



# Overexcitabilities

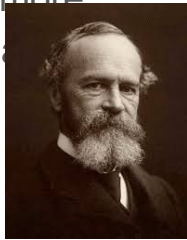


# What are overexcitabilities?

**William James:** American philosopher and psychologist (1842-1910)

## “Excitability of character”

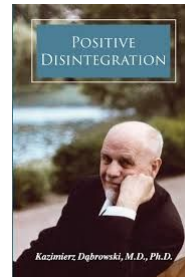
Those who feel things with great intensity; whose nervous systems are more alert and more easily & strongly stimulated.



**Kazimer Dabrowski:** Polish psychologist (1902-1980)

## “Overexcitability”

Those who have a tendency to be neurologically stimulated and affected to a greater degree than “normal” and prone to remain in that heightened state for prolonged periods.



**Mary Sheedy Kurcinka:** educator, behavior and sleep consultant, author

## “Spirited”

Focuses on the positive effects of an overabundance of feelings and sensations.



# **Types of Overexcitabilities**

**Psychomotor**

**Sensual**

**Intellectual**

**Imaginational**

**Emotional**

**Gifted people can have multiple tendencies, but one is usually dominant,**

**Dabrowski took these intensities to be part and parcel of the gifted person's psycho-physical makeup**

# Psychomotor



**Competitiveness**

**Compulsive organizing**

**Compulsive talking**

**Impulsive behavior**

**Physical expression of emotions**

**Preference for fast action and sports**

**Nervous habits and tics**

**Rapid speech**

**Sleeplessness**



# Sensual



Appreciation of beauty, whether in writing, music, art or nature, including the love of objects like jewelry

Craving for pleasure

Need or desire for comfort

Sensitivity to pollution

Sensitive to smells, tastes, or textures of foods

Tactile sensitivity (bothered by the feel of some materials on the skin or clothing tags)

# Intellectual



**Analytical thinking**

**Asking probing questions**

**Avid reading**

**Concentration, ability to  
maintain intellectual effort**

**Deep curiosity**

**Independent thinking**

**Love of knowledge and  
learning**

**Love of problem-solving**

**Theoretical thinking**

# Imaginational



**Daydreaming**

**Detailed visualization**

**Fear of the unknown**

**Good sense of humor**

**Imaginary friends**

**Love of fantasy**

**Love of poetry, music, and  
drama**

**Magical thinking**

**Vivid dreams**

# Emotional



Anxiety

Concern for others

Depression

Extremes of emotion

Feelings of guilt and sense of responsibility

Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority

A heightened sense of right and wrong or injustice and hypocrisy

Loneliness

Need for security

Physical response to emotions (stomach aches caused by anxiety, for example)

Problems adjusting to change

Strong memory of feelings

Timidity and shyness



# Overexcitabilities Resources

SENG: Overexcitability and the Gifted

<https://www.sengifted.org/post/overexcitability-and-the-gifted>

The Bright Side of Overexcitabilities

<https://educationaladvancement.org/blog-the-bright-side-of-overexcitabilities-in-gifted-children/>

Five Unexpected Traits of Gifted Students

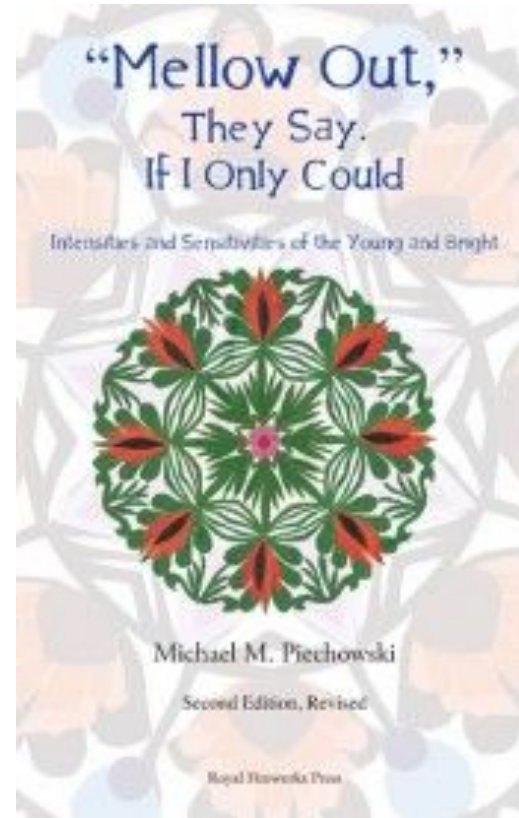
<https://www.byrdseed.com/five-unexpected-traits-of-gifted-students/>

Overexcitabilities (Discussion Guide)

<https://www.txgifted.org/files/Overexcitabilities%20-%20Dianna%20Mullet.pdf>

Dabrowski's Over-excitabilities: A Layman's Explanation

<http://www.stephanietolan.com/dabrowskis.htm>



**Royal  
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<https://www.rfwp.com/series/books-on-giftedness-for-parents-and-teachers#book-mellow-out-they-say-if-i-only-could>