

What has also been captured in this text is the complexity of the theory. The necessity of disintegration for one's personal development often gets lost within gifted education's use of the theory. Disintegration is not an easy experience; it involves discomfort, inner conflict, and feelings of insecurity. It likely involves some depression and psychological chaos. But it is through these experiences that a person has the potential to reintegrate. This reintegration may be positive or negative, presenting the person with the opportunity to experience emotional and psychological growth or to remain in a chaotic psychological state.

Unfortunately, in the attempt to cover the breadth of applications of Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration, the overall message of the book is somewhat muddled, and the audience for this text is unclear. Though readers who are generally interested in the theory itself will be quite satisfied, most teachers will struggle with the emphasis on theory and lack of educational application, and most psychologists will want to see more examples of the theory in clinical practice. Because of this, this text seems ideal for graduate study in psychology or education. Additional clarity to a wider readership might have been provided with an interweaving of chapters through editorial comment.

Mendaglio invited a range of contributors that include some of Dabrowski's former students, colleagues, and researchers. Sadly, the recent passing of Michael Pyryt makes this one of his final contributions to the field of gifted education and psychology.

The time for this book has come. It fills a niche that has been empty for some time. Until now, there were scattered chapters in texts, and Dabrowski's own writings, but no single source that synthesized TPD and its application. Mendaglio's *Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration* provides a great deal of background material and theoretical explication, but the reader who is looking to apply the theory in educational or counseling settings may need to wait for a Volume 2, still to come. We would love to see such a book that focuses more heavily on applications of the theory to educational and psychological practice, providing examples of the Dabrowskian lens in schools and counseling settings. Until another volume is published, however, this may well be the best basic source book for those seeking to understand Dabrowski and the theory of positive disintegration—the first book to seek out and a valuable resource for those new to the theory.

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Daniels, S., & Piechowski, M. M. (Eds). (2008). *Living With Intensity: Understanding the Sensitivity, Excitability, and Emotional Development of Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Adults*. Scottsdale, AZ: Great Potential Press (260 pp., \$26.95, pb, ISBN: 0-910707-89-8).

Susan Daniels and Michael Piechowski have coedited a volume geared toward understanding the theory and practical application of Dabrowski's theory of positive disintegration (TPD). Readers interested in Dabrowski will be pleased to find their understanding of TPD enhanced, especially if they seek to better understand intense children and adults at different stages of the life span.

The first two chapters explain TPD, discussing developmental potential, overexcitabilities, and developmental levels. These chapters are clear and succinct, with biographical sketches of Peace Pilgrim and others that illustrate the theory. Of particular note is the application of TPD in education and counseling settings. In the closing paragraph of the first chapter, Daniels and Piechowski sum up nicely the relevance of TPD and the shift in thinking about children and adults with intensity that must occur to view them with a Dabrowskian lens. They write:

[I]t becomes clear that our children must be reared and educated in an environment of mutual compassion, understanding, and positive adjustment—not simply adjustment to the changing material conditions of life. We must also recognize that our potential for growth does not end with childhood. The evolution of one's personality is an individual, autonomous process of perceiving, feeling, intuiting, and striving for that which is higher and truer in oneself *throughout one's life* [italics added]. (p. 23)

Part 2, "Understanding Intensity: Practical Applications for Parents, Teachers, and Counselors," includes in-depth illustrations of work in clinical settings with intense individuals, through case studies of multiple clients. This is particularly evident in two chapters from P. Susan Jackson and Vicky Moyle, who demonstrate the conceptual link between Dabrowski's theory and the skillful clinical application of counseling with children, adolescents, and adults. Also in this second part of the book is a chapter by Annemarie Roeper, drawing on her years of experience in the education of the gifted, as well as on her own life, on the perceptual skills of gifted children. This part includes a fine chapter by Edward Amend that discusses the differences between clinical work with a Dabrowskian lens in contrast

to the more common Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) orientation that seeks to diagnose a client by observing how he or she is not functioning well. Instead, the Dabrowskian perspective puts clinical symptomatology in a wider perspective. One chapter by Daniels details an in-process research study that (in its research focus) seems a bit out of place in the overall context of this section. At the same time, however, it provides useful information on how family dynamics are affected by and influence work with intense young people that parents will likely find helpful after culling through the research details.

In the shift to Part 3, the authors address lifespan intensity and giftedness in adulthood. Unlike the Part 2 focus on working with intensity, Part 3 expands the lens to examine the adult experience, including a chapter by Stephanie Tolan on how adults can personalize their own experience within a Dabrowskian perspective. Tolan writes that many gifted adults have written her over the years, seeking validation, advice, and support about their experiences of life as gifted children and then growing into gifted adults with much emotional and interpersonal baggage and perceived deficits. Ellen Feidler's chapter in this part addresses this, noting that many gifted adults develop outstanding coping mechanisms and increased ability to integrate their early experiences to become integrated and whole. However, she also notes that "gifted individuals of any age defy tidy classifications, and that 'exceptionality is the exception'" (p. 189). This section is punctuated by a biographical narrative of Annemarie Roeper, whose story is described as illustrative of the "transformative process and resulting inner growth [that] provides evidence of multi-levelness" (p. 211).

Part 4 describes the research directions of TPD, and the last chapter concludes with proposals for applications of Dabrowski's theory. Surprisingly, this final part lacks the visionary direction for future application and development

of the theory that would be expected, given the subject matter of the theory and the book.

Part 1 sets the book off with a clear and interesting explanation of TPD. Part 2 contains content that a reader can identify with and seek to apply. The same is true in Part 3, although some of the content is less clear. The breadth of the subject becomes evident, albeit with less guidance from the editors, guidance that would have been beneficial in shaping the book as a whole. Overall, however, this is a thoughtful volume, and many practitioners and parents will find it a useful guide to the application of Dabrowski's work.

Living with Intensity is a companion to Sal Mendaglio's (Ed.) *Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration* (2008). Throughout this book, there are nice examples of working with intensity, rather than against it or trying to fix it. The writing is accessible and suited for multiple audiences. Compared to *Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration*, *Living With Intensity* is more applied and may be a stronger introductory text for students of education or psychology or clinicians and parents seeking to understand the TPD. The books complement each other well. There is some content overlap, but where there is an overlap, they provide different explanations and approaches that the interested reader may find informative.

The reader may be inspired to explore Dabrowski's writings first hand. The reader's interest will also be energized to explore the work of those who are integrating Dabrowski's concepts into their own work, many of whom have written chapters for this book.

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