

# The Other Half of Giftedness: The Affective Side

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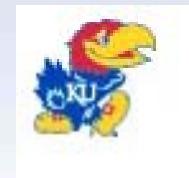
DCT, Gifted Education

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Is this child *gifted*?



# Rationale for an Affective Curriculum

Qualities that make the difference in gifted students' success and happiness are AFFECTIVE. We should be systematic and purposeful in helping our students to grow emotionally as well as intellectually.

# Characteristics of Giftedness

- An extraordinary speed in processing information
- A rapid and thorough comprehension of the whole idea or concept
- An unusual ability to see patterns in relationships and ideas
- An ability to synthesize and relate to a broad range of ideas
- An early ability to think abstractly
- Capable of complex thinking and finding alternative meanings in problems
- An extraordinary degree of intellectual curiosity
- An unusual capacity for memory
- A long concentration span
- A fascination with ideas and words
- An extensive vocabulary
- Ability to perceive many sides of an issue
- Argumentative (learns by arguing)
- An early ability to think in metaphors and symbols
- Ability to visualize models and systems
- Ability to learn in great intuitive leaps
- Awareness of detail
- Unusual intensity and depth of feeling
- A high degree of emotional sensitivity
- Highly developed morals and ethics (a need to “solve” world issues)
- An ability to empathetically understand and relate to ideas and other people
- An extraordinary high energy level
- A need for the world to be logical and fair

# Affective Characteristics

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# Personality Characteristics/Needs

- The self:
  - Insightfulness
  - Intensity
  - Introspectiveness
  - Sensitivity/empathy
  - Social introvert/shy  
extravert
  - Seeks complexity
  - Risk-taking
  - Intellectually restless
  - Experiencing the world in  
complex ways
- Expressed in:
  - Persevering
  - Self-directed
  - Intrinsically motivated in  
interest area
  - Seeking challenge
  - High expectations for  
performance
  - Anxiety about failure
  - Resilience

– Linda Silverman  
Counseling the Gifted & Talented (2000)

- Reva Friedman-Nimz  
University of Kansas (2009)

# Overexcitabilities: The Reason for the Characteristics

- Dabrowski proposed that advanced development requires a breakdown of existing psychological structures in order to form higher, more evolved structures.
- The emotional makeup and intellectual capacity of the individual determine the extent of development possible.
- Inner conflict generates the tension that impels the individual toward higher levels of functioning.

# Intensity

- Intensity is explained in terms of *overexcitabilities* – greater capacities to respond to various stimuli.
- The gifted come equipped with a supersensitive nervous system which enable them to assimilate an extraordinary amount of sensory stimuli.

# Psychomotor

## Surplus of energy

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

## Psychomotor expression of emotional tension

Compulsive talking and chattering, impulsive actions, nervous habits, workaholic, acting out, compulsive organizing, competitiveness

# Sensual



- Sensory pleasure
  - Seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, hearing
- Sensual expression of emotional tension
  - Overeating, overindulgence, buying sprees, wanting to be in the limelight
- Aesthetic pleasures
  - Appreciation of beautiful objects, writing styles, words



# Intellectual

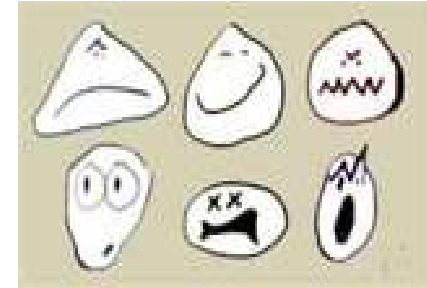
- Probing questions; problem solving; learning
  - Curiosity, concentration, capacity of sustained intellectual effort, avid reading, detailed planning
- Theoretical thinking
  - Thinking about thinking, analytical thinking, introspection, love of theory and analysis, moral thinking and development of a hierarchy of values, conceptual and intuitive integration



# Imaginational

- Free play of the imagination
  - Frequent use of image and metaphor, facility for invention and fantasy, facility for detailed visualization, poetic and dramatic perception, animistic and magical thinking
- Spontaneous imagery as an expression of emotional tension
  - Animistic imagery, mixing truth and fiction, elaborate dreams, illusions, detailed visual recall, fears of the unknown, tendency to dramatize

# Emotional



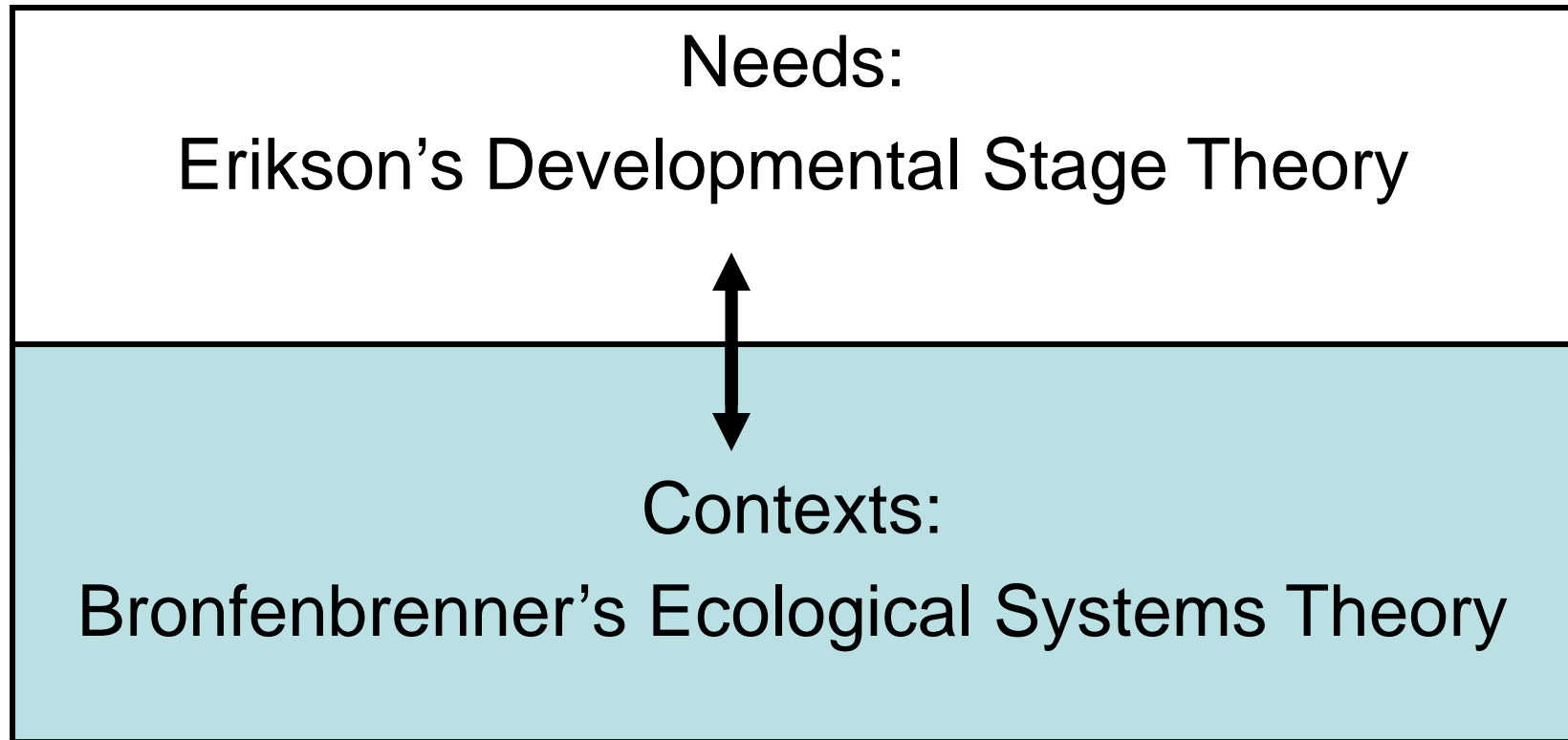
- Intensity of feeling
  - Positive/negative feelings, extremes of emotion, complex emotions/feelings, identification with others' feelings, laughing and crying together
- Somatic expressions
  - Tense stomach, sinking heart, blushing, flushing
- Inhibition (timidity, shyness)
- Strong affective memory
- Fears and anxieties, feelings of guilt
- Concern with death, depressive and suicidal moods
- Relationship feelings
  - Emotional ties/attachments, concern for others, sensitivity in relationships, attachment to animals, difficulty adjusting to new environments, loneliness, conflicts with others over depth of relationship
- Feelings toward self
  - Self-evaluation and self-judgment, feelings of inadequacy and inferiority



## The OEQ2c

- The Overexcitabilities Quotient for Children is an instrument which will be used to determine the overexcitabilities profile of elementary children. This work is being developed by Dr. Susan Daniels of California State University, San Bernadino.

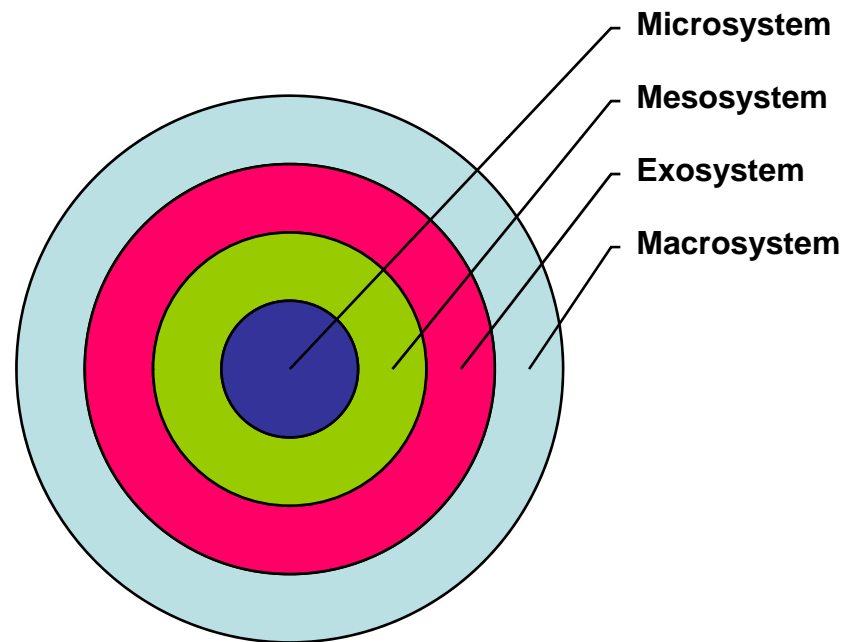
# Translating personality qualities into affective needs



# Contexts: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

- Ecological Systems Theory specifies four types of nested environmental systems, with bi-directional influences within and between the systems.
- The four systems:
  - Microsystem: Immediate environments
  - Mesosystem: A system comprised of connections between immediate environments
  - Exosystem: External environmental settings which only indirectly affect development
  - Macrosystem: The larger cultural context

# Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory



# Bronfenbrenner → Gifted Frameworks

- **Microsystem** – The Gifted Self
- **Mesosystem** – The Multidimensional Self
- **Exosystem** – Self in Groups
- **Macrosystem** – Self in the World

# Erikson's Developmental Stages


adapted from [www.learning-theories.com](http://www.learning-theories.com)

Crisis and <b>adaptive strength</b>	<b>Key themes and "basic virtues"</b>
<b>Trust vs Mistrust</b> Issue: comfort	To receive and to give in turn. Trust is reciprocal. Virtue: Hope and Drive
<b>Autonomy vs Shame &amp; Doubt</b> Issue: control	To direct behavior outward OR be retentive Virtue: Willpower and self-control
<b>Initiative vs Guilt</b> Issue: exploration, adventure, play	To make and complete things, and to make things together. To pursue ideas and plans. Virtue: Purpose & direction
<b>Industry vs Inferiority</b> Issue: achievement & accomplishment	To pursue desired goals, initiate projects or ideas, and to collaborate and cooperate with others to produce something. Virtue: competence and method
<b>Identity vs Role Confusion</b> Issue: resolving identity & direction	To be yourself and to share this with others. Affirmation/contradiction of how you see yourself. Virtue: Fidelity & devotion
<b>Intimacy vs Isolation</b> Issue: intimate relationships, work & social life	"To lose and find oneself in another" Virtue: Love & affiliation

# Affective Needs: Stage and Context

RFN & SNS, 2009 (listed alphabetically, contributions equal)

And with thanks to members of KY's C&T 831 Personal Dimensions of Talent

<b>Bronfenbrenner</b> 	<b>Microsystem</b> <b>"Gifted" Self</b>		<b>Mesosystem</b> <b>Multidimensional Self</b>	<b>Exosystem</b> <b>Self in Groups</b>	<b>Macrosystem</b> <b>Self in the World</b>
<b>Trust</b>	Confidence Optimism Hope		Stress (ir)rational beliefs		
<b>Autonomy</b>	Pride (accomplishment) I AM				
<b>Initiative</b>	Self regulation Delay gratification I am what I learn Power I CAN		Tolerance & acceptance (of others, of others' IDEAS, of chronological peers) Challenge Resiliency		
<b>Competence</b>	Self Knowledge Agency, Purpose Self concept Goal setting	Expectations Meta-cognition of affect I DO	Delineated Self Achievement Challenge Freedom to express oneself Manage, contextualize affect	Others' expectations	
<b>Identity</b>	Self esteem I know who I am I'M OK		Integrated self Family	Negotiating relationships Perspective taking, empathy Boundaries	
<b>Intimacy</b>	I CAN RISK CLOSENESS (without losing myself)		Interpersonal relationships Career study/life plans	Belongingness Career Choice	

# For More Information....

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