GIFTEDNESS AND STRESS

Understanding what is causing stress in our gifted youth and how to help them to cope

Jenny Hecht, LCSW
www.jennyhecht.com ~ hechtjenny@gmail.com

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“The truly creative mind in any field is no more than this: a human creature born abnormally, inhumanly sensitive. To him, a touch is a blow, a sound is a noise, a misfortune is a tragedy, a joy is an ecstasy, a friend is a lover, a lover is a god, and failure is death.”

(Pearl S. Buck)
STRESS!!!
“It’s not stress that kills us...it’s our reaction to it.” (Hans Selye)

**Stressor** – A stimulus that **may** cause stress.

**Stress** – An individual’s **response** to events that are threatening or challenging.
YOU’RE TOO SENSITIVE
What is Stressing Them Out???
Resiliency

The ability to recover from difficulties... to tolerate distress and manage emotions.
The Overexcitabilities
“The Universe is Expanding!”
“IT TAKES UP A LOT OF SPACE in YOUR BRAIN...”
“It’s hard to find people like that…”

Is there anyone that understands me?
What Questions Do You Have?

- 2013 CAGT Conference Student Panel answered with the following:
  - “Why are we here?”
  - “What’s our purpose?”
  - “The unknown! There are so many things in this world. I’ll never be able to learn everything...to personally find out!”
  - “If I’m so smart, why aren’t the answers easy?”
“None of this matters. It all seems so meaningless.”
“Good vs. Evil”
“I hated being a kid.”
Peeling back the layers

When gifted youth ask...
What is the purpose of this task? Why is this task meaningful?

What they might truly be asking is...
What is the meaning of life?

When gifted youth ask...
Am I special? HOW am I special?

What they might truly be asking is...
What is my life purpose?
Not-So-Healthy Ways People Cope

we're all addicted to something that takes the pain away.
How to thrive!

“The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.”
~ William James
Your Inner Compass

- What brings me the greatest joy?
- What do I really care about?
- What do I believe is essential in life?
- How may I be of service?

Turn to the person next to you and share your answer to the first question.
What is Mindfulness?

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Our Wise Mind

Harry Potter’s success depended largely on the balance these two provided him...

Ron represents
The Emotional Mind

Hermione represents
The Logical Mind

Where the two overlap, we find
The WISE MIND
An Epic Battle: 
Wizard vs. Lizard

Our lizard brain reacts impulsively, like a flick of the tongue. Our Wizard Brain pauses, ponders, and produces magical possibilities.

EnlightenInk.com

-Janet Jacobsen
Emotions as Events

And each is inspired by our THOUGHTS...

Conveyor belt
Airplane banner
Clouds
Becoming Grounded

BREATHING

- Spider breath
- Breathing Ball
- Alternate Nostril Breathing

CALMING POSES

- Legs up the wall
- Child’s Pose

JOURNALING / MEDITATION

- I am...
- I want...
- I need...
THEN we can explore...

“AFTER A STORM COMES A CALM.”

MATTHEW HENRY

© Lifehack Quotes
...What is going on in there?!?!  

- Feelings cards/lists  
- Emotional battery  
- Motivational interviewing – *Teaching them how to make their OWN decisions*
The Non-Negotiables

Adequate Sleep
Protein-Rich Diet
Healthy Activities
Spending Time Outdoors


Webb, James T. “Dabrowski’s Theory and Existential Depression in Gifted Children and Adults.” 2009
CONTACT INFORMATION

Jenny Hecht
hecht.jenny@gmail.com
303.817.9220

www.jennyhecht.com