

Emotional Sensitivity in Gifted Children

Some characteristics of emotional sensitivity:

- ✓ intense commitment to people and ideas
- ✓ even when they do not understand the words, they understand the meaning
- ✓ feelings easily hurt
- ✓ strong physical reaction to light, noise, texture, or foods
- ✓ strong response to criticism
- ✓ faith that success will occur
- ✓ work to avoid confrontation
- ✓ asks difficult questions: “what is evil? “Why is there violence?” “Is there a God?” “What happens when you die?”
- ✓ has a strong sense of right and wrong

Why is it important that we address these sensitivity issues?

Sensitive, gifted children bring their emotions (sensitivity) with them to counseling. They are able to read their counselor’s feelings. This is true in terms of their relationship with their parents, teachers, and friends. Because of the unconscious way of “reading” people, they simply may want to please the other person or completely isolate themselves.

Strategies for coping with sensitivity issues:

- allow them to share/give of themselves all that they want
- offer concrete suggestions
- teach them to build an invisible wall between themselves and others so that they can see and hear others without “feeling” them
- allow them to form bonds with other people or animals

Summary of sensitivity in gifted children:

Giftedness means so many things to so many people. In the past, many people believed that being gifted simply meant that you were smart.

After reading through the books covering giftedness, particularly emotional needs, I have found that there is so much more involved with the definition of giftedness. The emotional needs of gifted students are a critical component that needs to be studied. Sensitivity in gifted students was mentioned as being one of the three emotional tributaries that flow through the gifted personality. In order to help a gifted child succeed, you must first understand them as best as you can. Using some of the strategies mentioned in this brochure along with further education will help you begin the process of truly “seeing” your child.

Definition of sensitivity:

Sensitivity is a depth of feeling that results in a sense of identification with others (people, animals, nature, and the universe). Those having compassion, an aspect of sensitivity, make a commitment to other people and social causes that involve caring for others and wanting to decrease the pain that they feel in others.

Bibliography of sources:

- Silverman, Linda. “Counseling of the Gifted and Talented”
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