

PANDORA'S BOX

May 16th 2009

Intensity

Sensitivity

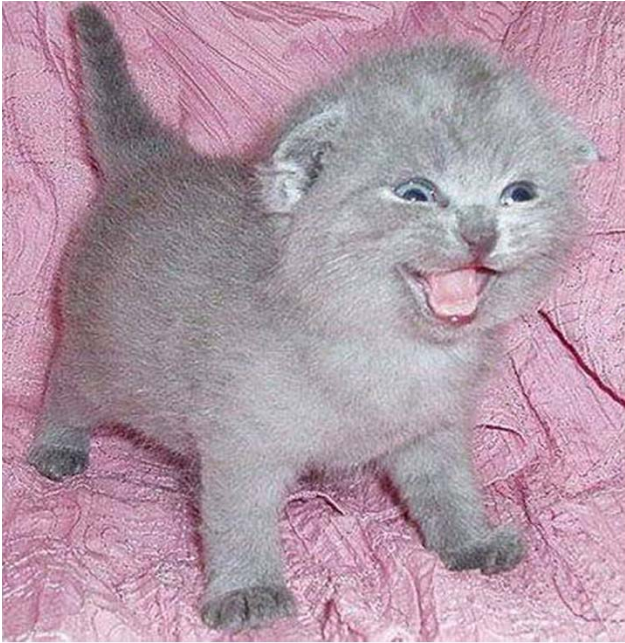
Anger

The OE's- *Over- excitability*

- Over- excitabilities are common in gifted people
- Over- excitability sounds like “too much” of something

..Too much emotion, too much activity, too much sensitivity.

- Too much reaction makes people uncomfortable.



"Calm down"

*"You don't have to cry about that.
You're over-reacting"*

- ❑ This can make you feel like there is something wrong with you.
- ❑ It can make you feel like you are not wanted or accepted.

Anger



- Feeling everything more deeply than others do can both be painful and frightening.
- Emotionally intense gifted people often feel abnormal.

"There must be something wrong with me... maybe I'm crazy... nobody else seems to feel like this."

Intensity



- Highly empathic gifted children seem to know what others feel and to actually experience the feelings within themselves; unfortunately, this is especially true of intensely negative feelings.

Sensitivity

- Intense feelings are normal for gifted children.
- Sensitivity does not mean weakness.

*Tear off the back page of your handout-
these articles are for your parents.*



"I'm a very sensitive person. I hurt real easy and real deep, which is why I think I have to write songs, [and] why so many of them fit the feelings of so many people that can't write. It's because I feel everything to my core."

Dolly Parton

DABROWSKI OVEREXCITABILITIES

- Intellectual (Avid Reading, Curiosity, Asking Probing Questions, Concentration, Problem Solving, Theoretical Thinking)
- Imaginational (Fantasy Play, Animistic and Imaginative Thinking, Daydreaming, Dramatic Perception, Use of Metaphor)
- Emotional (Concern for Others, Timidity and Shyness, Fear and Anxiety, Difficulty Adjusting to New Environments, Intensity of Feeling)
- Psychomotor (Marked Enthusiasm, Rapid Speech, Surplus of Energy, Nervous Habits, Impulsive Actions)
- Sensual (Sensory Pleasures, Appreciation of Sensory Aspects of Experiences, Avoidance of Overstimulation)

Emotional OE

- in the body - the body mirrors the emotions and feelings are often expressed as bodily symptoms such as tense stomach, sinking heart, blushing, headache, nausea
- strong affective memory - emotionally intense children can remember the feelings that accompanied an incident and will often relive and 're-feel' them long afterward

Emotional OE



- fears and anxieties, feelings of guilt, feelings of being out of control
- emotional ties and attachments to others, empathy and concern for others, sensitivity in relationships, attachment to animals, difficulty in adjusting to new environments, loneliness, conflicts with others over the depth of relationships

CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIOR PATTERNS OF the GIFTED



- **Difficulty seeing things from others' viewpoint**
- **Perfectionism—very self-critical; unwilling to take risks; oversensitive to criticism**
- **Creative—engages in non-traditional behaviors**
- **Judgment lags behind intellect (asynchronous development)**
- **Non-conformity; challenges others and traditions; refuses to accept authority; disrupts status quo**

Intensity



- Intensity and sensitivity- *may overreact; gets angry easily, or cries if things go wrong*
- Impatient with others and self
- Intolerant and critical of others

Idealism

- Impatient with failures
- Experiences keen disappointment
- Feelings of aloneness

Asynchronous development

out of synch-

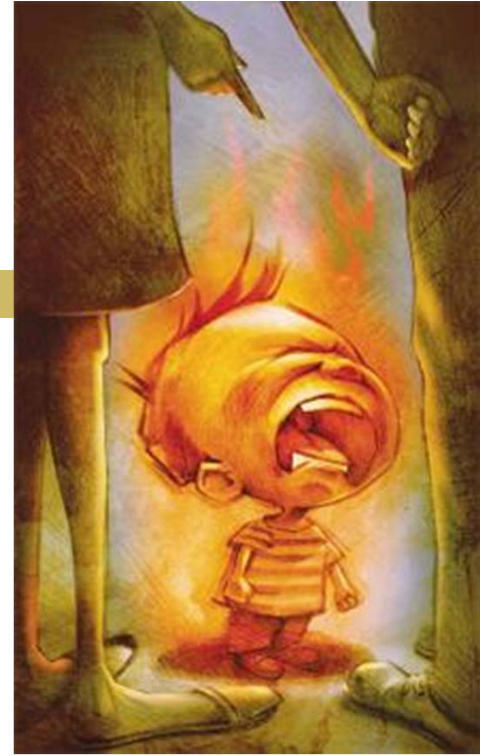
IQ and maturity, IQ and physical size

Intensity

- Oversensitive to criticism
- Difficulty seeing things from others' viewpoint
- Perfectionism—very self-critical; unwilling to take risks; oversensitive to criticism

Anger

- ❑ The anger that you see is anger.
- ❑ The source of it is heightened sensitivity.
- ❑ The majority of these angry outbursts are driven by the child's feelings being hurt.
- ❑ A child's feelings are hurt, she/he gets angry, parents or friends respond with anger as well.



ANGER- *What can you do?*

- Count to 10 when you are angry
- Realize you may be angry because your feelings were hurt- *maybe deeply.*
- Tell the person they really hurt your feelings or insulted you. (If it's someone you trust)
OR
- Walk Away and breathe deeply

CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED



- Neglects duties or people during periods of intense focus
- Numerous or diverse interests; appears scattered
- Disorganized learning or job functioning style; leaves tasks unfinished; lacks interest in details; hands in messy work
- Overly focused- reluctant to move to new topics in discussion.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED

- Underachievement due to excessive conformity with peers
- Asynchronous development- shows scatter of ability levels
- Poor handwriting
- Peer relation problems
- Jokes or puns at inappropriate times

DANGER: Low Blood Sugar

➤ REACTIVE HYPOGLYCEMIA

- Incidence 5% to 7% of highly gifted
- Need frequent snacks
- Brain uses 70% of body's glucose supply
- About half also have allergies and need less sleep
- May be misdiagnosed with temper issues or ADD/ADHD

SLEEP DISORDERS (Nightmare/ Sleep Terror or Sleepwalking Disorders)

- **Normal Sleep patterns (20% need less; 20% need more)**
- **10% - 20% of gifted, particularly males, have sleep problems.**
- **Bedwetting (5% - 10% of gifted boys ages 6-11)**

What is stress?

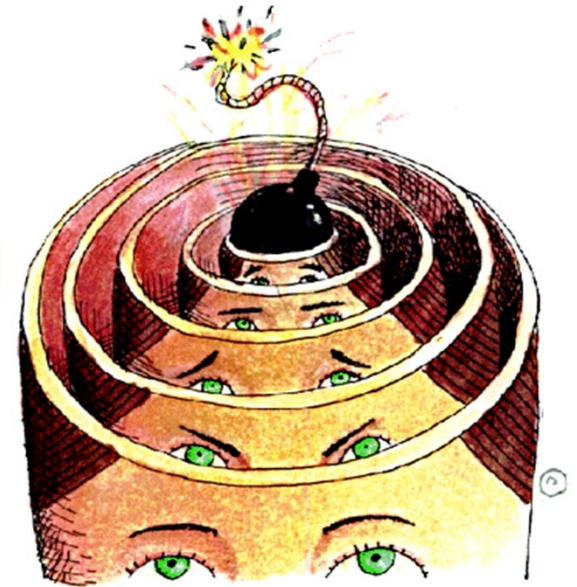
- Pressure or impact
- Under the right conditions it can bring out the best in us

A diamond transforms from a lump of coal over time, only under intense heat and pressure



Sources of stress

- ❑ Feeling misunderstood
- ❑ Feeling alone
- ❑ Lack of intellectual challenge
- ❑ Lack of feedback on how to improve



Sources of stress



- Wanting to help the world or community and not knowing where to start
- Lack of resources
- Pressure to be perfect
- Disappointment between what you have in your head and your actual product

Perfectionism

- See Handout:

“Perfectionism at a Glance”



Sources



- www.sengifted.org
- www.davidsongifted.org
- James Webb, Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children
- http://www.hsperson.com/pages/com_zone.htm This has some really good articles for teens about sensitivity.