



# Giftedness and Your Child

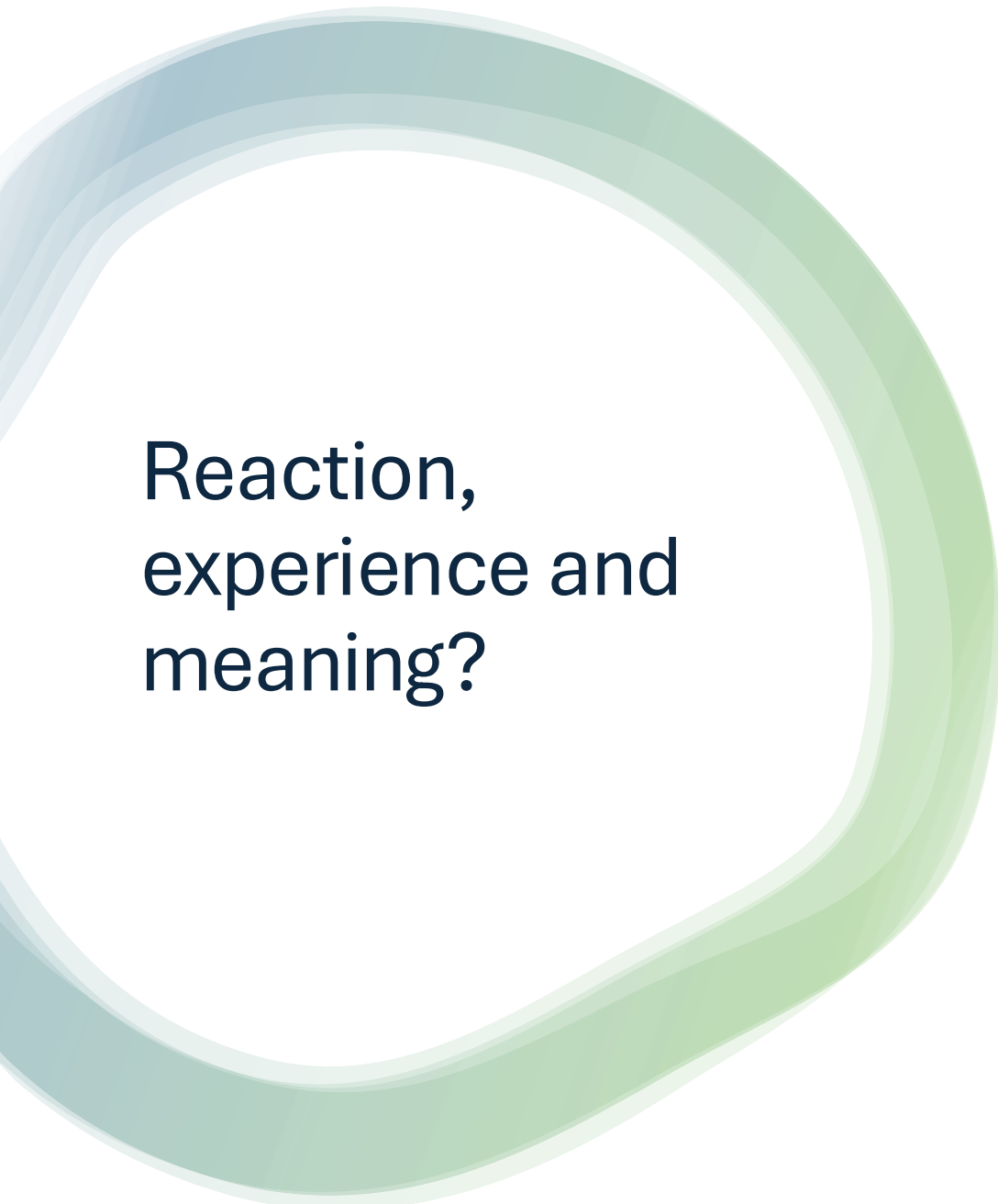
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Understanding Giftedness, Neurodiversity Part 2

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Reaction,  
experience and  
meaning?

What comes to mind when you think of "being gifted"?

What is it like to live alongside someone who is gifted? Parent someone with giftedness? Be in a relationship with someone with giftedness?

What becomes the socially constructed meaning of "giftedness"?

# Seeing Difference as Strength

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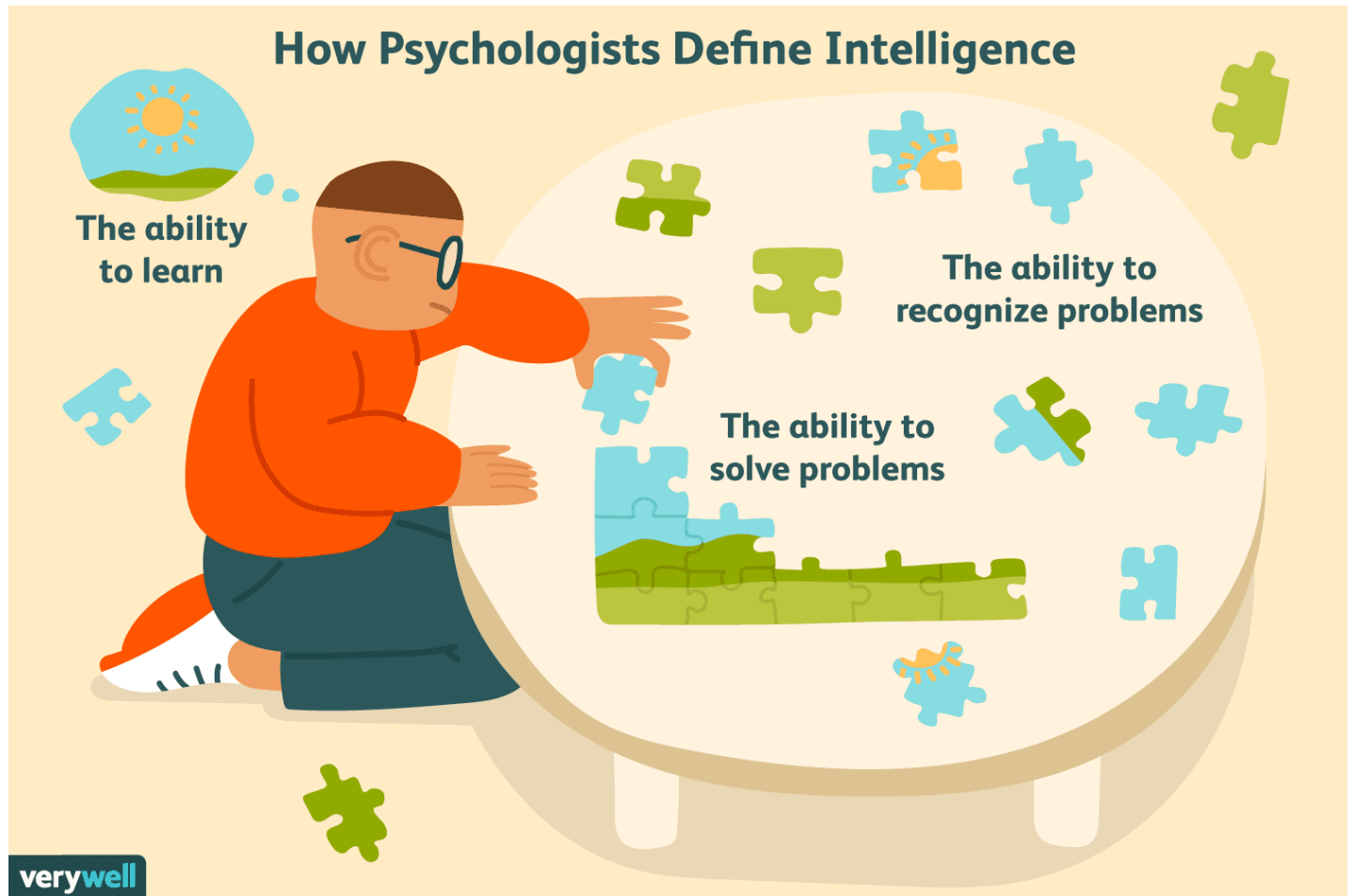
Judy Singer on the term **Neurodiversity**, 1997

*"I knew what I was doing," she tells me. "'Neuro' was a reference to the rise of neuroscience. 'Diversity' is a political term; it originated with the black American civil rights movement. 'Biodiversity' is really a political term, too. As a word, 'neurodiversity' describes the whole of humanity. But the neurodiversity movement is a political movement for people who want their human rights."*

*Source: The Guardian, The Mother of Neurodiversity: How Judy Singer Changed the World by John Harris, July 5, 2023*



Value on  
intelligence



## Bright vs gifted

BRIGHT CHILD	GIFTED LEARNER
Knows the answer	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Works hard	Plays around yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail, elaborates
Top group	Beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps meanings	Draws inferences
Completes projects	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates new designs
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical

Source: GATE (Gifted and Talented Education)  
<https://gatecalgary.ca/identification/bright-vs-gifted/>

# Traits of a gifted child

- remember with little practice
- work quickly
- see abstract relationships, patterns, alternative views
- generate explanations, theories, ideas and solutions
- show curiosity and/or strong interests.

Source:  
<https://gatecalgary.ca/identification/characteristics/>





# Traits of gifted child

- reveal unusual or unique responses
- be highly self-directed and independent
- be unusually perceptive of or sensitive to feelings and expectations of others
- seem intense in expression or feelings of justice and/or empathy
- demonstrate perfectionism
- seem out of synch with age-mates or prefer the company of adults.

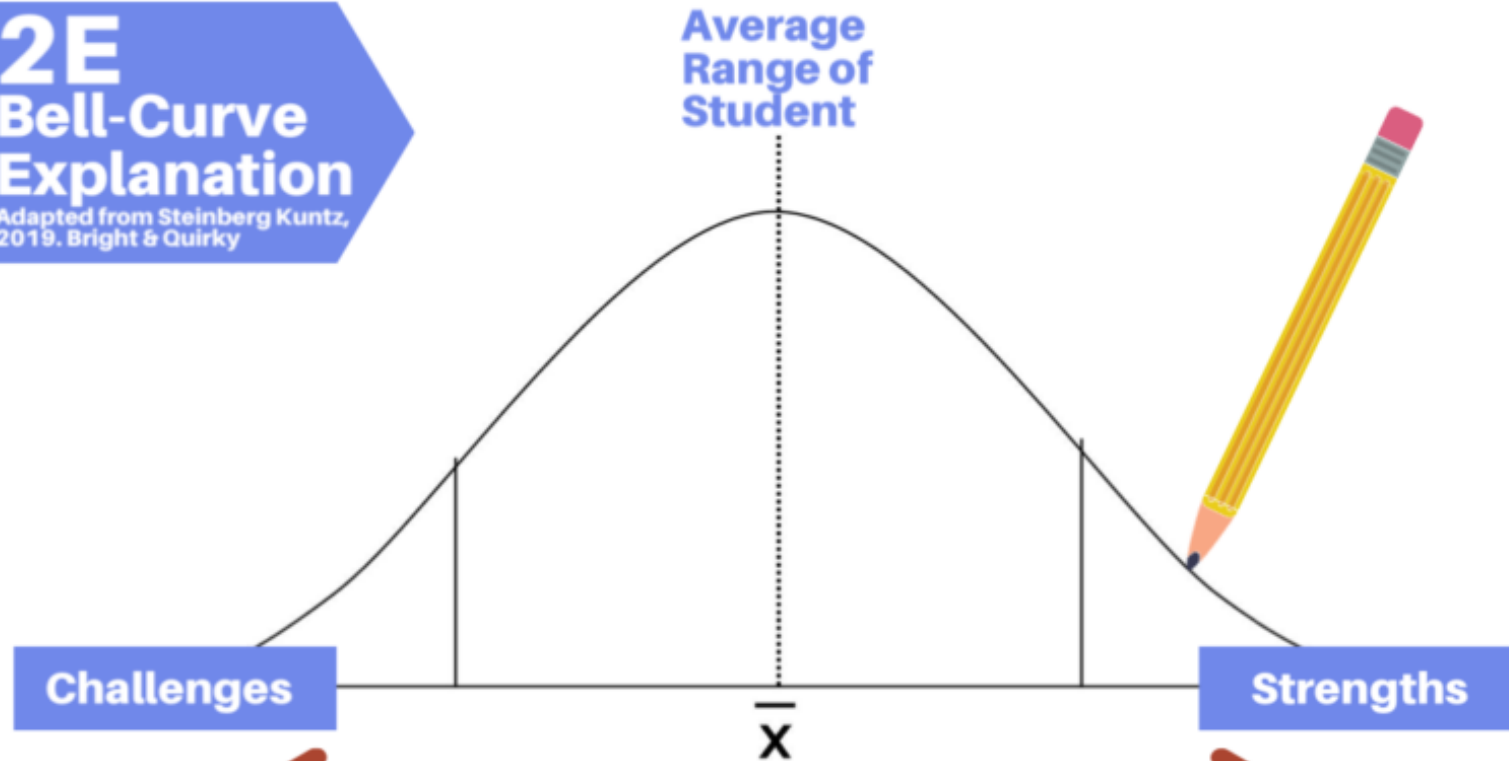
***"Honesty, fairness, moral issues, global concerns, and sensitivity to others are common themes in the lives of gifted children."***

***Silverman, 2011.***

Source:  
<https://gatecalgary.ca/identification/characteristics/>

## 2E Bell-Curve Explanation

Adapted from Steinberg Kuntz,  
2019. Bright & Quirky



STUDENTS ON ENDS OF BELL CURVE WITH  
BOTH CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHS ARE...

**TWICE EXCEPTIONAL**



Giftedness  
exists in  
context of  
whole child

Giftedness is not static

Children grow and develop, as do skills

Assessment is a snapshot in time

Psychosocial skills play crucial role in development

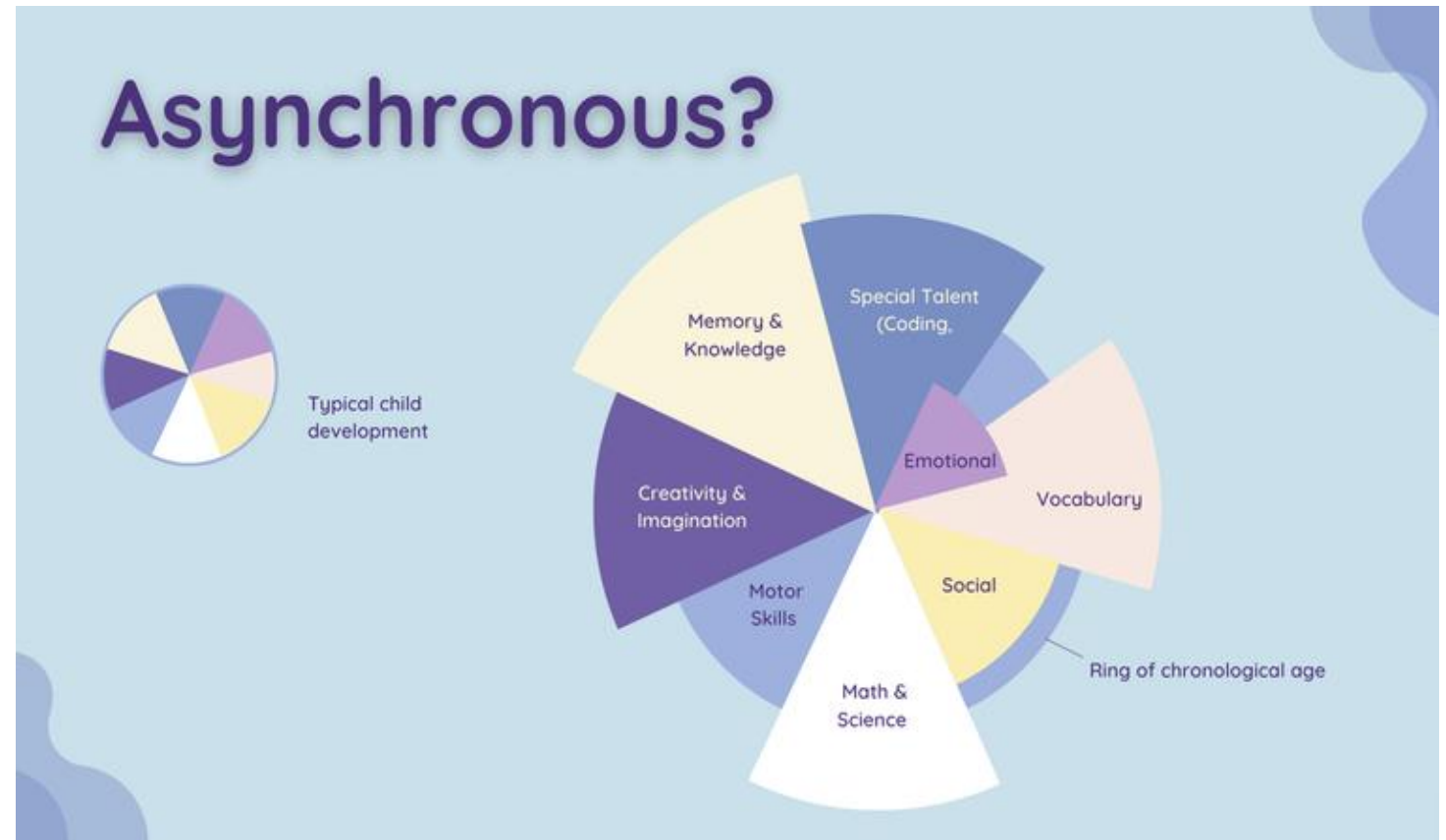
# Asynchronous development

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Uneven intellectual, physical, and emotional development.

In more typically developing children, these three domains of development usually advance at a similar rate.

Children with giftedness may develop unevenly across these three domains displayed with high capabilities and a lagging skill.





# Possible sources of stress

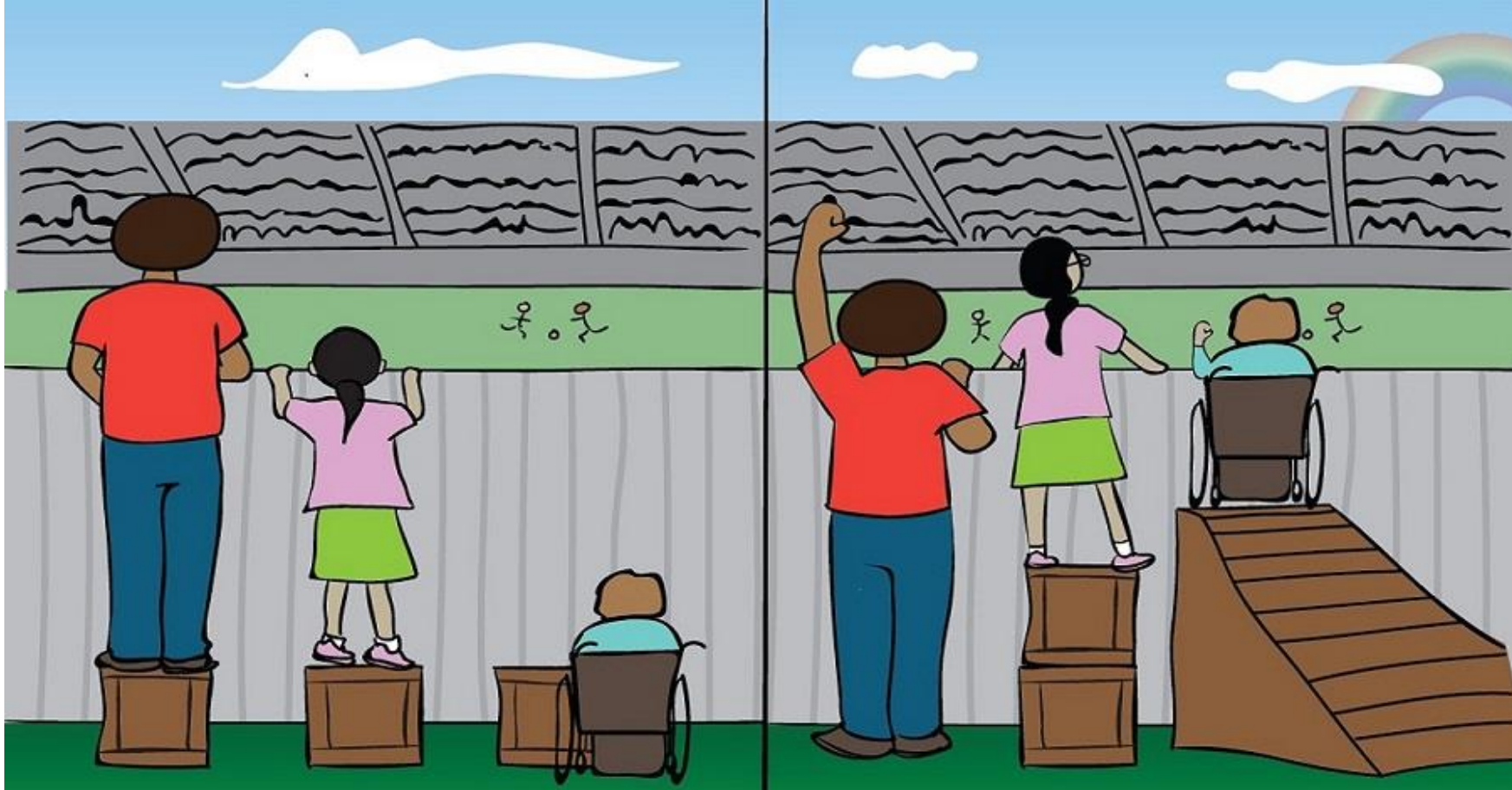
Perfectionistic qualities

External or internal achievement expectations

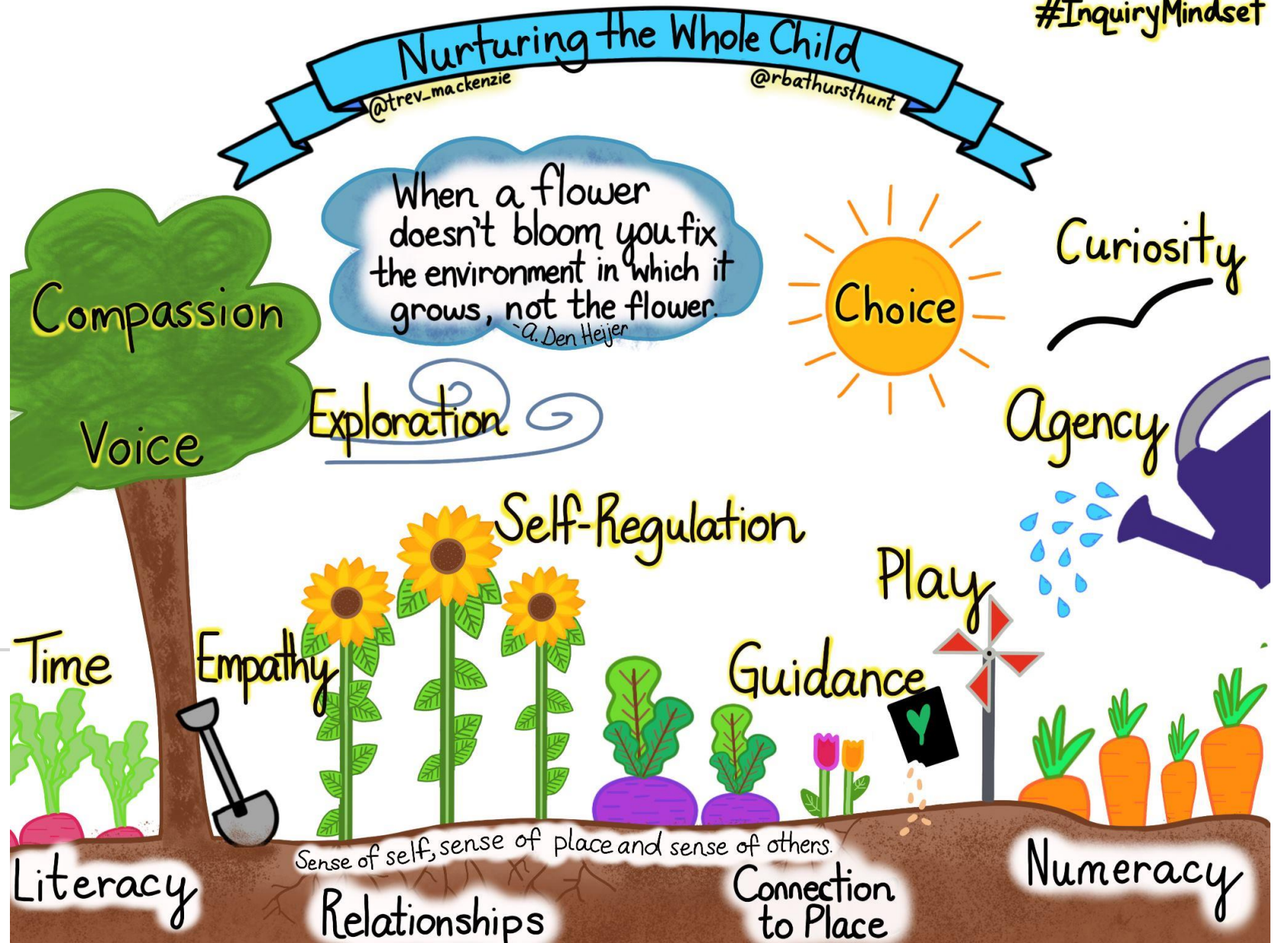
Intellectual/social gap in development (hard to connect with peers)

Heightened awareness / sensitivity to adult concerns

Equity means giving children what they need when they need it



# Focus on whole child



Encourage love of learning, embracing difficulty (and it's a practice)

Source: Carol Dweck

## HOW TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS

### Growth Mindset

What to say:

"When you learn how to do a new kind of problem, it grows your math brain!"

"If you catch yourself saying, 'I'm not a math person,' just add the word 'yet' to the end of the sentence."

"That feeling of math being hard is the feeling of your brain growing."

"The point isn't to get it all right away. The point is to grow your understanding step by step. What can you try next?"

### Fixed Mindset

What not to say:

"Not everybody is good at math. Just do your best."

"That's OK, maybe math is not one of your strengths."

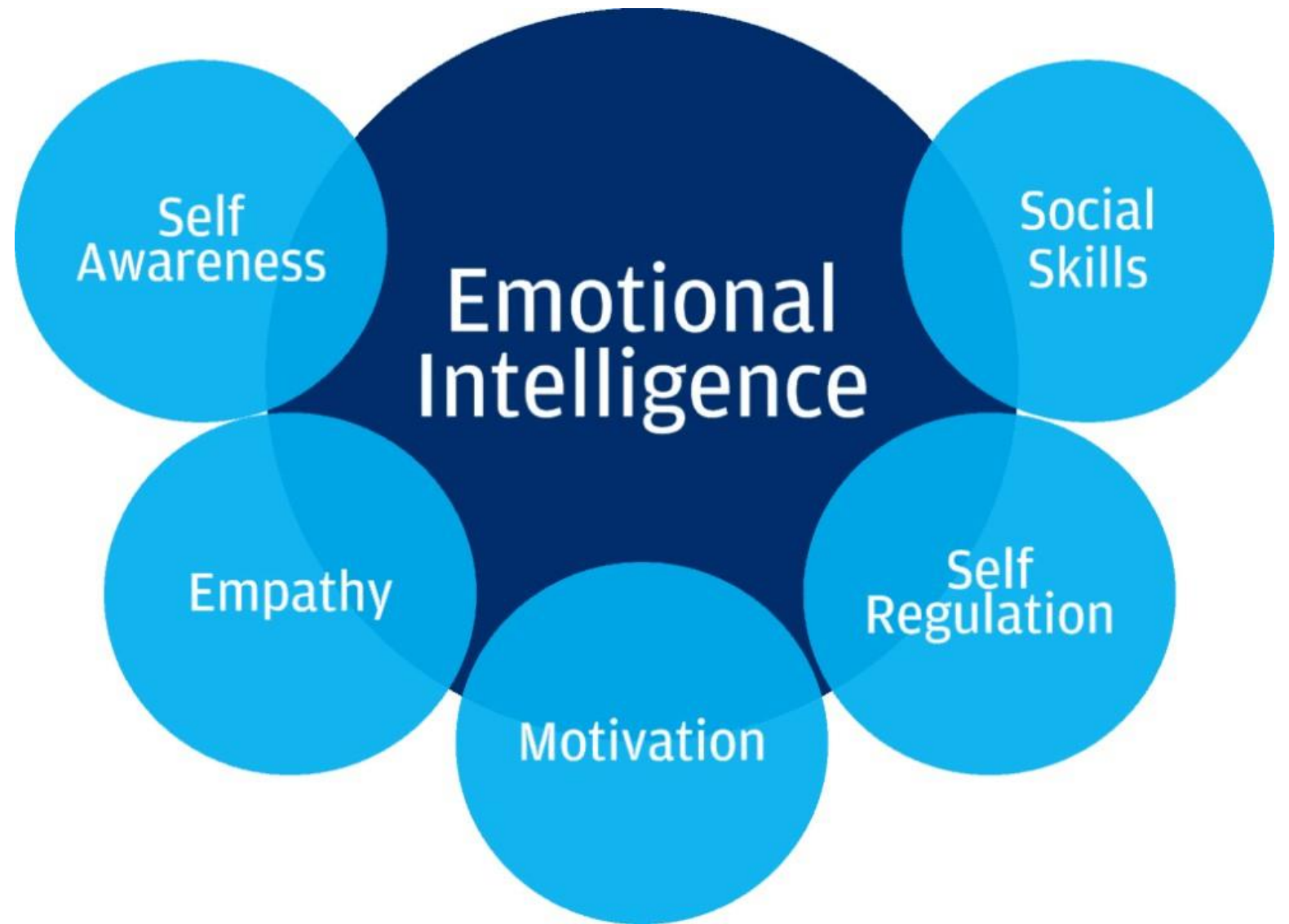
"Don't worry, you'll get it if you keep trying."\*

\*If students are using the wrong strategies, their efforts might not work. Plus they may feel particularly inept if their efforts are fruitless.

"Great effort! You tried your best."\*

\*Don't accept less than optimal performance from your students.

Emotional  
intelligence  
matters



Daniel Goleman 1995

# Individualized learning

**PACING:** Changes in pacing for gifted students usually means speeding up the rate at which content is taught.

**DEPTH:** This is often done at the unit or lesson level with teachers providing opportunities for students to go behind the scenes or follow up on “why” questions about a topic of study.

**BREADTH:** widen the scope of the curriculum, make connections across multiple classes or look at the way our understanding of a topic has changed over time.

**COMPLEXITY:** This can be a change in either the way information is given, or in the way the student must work with the content that is being taught—or both.



# Ideas about what to say to my child? Family?



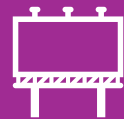
There is a lot of diversity in the world,  
different people and different brains.




We are all on our own journey and have  
different strengths and things that are  
hard.




Metaphor of brain being like an antenna,  
that can take in all kinds of signals, to  
understand abilities.



Labels are for programs not for people.

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- **Foster emotional and social development**
  - **Consider the whole child, provide stimulation and development as well as supporting lagging skills**
  - **Support autonomy and positive relationship to learning**
  - **Balance expectations**
  - **Collaborate with schools and extracurricular activities to ensure support and goodness of fit**



Key parenting ideas to support your child with giftedness

*"When you get a glimpse of the real lives of gifted people, you see that it's a mistake to separate this thing we call intelligence from all the other aspects of their lives. A person's intelligence is embedded in and interacting with all that person's other qualities — whether she is self-confident, conscientious, resilient or open to new experiences, whether she has experienced unconditional love, deep friendships, rich intellectual conversations. Just because some traits are easier to measure doesn't mean we can isolate them and not see everything that goes into this precious and never-to-be-repeated person.*

*... The bottom line is that we need to put intelligence in its place. We need to value it and put precocious children in settings where they are nurtured and stretched. But we don't want to overvalue it."*

**The New York Times**

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**OPINION**

**DAVID BROOKS**

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# What Happens to Gifted Children

June 13, 2024

# Resources

