


**Adult giftedness**  
And positive psychology

*Noks Nauta*

SENG, Williamsburg, July 2016




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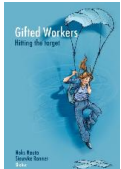

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**Noks Nauta**

- Occupational physician and psychologist, PhD.
- Discovered her giftedness at 52 after conflict at work
- IHBV, Gifted Adults Foundation, international page
- Research, publications, presentations

*Connecting people*  
*Collecting and distributing knowledge*  
*Opening black boxes*  
*Quality*


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**Program**

- **Adult giftedness**
  - What is it?
  - Discovery and exploration
  - How does it feel?
- **Positive psychology**
  - Essentials
- **How to use positive psychology?**
  - 5 examples: negative and positive sides
  - What makes you happy in your situation?

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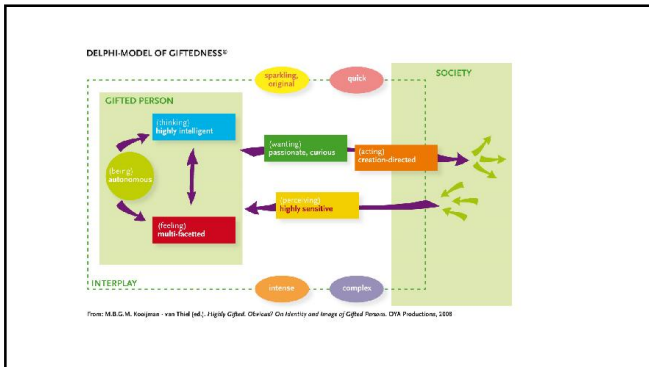
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**Stages in discovery/ exploration of giftedness**  
 (Lisa Erickson)

- Acknowledge (information)
- Recognize (exploration)
- Relations (understanding giftedness in relations)
- Integration (using insights)

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Which stages of exploration are you in?

- A few reactions

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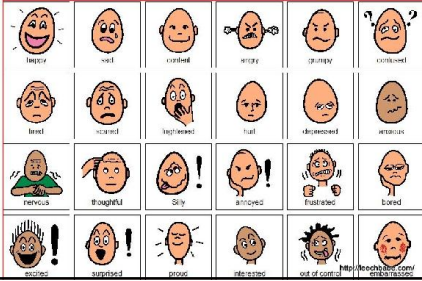
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- How does it *feel* for you now to be gifted?
- Which other emotions on your giftedness do you have?




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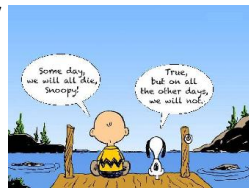
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### Feeling emotions: start for change

- Be aware of your (negative?) emotions
- Want to feel other (more positive) emotions?
- Use insights from positive psychology




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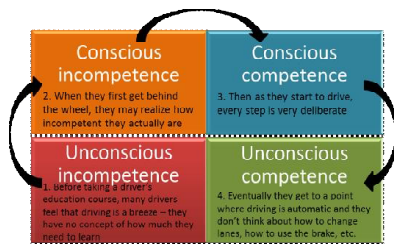
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### Learn to **cope** more effectively with giftedness




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Practice,  
Practice,  
Practice .....



Where to start?




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### Positive psychology

- Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi
- Official part of psychology since 2000
- What moves people? (Not: what makes them sick?)
- Three subjects:
  - Positive experiences: happiness, hope, love, ..
  - Positive characteristics: vitality, perseverance, wisdom, ...
  - Positive institutions: how can institutions make a positive difference within society?




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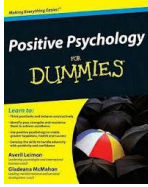
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### Essentials of positive psychology

- Wellbeing, art of living
- Talents should be used
- Evidence based interventions f.i:
  - Use your talents in daily life
  - Think each night of three positive events of the day
  - React enthusiastic and active
  - Write to a person to whom you are grateful
  - Enjoy daily activities
- Therapies focus on positive sides, specific therapies f.i. ACT




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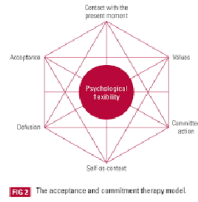
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### ACT = Acceptance and Commitment Therapy



- Negative feelings are part of life
- Avoiding them gives more pain
- Aim: Improve mental flexibility
- Form of behavioral therapy
- Suitable for gifted people? Plan for survey in The Netherlands

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### Examples in gifted adults

- Making choices
- Communication with supervisor and colleagues
- Boreout
- Burnout
- Conflicts

Please add your thoughts at the upcoming slides

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### 1. Making choices



#### Negative

- Too many possibilities
- How do you know the outcome?
- What if I make the wrong choice?
- ...
- ...



#### Positive

- Happy about many possibilities!
- I am free to choose
- I want to examine the process of choosing
- I can learn, also from a choice that works out not too well
- ...
- ...

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## 2. Communication with supervisor and colleagues

### Negative

- I feel lonely
- They do not understand me
- They all go so slowly
- I do not like social talk
- My boss is bossy
- ...
- ...



### Positive

- I like to listen to other views
- I ask questions that make other people think
- I have innovative and creative ideas
- ....
- ...




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## Boreout in art



Pieter de Hooch  
Interior with women beside a linen closet, 1663  
Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

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### Sickness:

*Ordinary work is merely a drudge  
I want to be on television*

- Boring, banal, repetitive, unsexy?
- How to recognize the value of ordinary routine
- Big themes of life are grounded in the way we approach everyday topics

Art is therapy  
Alain de Botton & John Armstrong  
2014

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### 3. Boreout

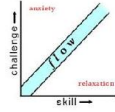
**Negative**

- I am bored to death ...
- I have no energy
- Nothing is interesting
- ...
- ...



**Positive**

- Banal things can be important too
- I look differently to my work now
- I found out what gives me flow
- ...
- ...




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### Flow

- Being completely involved in an activity for its own sake
- The ego falls away
- Time flies
- Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one
- Your whole being is involved and you're using your skills to the utmost




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### 4. Burnout

**Negative**

- I am so tired
- I think there is no right workplace for me
- ...
- ...



**Positive**

- I learn to know myself better
- I now know what makes my candle burn
- ...
- ...




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## 5. Conflicts

### Negative

- I am right, but they do not listen
- I know what is best
- This is not fair!
- ...
- ...



### Positive

- We spoke out to each other
- The air is clear now
- There are positive conflicts!
- ...
- ...




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## Positive conflicts




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## Coping

- How to live the art of your life
- How to become happy
- How to use your talents positively
- In your situation



STOP HOLDING ON TO WHAT HURTS AND MAKE ROOM FOR WHAT FEELS GOOD.

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Giftedness: being and feeling different  
Which image feels positive for you?

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Wishing you positive giftedness!

[noksnauta@ihbv.nl](mailto:noksnauta@ihbv.nl)  
[www.ihbv.nl/international](http://www.ihbv.nl/international)

**Diversity is strength**

gifted  
adults  
foundation

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