

Navigating the mindfields of intensities & personality types

Brooke Trenwith

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The Professional Association for Gifted Education

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Poipoia a tatou tamariki ihumanua
Nurture our gifted children



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MENU

Welcome

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Welcome

Nau mai, haere mai!

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

He Mihi

Manawa mai te putanga o te kō manawa

Ko te reo te manawapou o te tangata

Ko te ihi te waimanawa o te tangata

Ko te hupe te roimata te wai aroha

Whakaāhurutia te iho wairua o te tamaiti.

Mā wai e kawe te kaupapa, māu, māku, mā tātou.

Mā Tūtēia Rahatu, 2000

SENG Website

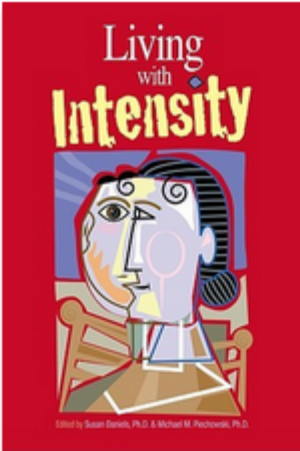
The screenshot shows the homepage of the SENG website. At the top, the browser address bar displays <https://sengifted.org>. The website header features the SENG logo on the left, which consists of a circular emblem with a hand holding a torch. To the right of the logo, the text reads "Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted" and "Changing lives, changing futures!". A search bar with the text "Search Powered by Google" and a "SEARCH" button is located in the top right corner. Below the header, a navigation menu includes links for "ABOUT SENG", "2015 CONFERENCE", "PROGRAMS", "RESOURCES", "STORE", "GET INVOLVED", and "MEMBERSHIP". A prominent blue button labeled "Donate To SENG" with a right-pointing arrow is positioned to the right of the navigation menu. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a large image of a diverse group of smiling people, with the text "SENG Model Parent Groups" overlaid at the bottom. The right column has a teal background and contains the section "SENG News & Alerts". This section includes two announcements: one about the July 16 deadline for online registration for the SENG Conference, and another about accepting submissions for the Board of Directors. Below these announcements is a link for "New to SENG? START HERE". At the bottom of the page, there is a row of five small images. The first image on the left is for "The SENGvine NEWSLETTER" with the tagline "Growing Understanding of the Gifted". The other four images show various people, including a woman looking at a laptop, an older woman and a younger woman smiling, a man reading a book, and a group of people sitting outdoors.

The logo for The Professional Association for Gifted Education (giftednz) is displayed. It features the text "The Professional Association for Gifted Education" at the top. Below this, the word "giftednz" is written in a large, stylized green font. Underneath "giftednz", the Māori phrase "Poipoiā a tatou tamariki ihumanā" is written in a smaller font, followed by the tagline "Nurture our gifted children". The logo is set against a background that includes a close-up image of a fern frond on the right side.

Living with Intensity

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Living
with
Intensity

Edited by Susan Daniels, Ph.D. & Michael W. Piechowski, Ph.D.

Want to Read

Rate this book

★★★★★

Living With Intensity

by Susan Daniels, Michael Piechowski (Editor)

★★★★★ 3.93 · rating details · 287 ratings · 44 reviews

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)

more details... edit details

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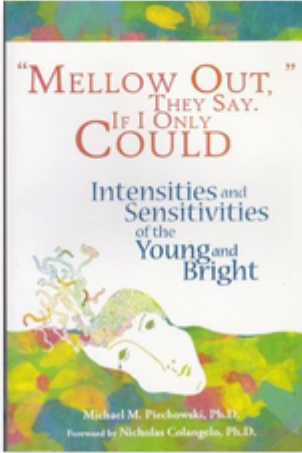
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Friend Reviews

Mellow Out, If Only I Could



Mellow Out, They Say. If I Only Could: Intensities and Sensitivities of the Young and Bright


by Michael M. Piechowski

★★★★☆ 3.81 ·  rating details · 16 ratings · 1 review

The purpose of this book is to give voice to the emotional life of bright young people, to show how their intensities and sensitivities make them more alive, more creative, and more in love with the world and its wonders. The young people express their thoughts and feelings through some 500 excerpts quoted in the text. The book has 21 chapters in five parts: 1. A Matter of ...more

Paperback, 307 pages
Published March 9th 2006 by Yunasa Books
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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?

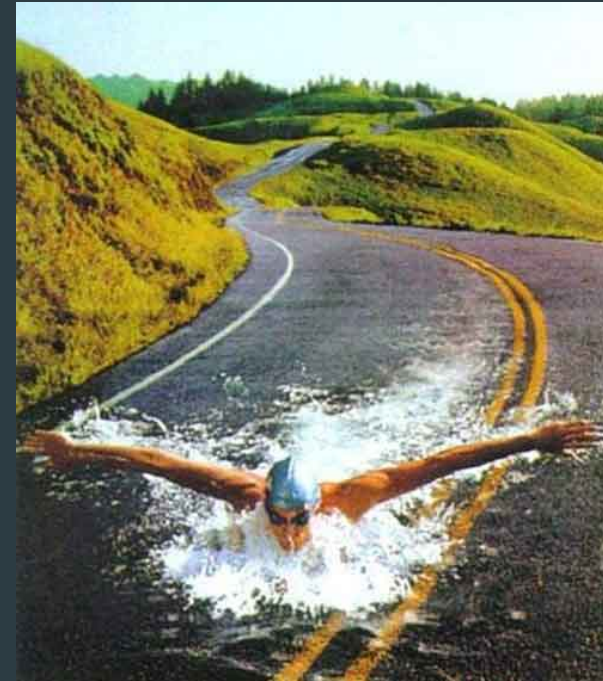
- **Psychomotor** – *surplus of energy*
- **Sensual** – *sensory and aesthetic pleasure*
- **Intellectual** – *learning and problem solving*
- **Imaginational** – *vivid imagination*
- **Emotional** – *intensity of feeling*



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)

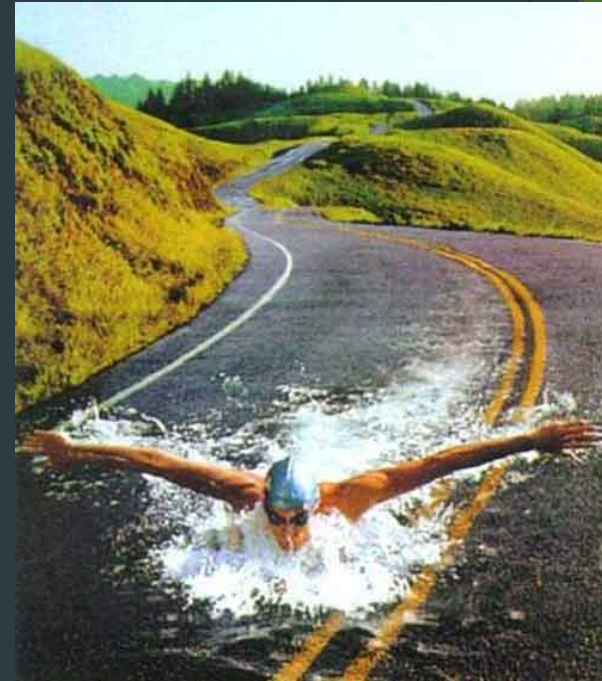
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Psychomotor Intensity (Lind, 1993)

- ▶ 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)



Sensual Intensity (Lind, 1993)

Often characterised by:

- Heightened sensory awareness
- Increased appreciation for music, language
- Intense reactions to sensory input (e.g. 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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“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



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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



Imaginational Intensity (Lind, 1993)

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



Emotional Intensity (Lind, 1993)

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- Extremes in emotion - highs and lows
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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.



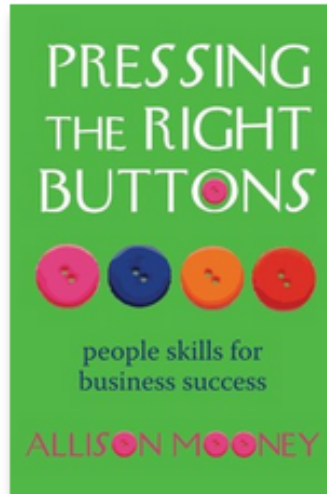
How else can we help?

- ▶ 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.



Animal Personality Types

Gary Smalley & Dr John Trent

[Want to Read](#)

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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

[more details...](#)[edit details](#)

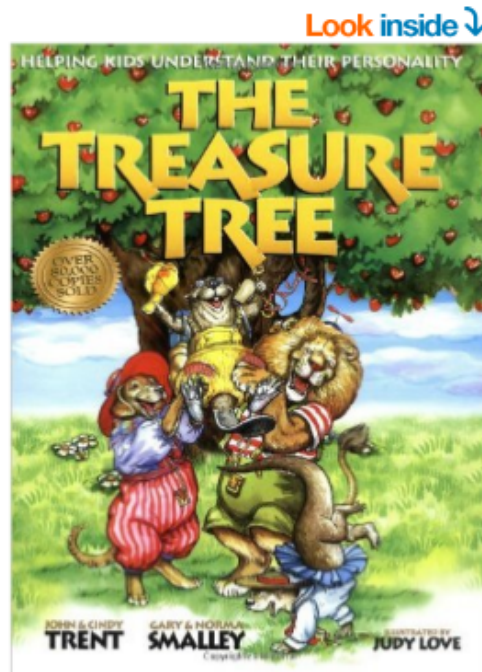
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The Treasure Tree: Helping Kids Understand Their Personality

Hardcover – March 15, 1998

by [John Trent](#) ▾ (Author)

★★★★★ ▾ [93 customer reviews](#)

▸ [See all 6 formats and editions](#)

Hardcover

\$12.55

46 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 & lion) teach personality traits and how to respect and appreciate each individual for who they are.

Meets national education standards.

[Flip to back](#)



The Amazon Book Review

Author interviews, book reviews, editors picks, and more. [Read it now](#)

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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 effect their circumstances, popular ideas, risk sharing, reliability...



- Evidence, information they can logically justify, systematic plans, progress reviews



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<http://bit.ly/BrookeTrenwith>



021 541 019



NZAGC

www.giftedchildren.org.nz

The New Zealand Association for Gifted Children

Gifted Children – Their Future – Our Challenge



What Is This 'Gifted' Thing
All About?

What Is NZAGC About?

Interested In Joining?

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Old Discussion Forum

[Home](#) > [2018 NZAGC National Conference \(Auckland\)](#)

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

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