

UNDERSTANDING OVEREXCITABILITIES

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Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities

- The brains of gifted children are “hard wired” differently
- They are more intense than same age peers
- Process information more quickly and in more places
- Able to react and respond differently and faster

Psychomotor

- Rapid speech
- Impulsivity
- Compulsive talking
- Nervous habits and ticks
- Sleeplessness
- Physical expression of emotions

Taken from Bainbridge, Carol.

<http://giftedkids.about.com/od/gifted101/a/overexcite.htm>

Sensual

- Heightened awareness of all senses
- Highly sensitive to smells, tastes, and textures of foods
- Sensitive to pollution
- Tactile sensitivity (may not like tags in shirts, or feet on grass)
- Desire and need comfort

Taken from Bainbridge, Carol.

<http://giftedkids.about.com/od/gifted101/a/overexcite.htm>

Intellectual

- Need to know.
- Thinking about thinking.
- Deep curiosity.
- Love of knowledge and learning.
- Avid reading
- Theoretical and analytical thinking.
- Concentration

Taken from Bainbridge, Carol.

<http://giftedkids.about.com/od/gifted101/a/overexcite.htm>

Imaginational

- Vivid dreams
- Fear of the unknown
- Love of fantasy
- Love of poetry and music
- Imaginary friends
- Detailed visualizations

Taken from Bainbridge, Carol.

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Emotional

- Emotional extremes
- Anxiety
- Feelings of guilt and sense of responsibility
- Loneliness
- Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority
- Depression
- Problems adjusting to change
- Physical response, sickness, in response to anxiety

Taken from Bainbridge, Carol.

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Overexcitabilities Activity

- Look at your list for your assigned overexcitabilities.
- List the positive and negative outcomes of having this overexcitability.
- Can be school or non-school related.

Taken from Bainbridge, Carol.

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Psychomotor

- + Might excel in sports because they can react quickly and sustain high energy for long periods of time.
- Often misdiagnosed as ADHD.
- Difficulty sitting still for long periods of time without some movement.

Sensual

- + Appreciation for good foods. Chefs.
- + Appreciation for music.
- + Can often “read” people’s emotions very well and respond to them.

- Picky eaters.
- Very distracted and bothered by loud noises or crowded places.
- Can feel ill over certain smells and foods.

Intellectual

- + Learn rapidly.
- + Make multiple connections and able to apply that knowledge readily.
- WHY?????
- Need for answers can be annoying to parents and teachers.
- Boredom with low level or rote activities.

Imaginational

- + Can be excellent writers.
- + Highly creative.
- + Drama/acting.

- Imagine worst case scenario, which prevents them from taking risks.
- Can have vivid nightmares.
- Difficulty fitting into “traditional” roles.

Emotional

- + Concern for others that can help them become philanthropists, missionaries, etc.
- Often misdiagnosed as bi-polar disorder.
- Depression and anxiety disorders.

Overxcitabilities

What you can do!

- Acknowledge that these over sensitivities are real
- Be patient and understanding
- Help them understand WHY things are different, but how they can use this to their advantage
- Encourage counseling if necessary