Emotional Coping Strategies of the Gifted

Roeper, A. (1982). How the gifted cope with their emotions. *Roeper Review, 5*(2), 21-24

Perfectionist	Child/Adult	Winner of the Competition	The Exception	Self-Critic	Well-Integrated Child
▪ Cannot fail in anything ▪ Places unrealistic demands upon themselves ▪ Feels omnipotent beyond normal stage ▪ Depersonalization; believes negative emotions impossible and imperfect, they should be suppressed; relegates negative emotions to unconscious resulting in guilt, fear, worries, phobias; can lead to total separation of affective domain when positive and negative emotions are suppressed; lack of affect in evident in behavior ▪ Considers failure if unable to achieve unrealistic expectations, personal fault instead of realistic age and ability limitation ▪ Unusually early superego development due to sensitivity and awareness ▪ Continuation of omnipotence combines with early conscience development creating enormous obligations ▪ Method of suppressing emotions underdeveloped and explosive ▪ Suppressed aggression expressed against one's self; masochist, becomes scapegoat, in extreme cases leads to suicide	▪ Sees themselves as adults' feels in complete control of themselves; interference threatens self-image ▪ Observes and reacts to adult weaknesses and insecurities; feels they can only trust themselves and are alone in the world ▪ Paranoia arises due to having two antagonist: a) dangers of unknown problems in the world they cannot solves, and b) continued thread to their unrealistic positions and self-image by environment which treats them as the children they are ▪ Becomes dependent child; doesn't battle with environment when confronted with limits of abilities, knows it's impossible to be an adult ▪ Defends infantile selves against the world	▪ Experiences psychosexual developmental phases differently ▪ Becomes winner of the competition when parents are in awe of him; children feels smarter, more capable than the father, sees himself as the mother's partner, makes him feel like he is the adult ▪ Forced to maintain this position which results in carrying this competitiveness everywhere; believes he must do better than peers to show mother how great he is; relegates need of father's support to unconscious ▪ Well-established, realistic, self-concept, feels parental support ▪ Experiences greater conflict during passage through Oedipal stage resulting in later resolution of this stage when it is inappropriate and unexpected ▪ Fights for imagined right	▪ Omnipotence interferes with conscience development ▪ High ability leads to great personal power which is never reconciled with needs of others; don't develop feelings for others, uses abilities to fulfill their own wishes and needs ▪ Giftedness leads to impairment in normal development of identification, empathy and conscience remains fixe in period of infantile self-centeredness ▪ Maintains illusion of being outside rules and regulations governing levels of normal people because it is this difference that their self-esteem is based on ▪ Like perfectionists; unrealistic expectations but instead under-estimate responsibilities ▪ Like child/adult; superiority to adults sees themselves beyond the system ▪ Fixation on feeling omnipotent ▪ Like winner of the competition; feels superior to parent of opposite sex, but that competitor is not required because normal expectations do not apply to them	▪ Views themselves as wanting; their emotions, actions, thought, behaviors do not live up to their expectations; they can separate from themselves and evaluate themselves objectively ▪ Compulsive compelled to complete tasks over and over again then feels overwhelmed with obligation due to double checking process ▪ Fails at tasks due to difficulty in carrying out their intentions ▪ Feels obligated to straighten the world out and simultaneously feels incapable of doing so ▪ Gives up feeling of omnipotence early but overextends their conscience ▪ Possesses insights, deep awareness, self-criticism originates from giftedness ▪ Does not believe in the giftedness; only their responsibilities	▪ Develops more realistic conscience at proper developmental phase ▪ Is aware of differences from other children and the consequences of their giftedness ▪ More aware of world's problems; feels compelled to stand up for their convictions while suffering loneliness and isolation for this risk-taking ▪ Realizes rights to their own feelings as well as their gifted, developing empathy with feelings of others ▪ Needs support for the resulting feelings created by reactions to their surroundings ▪ Passes through developmental stages in normal manner ▪ Feels parental support and sees themselves as autonomous beings who own their giftedness ▪ Views themselves realistically; understands failure is a part of life ▪ Positive and negative emotions are normal and basic to life ▪ Overcomes omnipotence in normal manner