Navigating the mindfields of intensities & personality types

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With thanks to the support of the giftEDnz Speakers' Bureau

http://giftednz.org.nz/
Welcome

Nau mai, haere mai!

Welcome to your national professional community in gifted and talented education.
Living with Intensity

Gifted children and adults are often misunderstood. Their excitement is viewed as excessive, their high energy as hyperactivity, their persistence as nagging, their imagination as not paying attention, their passion as being disruptive, their strong emotions and sensitivity as immaturity, their creativity and self-directedness as oppositional. This resource describes these...more

Paperback, 305 pages
Published 2009 by Great Potential Press (first published 2008)
Mellow Out, If Only I Could
Gifted and Intensity

“Their vast emotional range makes them appear contradictory: mature and immature, arrogant and compassionate, aggressive and timid. Semblances of composure and self-assurance often mask deep feelings of insecurity. The inner experience of the gifted young person is rich, complex and turbulent”.

Linda Silverman
Intensities/Overexcitabilities

Kazimierz Dabrowski (1902-1980)
- Heightened intensity and supersensitivity of the nervous system

Michael Piechowski (1991)
- An abundance of physical, sensual, creative, intellectual, and emotional energy that can result in creative endeavors, as well as advanced emotional and ethical development in adulthood
What are they?

➢ extreme intensities or sensitivities that affect the ways in which an individual experiences the world.

➢ Polish psychologist Kazimierz Dabrowski (1902-1980) identified overexcitabilities as part of a larger theory of development.

➢ those with overexcitabilities experience these distinguishing behaviours regularly.
What are they?

➢ are innate
➢ will be present in some form throughout one's life.
➢ not all gifted children have overexcitabilities,
➢ do seem to be found to a greater degree in gifted and/or creative children than in average-ability children.
What are they?

- can be a positive experience
- they can also cause problems with school experiences and social interaction

How a person responds to a situation is determined by which overexcitability/intensity is most dominant
What are they?

- **Psychomotor** – surplus of energy
- **Sensual** – sensory and aesthetic pleasure
- **Intellectual** – learning and problem solving
- **Imaginational** – vivid imagination
- **Emotional** – intensity of feeling
Psychomotor Intensity (Lind, 1993)

Often characterised by:

- High levels of energy
- Rapid speech and gestures
- Intense physical activity
- Difficulty relaxing or sleeping
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“I feel the most energy when I am about to go swimming. I feel as if I could just go on forever and reach higher limits.”
(Girl, 11)
Psychomotor Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- Rapid speech, marked enthusiasm for fast games and sports, pressure for action, acting out

- Compulsive talking and chattering, impulsive actions, nervous habits (tics, nailbiting), extreme competitiveness
Pyschomotor Strategies (Lind, 1993)

- Allow time for physical or verbal activity
- Build activity and movement into their lives.
- Be sure the physical or verbal activities are acceptable and not distracting to those around them.
- Provide time for spontaneity and open-ended, freewheeling activities.
- Use competitions
Sensual Intensity (Lind, 1993)

Often characterised by:

- Heightened sensory awareness
- Increased appreciation for music, language and art
- Intense reactions to sensory input (e.g., light or sound)
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- Intense reactions to sensory input (e.g., light or sound)

“This OE is the least represented in responses of younger subjects and is hard to find at its most intense.”

(Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984)
Sensual Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- Seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, hearing
- Overeating, buying sprees, wanting to be in the limelight, R18 activities (!)
- Appreciation of beautiful objects (paintings, jewelry), love of words, writing styles
Sensual Strategies (Lind, 1993)

- limit offensive stimuli and provides comfort, based on the voice of the student
- Give unexpected attention, or facilitate creative and dramatic productions that have an audience
- Let them feel the joy of being in the limelight in appropriate ways
- Give time to enjoy the senses
Intellectual Intensity (Lind, 1993)

Often characterised by:

- Intense curiosity
- Love of ideas and analysis
- Ability to solve complex problems
- Passion for knowledge, truth and understanding
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- Passion for knowledge, truth and understanding

“I think I’m the only kid who loves to ask questions. I mean... that’s my life! Questions, questions, and finally when I get all those questions answered, it’s put together, and it’s like a puzzle...” (Girl, 13)
Intellectual Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- Curiosity, concentration, capacity of sustained intellectual effort, avid reading, detailed planning

- Analytical thinking, love of theory and analysis, advanced moral judgment, conceptual and intuitive integration
Intellectual Strategies (Lind, 1993)

- Show how to find the answers to questions.
- Respects and encourages a person’s passion to analyze, synthesize, and seek understanding.
- Provide or suggest ways for those interested in moral and ethical issues to act upon their concerns—such as using KIVA.org.
- Help them learn tactful ways to discuss ideas and other people’s opinions.
Imaginational Intensity (Lind, 1993)

Often characterised by:

- Detailed visual imagery
- Love of the unusual
- Increased facility for fantasy and invention
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Often characterised by:
- Detailed visual imagery
- Love of the unusual
- Increased facility for fantasy and invention

“I like to dream about different countries, places that I make up myself, even animals that I make up. Just anything that is unusual to me.” (Girl, 13)
Imaginational Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- Frequent use of image and metaphor, facility for invention and fantasy, poetic and dramatic perception
- Animistic imagery, mixing truth and fiction, elaborate dreams, illusions, detailed visual recall, fears of the unknown
Imaginational Strategies (Lind, 1993)

- Imaginational people may confuse reality and fiction because their memories and new ideas become blended in their mind.
- Help individuals to differentiate between their imagination and the real world by having them press pause their mental DVD, or write down or draw the factual account before they embellish it.
- Help people use their imagination to function in the real world and promote learning and productivity. For example, instead of the conventional school organized notebook, have children create their own organizational system.
Emotional Intensity (Lind, 1993)

Often characterised by:

- Extremes in emotion - highs and lows
- High levels of empathy and compassion for others
- Acute awareness of own feelings and behaviour
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“When I am quite happy I am so high it seems like nothing could ever get me into a bad mood.” (Boy, 13)
Emotional Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- Extremes of emotion, complex emotions and feelings
- Tense stomach, sinking heart, blushing, sweating
- Timidity, shyness, introspection
- Feelings of guilt, concern with death, depressive and suicidal moods, loneliness
Emotional Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- Empathy and concern for others, sensitivity in relationships,
- Difficulty adjusting to new environments, deep attachment
- Self-critical, feelings of inadequacy and inferiority
Emotional Strategies (Lind, 1993)

- Accept all feelings, regardless of intensity. For people who are not highly emotional, this seems particularly odd. They feel that those high in Emotional OE are just being melodramatic. But if we accept their emotional intensity and help them work through any problems that might result, we will facilitate healthy growth.

- Teach individuals to anticipate physical and emotional responses and prepare for them. Emotionally intense people often don’t know when they are becoming so overwrought that they may lose control or may have physical responses to their emotions.
Emotional Strategies

- Help them to identify the physical warning signs of their emotional stress
- Use Mindfulness, gratitude and Positive Psychology
- Investigate SLOW movements
How else can we help?

- Allow time for the child to express his or her overexcitability in a safe environment. For example, make time for physical activity or daydreaming.
- Educate the child and others involved in the child's life on overexcitabilities.
- Encourage the child to focus on his or her strengths and to use his or her overexcitabilities to an advantage.
How else can we help?

- Teach the child skills to manage his or her overexcitabilities effectively. For example, teach the child emotion regulation techniques (e.g., deep breathing exercises for dealing with stress or anger) or how to effectively cope with offensive stimuli (e.g., politely declining a certain food or avoiding certain smells).

- Emphasize the child's differences as a positive and not a negative. Help the child to understand that being different is okay. We are all unique beings and should be celebrated as such.
Pressing the Right Buttons: People Skills for Business Success

by Allison Mooney

★★★★★ 4.25 - rating details - 4 ratings - 0 reviews

A business book with a sense of humour, on how to develop people skills in a work environment using personality types. To be successful at any level in the business world, you need to be able to work with a variety of people, communicate with them, and keep them happy. This book provides a simple framework for analysing personality types and will show you the best ways to ...more

Kindle Edition, 192 pages
Published May 1st 2010 by Random House New Zealand

Get a copy:
Kobo online stores Book links

Friend Reviews
**The Treasure Tree: Helping Kids Understand Their Personality**

Hardcover – March 15, 1998
by John Trent  (Author)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★  33 customer reviews

See all 6 formats and editions

**Hardcover**

$12.55

45 Used from $0.01
51 New from $6.40
1 Collectible from $9.85

Kids will love this creative and fun book in which 4 animals (an otter, beaver, golden retriever and skunk) teach personality traits and how to respect and appreciate each individual for who they are.

Meets national education standards.

The Amazon Book Review
Author interviews, book reviews, editors picks, and more. Read it now

[The Professional Association for Gifted Education](http://www.giftednz.org.nz)
The Lion

- Likes control
- Confident
- Firm
- Likes challenge
- Problem solver
- Bold
- Goal driven

- Strong willed
- Self-reliant
- Persistent
- Takes charge
- Determined
- Enterprising
- Productive

- Purposeful
- Adventurous
- Independent
- Takes charge
- Action orientated
- Competitive
- Productive
The Otter

➢ Enthusiastic
➢ Visionary
➢ Energetic
➢ Promotor
➢ Mixes-easily
➢ Fun-loving

➢ Optimistic
➢ Takes risks
➢ Motivator
➢ Very verbal
➢ Friendly
➢ Popular

➢ Initiator
➢ Inspirational
➢ Likes change
➢ Enjoys variety
➢ Group oriented
➢ Spontaneous
➢ Likes new ideas
The Golden Retriever

- Sensitive
- Calm
- Non-demanding
- Enjoys routine
- Relational
- Adaptable
- Good listener
- Loyal
- Even-keeled
- Gives in
- Indecisive
- Dislikes change
- Sympathetic
- Nurturing
- Tolerant
- Peace maker
- Thoughtful
- Patient
- Dry humour
The Beaver

➢ Consistent
➢ Reserved
➢ Practical
➢ Factual
➢ Perfectionistic
➢ Detailed
➢ Sensitive
➢ Accurate
➢ Controlled
➢ Predictable
➢ Orderly
➢ Conscientious
➢ Precise
➢ Scheduled
➢ Deliberate
➢ Discerning
➢ Analytical
➢ Inquisitive
➢ Persistent
Their pace

- Fast and decisive
- Fast and spontaneous
- Slow and easy
- Slow and systematic
They gain security through

- Control
- Flexibility
- Close relationships
- Preparation
They are irritated by

- Wasted time, unpreparedness, arguing, blocking results
- Too many facts, too much logic, boring tasks, same old approach, routine...
- Pushy & aggressive behaviour, insincerity, being put on the spot...
- People who do not know what they are talking about, lack of attention to detail...
They want you to be

- Efficient and to the point
- Stimulating and interesting
- Cooperative and pleasant
- Accurate and precise
Provide them with:

- Options, information on what it does and by when, freedom to act, immediate action

- Quality, information on how it will enhance their status, increased talent, originality, uniqueness

- Assurances, information on how it will affect their circumstances, popular ideas, risk sharing, reliability...

- Evidence, information they can logically justify, systematic plans, progress reviews
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Giftedness from the Inside Out

16-18 March Auckland NZ
NZAGC Conference 2018

Giftedness is someone you are, not just something you do (Jim Delisle)

Click here for information on a pre-conference literacy workshop for teachers
References - Intensities


References - Intensities


References - Personality Types

- http://thaoski.com/2013/04/02/5-minute-personality-test-lion-beaver-otter-golden-retriever/
- https://www.smalley.cc/free-personality-test/