are using weather symbols to help them describe the experiences they felt along the journey. They are expected to use a symbol for each experienced feeling along the journey – they only put something on the weather map when they can recall feelings..

The weather map template

Customers or employees are given a template to work from. This template has a legend of weather symbols, they can choose to replicate these or use their own. They may choose to add words to this symbol too. It's important that the template describes the start and the end of the journey so that the people completing it know the scope of their descriptions.





THE EI EVOLUTION

BOLD EXPERIENCES TO GROW EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Consultancy • Coaching • Courses • Training

Now that we have covered the introduction. Let's go to **Section Two: How to use the Weather Maps**

For more information or to discuss the science behind the design of the Weather Maps contact Sandra Thompson at The Ei Evolution on + 44 7896561001 or connect with her at:
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cxeisandra/>



© The Ei Evolution 2021



THE **EI** EVOLUTION

Weather Mapping

How to uncover real emotions for your journey maps

Section Two: How to use Weather Maps

You're ready

Before you send the weather maps out to the customers or employees involved in your weather mapping workshop, there are a few things to get ready.

First of all, you should have made decisions on the **scope of your journey mapping exercise** – in other words you have decided on the purpose of journey map and agreed where the journey starts and stops, this is the scope of the journey you will be examining.

For example, for employees you might be looking at the on-boarding stage through to the end of the induction process. For customers you might just look at the payment steps – from selection of the product to the basket through to the thank you message they receive when payment has been made.

Secondly, you've either commissioned an agency to recruit **customers that fit the persona** you intend to work with, or you'll have **clustered similar employees** according to the criteria you have set and you have a list of these ready to invite.

Finally, you'll have decided on the group of **internal staff** who will be involved in facilitating the journey mapping exercise itself. **These people will meet after this weather mapping exercise to add the insight they have gained from this session to the full customer or employee journey map.**



The internal roles

While you might be leading this session, other internal staff will be helping you to facilitate it. And because they will be critical in the next stage of the full mapping process, you have to be confident that they can fulfil your requirements.

Your customers or employees will be invited to send their completed weather maps to you one week ahead of the session or they can bring them on the day. Should they send them to you early keep them to yourself, we don't want anyone hypothesizing on their meaning before they have been explained.

One of the critical parts of this weather map session is for your colleagues to listen to the customers or employees talk them through the weather map they have pre-prepared. It's critical that those internal staff you invite are able to actively listen, they can take good notes and they are highly skilled communicators.

It's important that the internal roles heavily focus on what they are being told by the customers or employees. We don't want them to problem solve or jump to conclusions in the first part of the workshop.

You may wish to consider the types of people you include in this exercise very carefully. They should each have high levels of emotional intelligence and allow the customers or employees to take the lead in their storytelling.



Send out the weather maps

Send the weather maps out to your customers or employees in a couple of different ways. Don't assume that they have printers at home and don't assume that they are all creative geniuses [invite them to draw, cut and paste or copy and paste – whatever works for them]

We would strongly recommend sending all of the workshop participants, including your internal staff a copy of the invitation and instructions on how to complete the weather maps, this way everyone knows what to expect.

How you decide to introduce this exercise is up to you, we have used this explanation in the past, but you may have a different set of words that work well for you:

Thank you for agreeing to take part in our weather mapping exercises on xx xx 20xx at xxx. In preparation for this session we are inviting you to complete something we call a 'weather map'.

*Usually, we would ask you to describe your experiences with us in a very transactional way, this time we are using this different, weather map technique as it will help us understand more about your experience and how you felt as you took the journey. There's a blank template attached to this email if you wanted to complete it on your computer and we will be sending you one of the paper templates in the post in case this is more convenient for you. These weather maps are **critical** for our workshop session, so you can either complete and send back to me by xx xx or bring the completed version with you on the day. All of the postal and email details are at the bottom of this email.*



© The Ei Evolution 2021

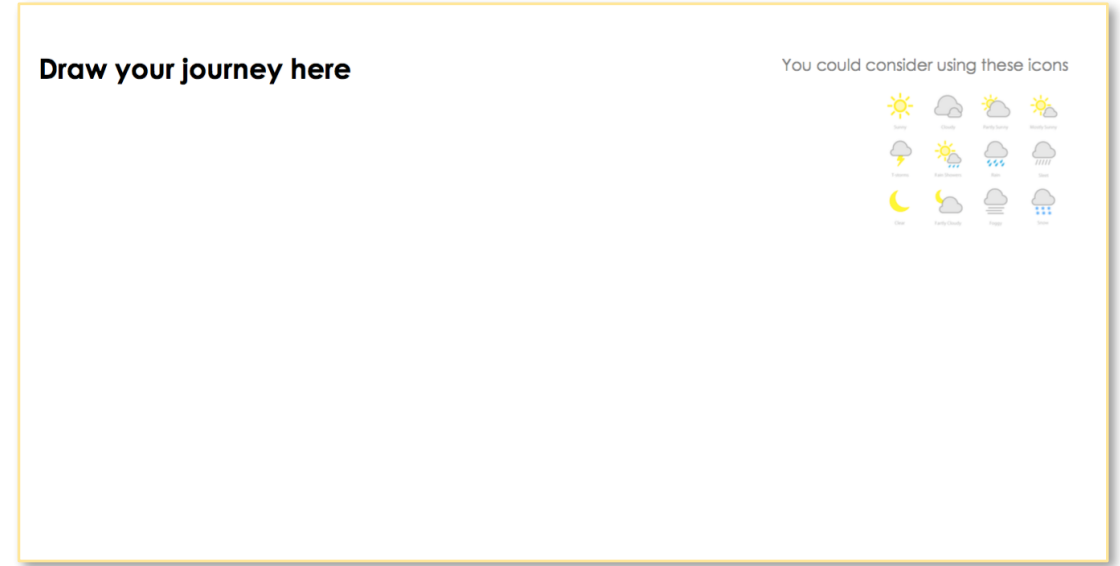
The weather map instructions

You may decide to say the following to your customers or your employees:

The weather map template is attached to this email. It's mostly blank so that you can plot **each step** you took on your journey from xx to xx with a weather icon (one weather icon for each step you can recall) or a drawing. We have included 12 example weather symbols on the right of the template to give you an idea of what you might include, but we're not expecting you to use these.

You may choose to print this template out and draw on it. Alternatively, you may decide to use Google to give you the weather icons. **Either way the steps you took on your journey with us should feature something related to the weather and how this symbol reflects how you felt at the time of the experience with us. As an example:** possibly the sunshine symbol might mean you were happy at one stage of your journey with us and the thunder cloud symbol might represents your frustration or anger, if relevant.

We invite you to write a few words along with this symbol to add more information/further description to your journey.



The journey template

The weather map template

Draw your journey here

You could consider using these icons



Please put your name here:



THE EI EVOLUTION

BOLD EXPERIENCES TO GROW EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Consultancy • Coaching • Courses • Training

Now that we have covered how to use the weather maps. Let's go to **Section Three: The Weather Maps in your workshop**

For more information or to discuss the science behind the design of the Weather Maps contact Sandra Thompson at The Ei Evolution on + 44 7896561001 or connect with her at:
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cxeisandra/>



© The Ei Evolution 2021



THE **EI** EVOLUTION

Weather Mapping

How to uncover real emotions for your journey maps

Section Three: The Weather Maps in your workshop

The workshop agenda

About two weeks before the workshop you'll brief the internal staff involved on their role and take them through the agenda for the session, which would be something like this [this has worked well for us in the past]:

1. **Introductions** – you'd invite the customers or the employees to introduce themselves. You might invite them to consider a colour that is their favorite and explain why. Or they can name a city anywhere in the world that has meaning to them. Again, invite them to explain why this is. Either of these are effective icebreakers.

2. **Brands we love** – you'd invite everyone to write a brand name on a post it and this would go onto the wall. People are invited to explain why they love that brand and encourage others in the room to share their experiences of that brand if there are any. This gets people talking about their experiences and suggests that there are no right or wrong answers. They is just perception, emotion and memory.

Short break



The workshop agenda #2

3. **The Weather Map** – customers or employees are now buddied up with a member of the internal staff. They are invited to sit at a desk in the room far enough away from others so that they cannot be overheard and influenced by the conversation between others. The customer or employee then takes their buddy through their map. The buddy is not allowed to ask any questions at all. They can make some notes.

4. **The check in** – now it's the turn of the buddy to play back what they think they have heard. The customer or employee can interrupt, clarify or correct at any time. The buddy asks questions of the customer and employee now too. They can ask about feelings and decisions but they should not fill in the steps the customer or employee may have missed out of the journey – the reason why they have not included these is because they don't remember them. This is a significant learning.

Short break



The workshop agenda #3

5. **Key reflections** – as an extension of the short break both the internal staff (buddy) and the customer or employee write a few notes on their reflections of the check in session. How did they feel, was there anything else they wanted to say? Was there anything else they wanted to add? Any other observations? These notes are collected up by the lead facilitator.

6. At this point you can either close the session or you can go for a final exercise which is to invite the customers or employees to sum up their experience along the journey you have been exploring making anything they like out of **playdoh**. Give them 10 minutes to make something and then walk around the room inviting each person to talk through their model. Each should describe it, explain what it represents and why this is important.

Thanks and close.

Everyone is invited to stay and chat further. These exercises can also be carried out online with breakout rooms and you'd send the playdoh in the post along with the template so that participants would have them to hand.



© The Ei Evolution 2021

Follow up

The host would send a message to everyone involved thanking them for their contribution. They invite any further thoughts and reflections.

The internal staff are requested to send their answers to some specific questions two days after the workshop, these might be:

1. What emotions seemed to dominate during the workshop from the customers or employees and from the internal staff?
2. Which part of the weather map you went through stood out for you the most and why?
3. What language did the customer or employee use which you think would be helpful for the journey mapping project team?
4. What else do you recall that you'd like to share.....?

All of this insight is used to inform the completion of the weather map.



Examples from previous weather maps

How you found out about different ways to pay for your energy.

PRESS INFO- NEWS AND ONLINE AND ADVICE OF FRIENDS- I REALISED THAT BY NOT FIXING MY DIRECT DEBIT I WAS PAYING TOO MUCH AND BILL RECEIPT WAS NOT THE BEST OPTION. PLUS A LETTER CAME FROM BRITISH GAS TO TELL ME ABOUT A CHEAPER DEAL



• How you decided that you wanted to pay by Fixed Direct Debit. (either when you joined British Gas or later in your my relationship with us when you thought about changing how you paid)

I DID A COST COMPARISON ON A WEB SITE AND ALSO LOOKED AT UNITS USED AND THE FIXED STANDING CHARGE AND WORKED OUT THAT DIRECT DEBIT WAS BETTER. IT ALSO SEEMED WRONG TO ME THAT THOUGH THE DIRECT DEBIT WAS TO BE FIXED BRITISH GAS FIXED IT AND NOT ME!



I FELT A BIT ANXIOUS THAT IT WOULD GO THROUGH ON THE RIGHT DAY AND THE RIGHT AMOUNT AND NOT TWICE AND SUDDENLY BE INCREASED AT A WHIM



• When you needed help what happened?

I SIMPLY WENT TO MY ACCOUNT ON LINE LOOKED AT THE LINKS AND HELP PAGES AND IT ALL SEEMED FINE SO I DID NOT NEED ANY MORE CONTACT. IT JUST SEEMED MORE EXPENSIVE AS A BILL AS IT WAS BEING PAID EVERY MONTH- BUT THAT WAS DECEPTIVE AND JUST A FEELING AS THE NAME BRITISH GAS SHOWED UP ON MY STATEMENT SO MUCH MORE





THE EI EVOLUTION

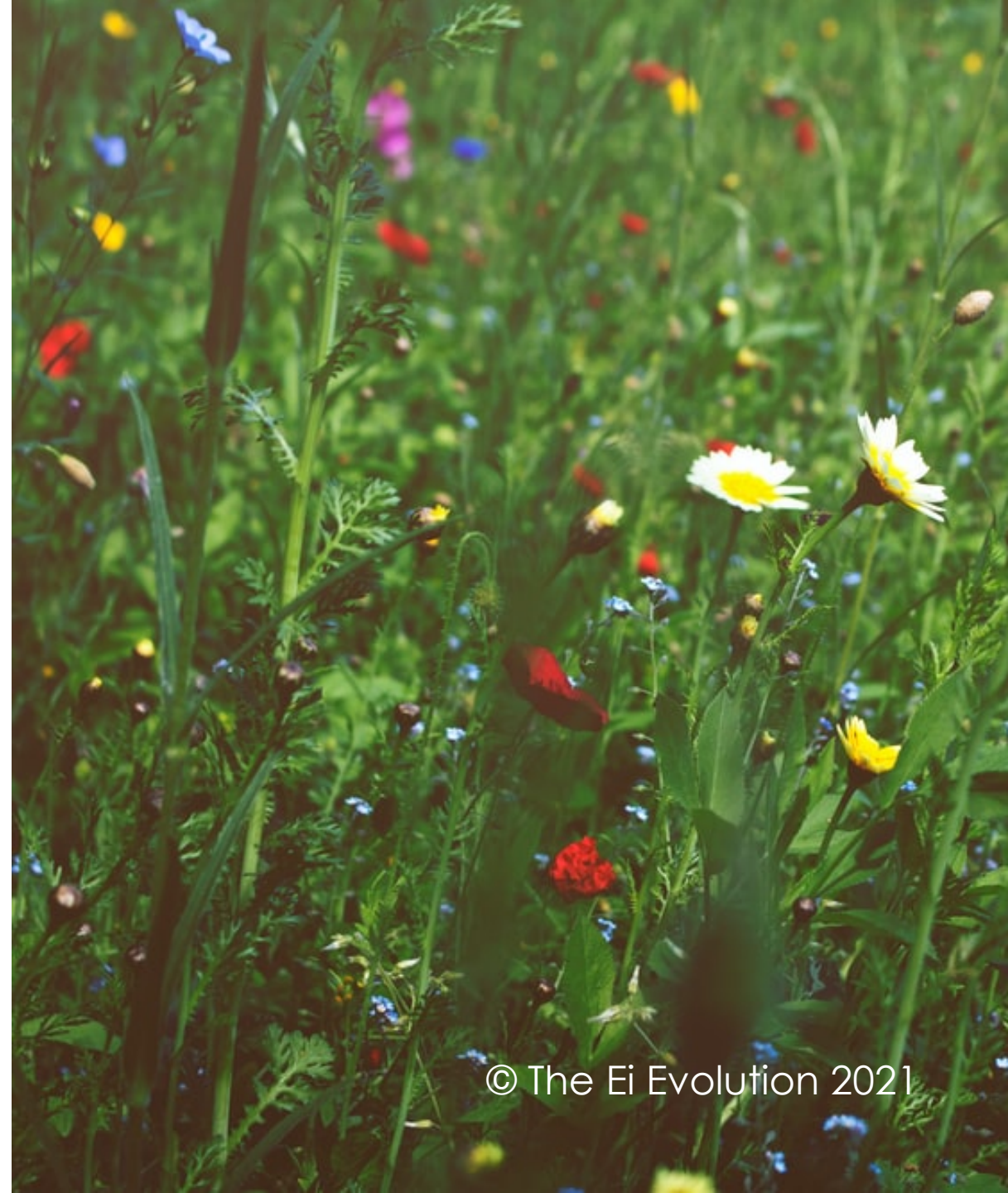
BOLD EXPERIENCES TO GROW EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Consultancy • Coaching • Courses • Training

**Thank you for your interest in
Weather Maps. We wish you
every success with them.**

For more information or to discuss the science behind the design of the Weather Maps and how you take the insight from these exercises to add emotions to your journey maps contact Sandra Thompson at The Ei Evolution on + 44 7896561001 or connect with her at:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cxeisandra/>



© The Ei Evolution 2021