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Dąbrowski 201: An Introduction to Kazimierz Dąbrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration.

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Learning Dąbrowski

- Dąbrowski 101: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-l03ZmhovQ>
- Dąbrowski 201: <http://www.positivedisintegration.com/Dabrowski201.pdf>
- Dąbrowski 301: <http://www.positivedisintegration.com/301new.html>
- Dąbrowski 401: <http://www.positivedisintegration.com/Dabrowski401.pdf>
- Dąbrowski 501: <http://www.positivedisintegration.com/Dabrowski501.htm>
- Master References: <http://www.positivedisintegration.com/ref.pdf>

- Appendixes 201/401: <http://www.positivedisintegration.com/app.pdf>
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- A comprehensive review of TPD is available at: <http://positivedisintegration.com>
- Another useful guide is Tillier (2018).

- 1.1 Introduction and context.

5 **The Strategy of this Presentation.**

- Dąbrowski's work has never been easy to overview because there are many interrelated constructs.
- Direct quotes from Dąbrowski will illustrate his ideas.
- Used a unique “dynamic” approach: one construct has different descriptions, different functions, and different impacts at different developmental levels. This complexity is inherent in Dąbrowski's multilevelness.
- Dąbrowski's thinking was quite original and his conclusions often challenge the status quo.
- Dąbrowski's theory was shaped by diverse influences,
- The real introduction to Dąbrowski remains reading his original works and seeing his ideas emerge.

Dąbrowski's Theory.

- Dąbrowski wrote a broad, interrelated and nuanced theory to account for human development:
 - He integrated many diverse streams of thought, from philosophy, from psychiatry, from psychology, from neurophysiology, and from literature.
 - Dąbrowski's English works represent a sample of his overall publications (~ 2X as many in Polish).
 - As material is translated, more detail will emerge.
- There is an intuitive element in comprehending Dąbrowski; as some have said, "it's a theory best understood by its application in one's life," some who approach it academically, "just don't seem to get it."

Frustrating Ideas and Language.

- Basic contradictions: How can psychological disintegration be positive? Personality is rare.
- Psychology assumes that the development process is universal – we all develop along the same basic path. TPD says advanced development (and true personality) is rare and follows a non-traditional path.
- Frustrating to learn TPD because it often uses traditional words (e.g., personality) to describe ideas that are used in a unique way. Also because the ideas are interrelated in a complex network: It takes time to see Dąbrowski's "big picture."
- Many new constructs and terms are introduced.
- Not "black and white," vagueness and subtlety reign.

8 **Combination of Old and New Approaches.**

- Dąbrowski assembles old ideas in a unique way:
 - Subsumes a traditional Piagetian (cognitive) approach but under an emotion – based umbrella.
 - Places emotion in a unique guiding role.
- Dąbrowski adds several new and unique constructs:
 - Multilevelness as a psychological view of life (ML)
 - Developmental Potential (DP) [includes overexcitability (OE) and third factor, etc.].
 - Positive Disintegration: Initial, lower level psychological integrations are governed by lower instincts and by socialization. These “primary” integrations must break down to allow the creation of new, higher level structures.

9 Philosophical and Psychological Approach.

- The theory combines two different philosophical traditions: elements of the **essentialism** of Plato with the emphasis on individual choice in **existentialism** (called the “existential-essentialist compound”).
- Essence is primary, but it’s not enough for one’s essence to just unfold, it must also be shaped by one’s day-to-day existential choices.
- Our character can be consciously evaluated and developed – this differentiates humans from animals.
- Dąbrowski was deeply concerned with the unique traits and personality of each individual. He asks us to develop and differentiate ourselves and to understand, appreciate, and accept the differences of others.

Other Developmental Theories Fall Short.

- The differentiation of developmental levels is common in theories of biology, philosophy and psychology:
 - Many theories present various hierarchies detailing levels.
 - A variety of descriptions and explanations of psychological and personality development have been proposed.
 - Most approaches suggest all people have the potential to advance, but most people fail to achieve their full potential for various reasons (e.g. run out of energy; social blocks).
- Dąbrowski said he could not find a psychological theory that could explain his observations of both the lowest behaviors and highest achievements of people.
- His goal: to write a “general theory of development” accounting for the wide range of behaviors seen, and explaining the factors and processes that he believed are associated with advanced development.

Personality Theories.

Personality Theories

Psychoanalysis	Behavioural	Biological	Humanistic	Trait	Social	Stage
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Freud	Jung	Pavlov	Eysenck	Maslow	Eysenck	Kelly	Freud
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Adler	Watson	Sheldon	Rogers	Leary	Bandura	Piaget
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Horney	Skinner	Jeff Gray	Dąbrowski	Allport	Mischel	Erikson
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Cattell	Kohlberg
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FFM

Several Radical Core Ideas #1.

- **Dynamics of concepts:** Called for a new way to look at concepts. Psychological attributes often vary widely with development and over levels. Thus, they require flexible and “dynamic” concepts to fully and accurately describe.
 - “Many-sided and authentic development of man implies the formation of an adequate system of concepts and terms which would correspond to the new higher stages of this development” . . . This process of transformation of concepts and terms in their intellectual and experiential aspects can be called ‘the drama of the life and development of concepts’” (1973, pp. xiv-xv).
 - “This process of dynamization of concepts will more and more express the close association and interconnection of intellectual and emotional functions. . . . should allow a much more incisive analysis of the understanding of oneself, of other individuals and human groups” (1973, p. xiii).

Several Radical Core Ideas #2.

- **Psychoneuroses:** Rejecting traditional views, psychoneuroses are seen as a critical part of growth. Severe depression, self-doubt & anxieties are the crises (dis-ease) that challenge one's secure adjustment to the status quo and force self-examination.
 - “The psychoneurotic problem is one of the lack of adjustment manifesting protest against actual reality, and the need for adjustment to hierarchy of higher values: to adjust to that which ‘ought to be’” (1972, p. 3).
 - “Psychoneurotics, rather than being treated as ill, should be considered as individuals most prone to a positive and even accelerated psychic development” (1972, p. 4).
 - “Nervousness, neuroses, and especially psychoneuroses, bring the nervous system to a state of greater sensitivity. They make a person more susceptible to positive change. The higher psychic structures gradually gain control over the lower ones” (1972, p. 41).

Several Radical Core Ideas #3.

- **Positive disintegration:** Growth takes place when one's status quo undergoes dis-integration. Positive when it leads to higher development, not simply a retrogressive re-integration.
 - “The term disintegration is used to refer to a broad range of processes, from emotional disharmony to the complete fragmentation of the personality structure, all of which are usually regarded as negative” (1964, p. 5).
 - “Disintegration is the basis for developmental thrusts upward, the creation of new evolutionary dynamics, and the movement of the personality to a higher level, all of which are manifestations of secondary integration” (1964, p. 6).
 - “Crises are periods of increased insight into oneself, creativity, and personality development” (1964, p. 18).
 - “Inner conflicts often lead to emotional, philosophical and existential crises” (1972, p. 196).

Several Radical Core Ideas #4.

- **Levels:** Psychology can best be understood using a levels approach. Intellect (IQ), instinct and emotion can be described on different levels. Appreciating levels gives context & perspective to the wide range of behaviour humans express.
 - “Lower levels of functions are characterized by automatism, impulsiveness, stereotypy, egocentrism, lack or low degree of consciousness. . . . Higher levels of functions show distinct consciousness, inner psychic transformation, autonomusness, creativity” (1972, p. 297).
- **Unilevelness:** “without a consideration of the multilevelness of life, without ideas. It [life] is a unilevel, statistical, adjusting, sensual life with intelligence in the service of primitive instincts. It is ‘ordinary’ life” (Cienin, 1972, p. 65).
 - Unilevel processes “‘everything goes,’ or ‘black and white are equally attractive’” (1996, p. 150).
 - “Life begins only with a hierarchy” (Cienin, 1972, p. 65).

Several Radical Core Ideas #5.

- **Multilevelness:** Describes the hierarchical nature of reality. Growth is connected to perception of higher reality, creating comparisons between higher and lower levels.
 - “The perception of the external world changes as a function of a new multilevel conception of reality” (1996, p. 106).
 - “The recognition of multilevelness of mental functions and structures in oneself allows analogous recognition with regard to other people” (1973, p. 8).
 - “Only with the appearance of self-evaluation do we have a multilevel component” (1996, p. 38).
 - “Individual perception of many levels of external and internal reality appears at a certain stage of development, here “called multilevel disintegration” (1972, p. 298).
 - “The functions of multilevel disintegration are to a considerable extent volitional, conscious, and refashioning functions, in relation to lower levels” (1967, p. 74).

Several Radical Core Ideas #7.

- **Developmental potential:** Exemplars of development show a unique set of characteristics called development potential (DP). Strong positive DP is a genetically based foundation for advanced psychological development. Not everyone has sufficient positive genetic potential to reach full development.
 - “Hyperexcitability,” “psychic overexcitability” and “overexcitability” were described in Dąbrowski’s 1937 monograph.
 - “The constitutional endowment which determines the character and the extent of mental growth possible for a given individual” (1972, p. 293).
 - “Developmental potential can be assessed on the basis of the following components: psychic overexcitability, special abilities and talents, and autonomous factors (notably the third factor)” (1972, p. 293).

Several Radical Core Ideas #8.

- “The prefix over attached to ‘excitability’ serves to indicate that the reactions of excitation are over and above average in intensity, duration and frequency” (1996, p. 7).
- “Psychic overexcitability is a term introduced to denote a variety of types of nervousness” (Dąbrowski, 1938, 1959).
- “High overexcitability contributes to establishing multilevelness, however in advanced development, both become components in a complex environment of developmental factors” (1996, p. 74).
- “It appears in five forms: emotional, imaginational, intellectual, psychomotor, and sensual” (1996, p. 7).

• **Dynamisms:** “biological or mental force(s) controlling behavior and its development. Instincts, drives, and intellectual processes combined with emotions are dynamisms” (1972, p. 294).

- “intrapsychic factors which shape development” (1996, p. 5).

A nomological network[★] of constructs.*

- Dąbrowski's work contains many (~20) interrelated, generally unique constructs, often forming hierarchies.

One example:



★ a broadly integrative theoretical framework that identifies the key constructs associated with a phenomenon of interest and describes the relationships among those constructs.

* (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955).

What is Development? #1.

- Dąbrowski presented a “mixed” view of development.
- Traditional views of development are **ontological**: a predictable, sequential, chronological timeline (milestones). Higher levels unfold *from* and based *upon* lower ones.
- Dąbrowski described both ontological pathways as well as non-ontological aspects of development, depending upon the features and levels involved.
- **Non-ontological** aspects do not arise from, are not based upon, nor are they predictable from, the features of lower levels. They are predicated on “other factors” or emerge anew as evolution proceeds. Represents a metaphysical and autopoietic aspect.

What is Development? #2.

- Metaphysical aspects: In the self, “the inner psychic milieu” and “third factor” arise from genetic “roots” but transcend their origins to become emergent, independent developmental forces.
- Higher levels are “newer” evolutionary steps, achieved in TPD through positive disintegration. Lower levels break up to be replaced by revised, higher structures.
- “Two main qualitatively different stages and types of life: the **heteronomous**, which is biologically and socially determined, and the **autonomous**, which is determined by the multilevel dynamisms of the inner psychic milieu” (Dąbrowski, 1970, p. 5).
 - Each has characteristic developmental processes.

An Emotion – Value Based Approach.

- Values and moral behavior are critical – when one comes to see what “ought to be” versus “what is.”
- Our emotions are the ultimate guide to our values, sense of self, and behavior, not our intelligence.
- Values are individual but not relative – there are core objective (universal) values that authentic humans will independently discover and embrace as they build their own unique value systems and personalities.
- Dąbrowski saw emotions and values as synonymous.
- Education must prepare the child for life using a balanced approach; personality, intellect and emotion are all important. Goal: to foster a unique, autonomous person, guided by their own emotions and values.

The Role of Emotion in Development.

- Emotion anchors and guides the creation of autonomous and authentic human values.
- Our feelings work with imagination to develop a sense of what is higher and what ought to be, over “what is.”
 - We move away from what feels bad / wrong / lower.
 - We move toward what feels good / right / higher.
- If we become conscious of our higher emotions, we can use them as a rudder to direct cognition to strive for what “ought to be” – toward “higher possibilities.”
 - Intelligence comes to serve and implement our personality ideal: an image of our unique self, based on our feelings of who we ought to strive to be.

Emotion – A New Appreciation.

- The highest levels in traditional theories are based on cognition (e.g. Platonic model, Piagetian model).
 - The traditional goal is to have reason control and direct passion (Plato); this approach has predominated Western education and psychology.
- Emotions are evaluated based on levels of development: differentiates higher vs. lower emotions.
 - Dąbrowski used to say: Love at Level I compared to love at level IV is as different as love is from hate.
- Dąbrowski's observation: In “authentic” development, “higher” emotions guide individual values and define our sense of who we want to be. Intelligence becomes subservient to the guidance of our higher emotions.

Dąbrowski's English Books.

- The titles of Dąbrowski's six major English books reflect the major themes of his approach:
 - "Positive disintegration" (1964).
 - "Personality shaping through positive disintegration" (1967).
 - "Mental growth through positive disintegration" (1970).
 - "Psychoneurosis is not an illness" (1972).
 - "Dynamics of Concepts" (1973).
 - "Multilevelness of emotional and instinctive functions" (1996).

- 1.2 Who was Kazimierz Dąbrowski?

27 **Synopsis: Kazimierz Dąbrowski (1902-1980).**

- A Polish psychologist and psychiatrist.
- Deeply affected by his life experience, first as a child eyewitness to the aftermath of horrific battles in WW I.
- Pursued a very comprehensive and diverse education.
- Saw that people display wide variations in how they experience and feel life: some seem to feel *more*.
- Had strong “overexcitability/nervousness” as a youth.
- Deeply affected again by WW II. Later, under Stalinist authorities, he was imprisoned for 18 months. After his release, his activities were closely controlled.
- Despite his challenges, he published extensively.
- For biographies, see <http://positivedisintegration.com/>

A Precocious Student.

- Dąbrowski aspired to be a journalist. In junior high school, he enrolled as a free listener at university, he was later granted 2 years of university study (Skrzyniarz, 2019).
- Dąbrowski did a Masters in philosophy and considered a career in music, but his best friend (a fellow student) committed suicide, changing the direction of his life.
- Dąbrowski entered medicine taking courses from eminent Polish psychiatrist, Jan Mazurkiewicz, a follower of J. H. Jackson. In 1928, he took courses from Édouard Claparède and Jean Piaget, writing a thesis on suicide in 1929.
- He completed a doctorate degree in psychology in 1931, writing a thesis on self-mutilation (1934/1937).

A Diverse Education Continues.

- Studied psychoanalysis in Vienna under fellow Pole Wilhelm Stekel (and attended lectures by Freud).
- In Paris he practiced psychiatry under Pierre Janet.
- Dąbrowski learned German, Spanish, Russian and French. Centers studying TPD were built in Spain and Lima, Peru (he lectured there). Books were published in Spanish and French. His 1929 thesis was in French.
- In 1933, Dąbrowski spent a year at Harvard and Boston (sponsored by the Rockefeller foundation).
 - In the 1930s, he organized mental health services and clinics in Poland (with Rockefeller funding).
 - Continued to study and write prolifically.

A Promising Career.

- First mentioned emotional and sensual overexcitability in 1929, added psychomotor and imaginal in a 1935 book on a study of 250 normal IQ students.
- During WWII, he was imprisoned several times by the German police (released for ransom) but avoided incarceration in the concentration camp system.
- In the late 1940s, Dąbrowski began to resume his work on mental health and again visited Harvard.
- In 1950, he was imprisoned by the Stalinist authorities for 18 months. Closely monitored after release.
- 1958: first mention of intellectual hyperactivity.
- Introduced ideas of integration and disintegration incrementally, in works in 1937, 1946, and 1949.

Roots in Canada.

- In 1964 worked with Jason Aronson in New York, leading to *Positive Disintegration*. Met philosopher Andrew Kawczak in Montréal.
- In 1965, hired by University of Alberta, moved his family to Edmonton (also worked at Université Laval (Laval University), Quebec City).
- In 1966, met Abraham Maslow and the two became friends and correspondents.
- Several of his Edmonton students became co-authors; Dexter Amend, Michael Piechowski & Marlene Rankel.
- For the rest of his life, split his time between Alberta, Québec, and Poland. Worked tirelessly to write about and promote TPD — he never seemed to stop.

A Chapter Closes.

- In 1975, at the age of 73, Dąbrowski purchased an estate in Poland with plans to develop a new center.
- In 1976, I became Dąbrowski's last student in Edmonton and he asked me to keep his theory alive. I later received his unpublished papers.
- In 1979, Dąbrowski had a serious heart attack in Edmonton and died in Warsaw, November 26, 1980.
- He was buried beside his old friend, Piotr Radlo, in the forest near his old Institute at Zagórze, Poland.
- I became a psychologist, created the TPD webpage, archived his work and participated in conferences.
- Piechowski took Dąbrowski's work to gifted education, emphasizing OE. This created a new audience.

- 1.3 Marie Jahoda.

Jahoda's Approach #1.

- Marie Jahoda was a major influence on Dąbrowski.
- Jahoda (1958, p. 23) delineated six main features of positive mental health:
 - 1. Indicators of positive mental health should be sought in the attitudes of an individual toward his own self. Positive self-attitudes (*self-perception*).
 - 2. The individual's style and degree of *growth, development, or self-actualization* are expressions of mental health. This set of criteria, in contrast to the first, is not concerned with self-perception but with what one does with one's self over a period of time.



Jahoda's Approach #2.

- 3. *Integration*: A central synthesizing psychological function, incorporating some of the suggested criteria defined in 1) and 2) above. Integration is the relatedness of all processes and attributes in an individual.
- 4. *Autonomy* singles out the individual's degree of independence from social influences as most revealing of the state of his or her mental health;
- 5. The adequacy of an individual's *perception of reality*.
- 6. There were suggestions that *environmental mastery* be regarded as another criterion for mental health.

Jahoda's Approach #3.

- Following Jahoda (1958), Dąbrowski said that mental health should not be defined simply by the presence or absence of symptoms, rather, definitions of mental health must be concerned with views of individuals as they *ought to be* and by the potential of the individual to achieve ideal, desirable, developmental qualities.
- Dąbrowski defined mental health as: “Development towards higher levels of mental functions, towards the discovery and realization of higher cognitive, moral, social, and aesthetic values and their organization into a hierarchy in accordance with one’s own authentic personality ideal” (1972, p. 298).

Jahoda's Approach #4.

- The influence of Jahoda's six main points can be felt in Dąbrowski's thinking, especially in terms of the goal of advanced development [paraphrased]:
 - An autonomous, consciously derived hierarchy of values, marking the creation of an idealized vision of self – the unique personality of the individual, encapsulated by his or her personality ideal.
- Dąbrowski believed that the moral guidelines one ought to follow must be of one's own creation. To paraphrase Frederick Nietzsche, each of us must create our own values and personality and thus walk our own path in life.

Jahoda's Approach #5.

- Dąbrowski's observations of people and his adoption of Jahoda led him to an unusual conclusion: that individual personality is not universally, or even commonly, achieved. The average “well socialized” person lacks a unique personality and therefore cannot be considered mentally healthy – the “state of primary integration is a state contrary to mental health” (1964b, p. 121)
- “Mental illness consists in the absence or deficiency of processes which effect development”:
 - “1) either a strongly integrated, primitive, psychopathic structure [Level I], or
 - 2) a negative, non-developmental disintegration (psychosis)” (1970, p. 173).

- 1.4 Multilevelness: Levels of reality.

Levels of Function.

- Definition: “The qualitative and quantitative differences which appear in mental functions as a result of developmental changes. . . .
 - Lower levels are characterized by automatism, impulsiveness, stereotypy, egocentrism, lack of, or low degree of consciousness. . . .
 - Higher levels show distinct consciousness, inner psychic transformation, autonomusness, creativity” (1972, p. 297).
- Basic to Dąbrowski’s view of authentic human beings:
 - “The reality of mental functions in man is dynamic, developmental and multilevel” (1970, p. 122).
- Dąbrowski stressed levels in TPD are only a heuristic device, not to be taken *too* literally (Stupak & Dyga, 2018).

The Unilevel Versus the Multilevel.

- Two fundamentally different views of reality. The lower, basic perception is horizontal – **unilevel**. The higher, developmental view is vertical – **multilevel**.
- Unilevel views of reality encompass only horizontal elements. Only phenomena on the same level are perceived and considered in decision making.
- Most behaviors can be seen as either UL or ML.
- Likewise, motivations of behavior and processes of development can reflect either UL or ML character.
- Multilevelness is paramount because it allows us to see and compare the higher versus lower. Over time, *ideally*, the higher aspect will increasingly be chosen.

42 **Unlevelness (UL) and Multilevelness (ML).**

- The “average” view of life is horizontal – unilevel:
(Ken Wilber: “flatlanders,” Bertalanffy and Yablonsky: “robopaths”)
 - “Robots” blindly follow social roles and values.
 - “Animal model” – stimulus-response reactions.
 - Equal alternatives create false “illusion of choice.”
 - Conflicts between different but equivalent choices.
 - No vertical component to allow for higher growth.
- Development is linked to a “new” – vertical – ML view:
 - One begins to see higher possibilities in comparison to lower realities and alternatives.
 - A vertical, ML view creates a hierarchical model of life, of values and of behavior – allows us to see and choose the higher over the lower.

Perilous Shift From UL to ML #1.

- Initially, ML awareness creates great internal stress because choosing the lower has become habitual. Now, “the possibility” of a different and better choice comes into view. This contrast is upsetting and, at first, is quite spontaneous. “Vertical conflicts” arise.
- The transition to multilevelness is the “greatest step” in growth and also the most perilous: As one’s old, status quo unilevel frame of reference crumbles, feelings of chaos, anxiety and dread are common.
- One’s once secure and familiar foundation is lost without yet seeing any pathway to one’s future.
- Strong urges to return to the security of unilevelness.
- “The dark night of the soul” is a common experience, reflects an existential crisis – one’s world is in chaos.

Multilevelness – Overview.

- Levels are a philosophical foundation of the theory:
 - Level based analysis has a long philosophical history.
- Premise: Reality and our perception of reality can be differentiated into a hierarchy of levels.
- The reality that one perceives reflects one's given level of development – fairly wide differences are observed.
- Most psychological features change *quantitatively*. Some features show *qualitative* changes as they develop or emerge. Higher levels differ *qualitatively*.
- This allows us to differentiate higher, more developed levels from lower, earlier, less developed levels.
- Differentiation of lower and higher levels is basic to Dąbrowski's view of mental health and development.

Multilevelness: Multiple Meanings.

- Multilevelness means that each psychological feature must be described differently on each level: A given dimension has different meanings, different expressions and different impacts on each level.
- Dąbrowski: the lowest level of love differs from the highest level more than love differs from hate.
- The combination of multiple levels and dimensions creates a comprehensive but complicated analysis that is difficult to operationalize or measure.
- Ideal situation: multidimensional and multilevel perception of reality, both of the external environment and of one's inner psychic milieu, including thinking, feeling, imagination, instincts, empathy, and intuition.

Multilevelness #1.

- Definition: “Division of functions into different levels: for instance, the spinal, subcortical, and cortical levels in the nervous system. Individual perception of many levels of external and internal reality appears at a certain stage of development, here called multilevel disintegration” (1972, p. 298).
- The dynamic process of “hierarchization” expands our range of human experience, creating a new, critical type of conflict: vertical conflicts between higher and lower alternatives and choices.
- “It appears obvious that the ability to understand and to successfully apply the concept of multilevelness depends upon the development of personality of the individual” (1973, p. x).

Multilevelness as a Growth Process.

- One begins to *imagine* the higher possibilities in life.
 - Creates a new goal: a unique personality ideal based on the “discovery” of our deep essence.
- Once the higher alternative is seen, acting on the lower creates guilt, unhappiness, feelings of inferiority:
 - Vertical conflicts / dissonance become a vital, internal driving force of personality change.
 - I *think* I *want* the lower, but on reflection, I *know* I *must* choose the higher – because I *feel* it is right.
- “Hierarchization” becomes a key process of ML. Contrasts of the lower and higher create hierarchies.
- The true solution to human problems must involve ascent; moving one not only forward but upward.

Developmental Complexity #1.

- The level of development is not uniform across all dimensions within a person. People are often on different levels on different dimensions:
 - A person may be at a high level cognitively and on a low level emotionally (and morally); this is common and seems to be the social status quo.
 - Dąbrowski called this one-sided development.
- What dimensions should we include in our analysis?
 - This complicates the assessment of levels, may be unfeasible when many dimensions are included.
 - Current educational testing focuses on only one or two dimensions (almost always cognitively based).
 - Dąbrowski: we need a richer, broader approach to measure human development and potentials.

Developmental Complexity #2.

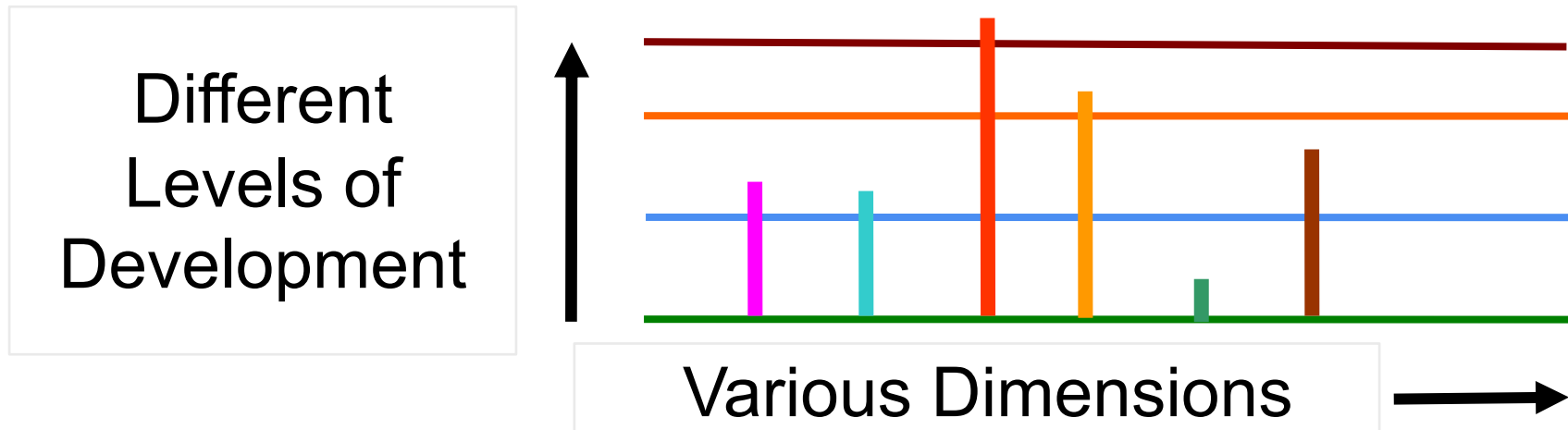
- One-sided development: “Type of development limited to one talent or ability, or to a narrow range of abilities and mental functions” (1972, p. 300).
 - “Grave affective retardation is usually associated with above average intelligence subordinated to primitive drives” (1970, p. 30).
- To overcome one-sided development, Dąbrowski advocated we strive to achieve balance by focusing more attention on the child’s *weaker* talents. If a child is a mathematical prodigy, weak in English, then focus on the overall development of the child and on English.
- A study of child prodigies found that most parents exclude everything except the single talent, leading to various psychological issues later in life (Hulbert, 2018).

Multilevel and Multidimensional Analysis.

- Dąbrowski uses a powerful type of analysis combining:
 - A multilevel approach (ML).
 - A multidimensional approach (MD).
 - Behavior involves an interaction of dimensions and levels: A behavior is expressed differently on different levels (obvious if comparing UL to ML).
 - MD and ML must be used together to examine, evaluate, and understand behavior in the context of the developmental level and motivation that spawned it.
- Ken Wilber used a similar approach – popular in the USA, called “the all [four] quadrant approach.”

Multilevelness and Multidimensionality.

- People are often at different levels of development on different dimensions, e.g., intellect vs. emotion. We need to consider the level for each dimension we choose to look at.



- Each dimension will be expressed differently at each different level of development.

Examples of Dimensions:

Attention Cooperative Independence
 Imaginational OE Accommodating Dependability Emotional OE
 Trustworthy Optimistic Third Factor
 Neuroticism (FFM) Openness to Experience (FFM) Determination
 Pessimistic Perspicacity (insight) Emotionality Tenacious
 Extraversion (FFM) Acumen Thespian Strategic
 Common sense Psychomotor OE Empathic
 Artistic talent Creativity Rigorous Supportive
 Raw intelligence Musical talent Aesthetic Appreciation
 Loyalty Athleticism Open boundaries Subject – Object
 First Factor Asceticism Conscientiousness (FFM)
 Sensual OE Self-criticism Extra-Introversion
 Intellectual OE Second Factor Agreeableness (FFM)

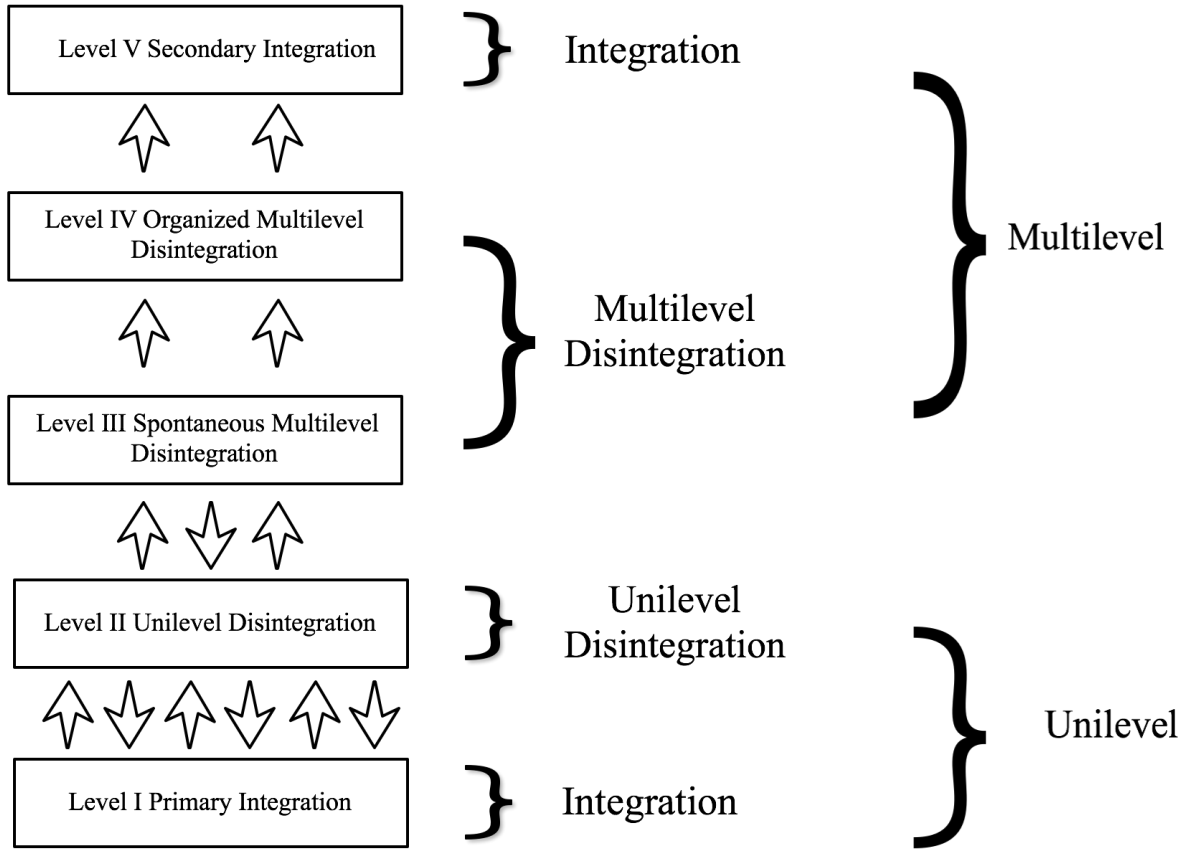
(FFM): 5 Factor Model

Dąbrowski's Factors

Dąbrowski's OEs

- 1.5 The Levels.

Dąbrowski's 5 Levels.



Dąbrowski's Level I #1.

- Dąbrowski believed that the majority (about 65%) of people live life at Level I – Primary Integration:
 - A stable, rigid, integrated, horizontally based level.
 - Behavior is automatic, reflexive, rote, unthinking.
 - Instinct (first factor) and social forces (second factor) influence and determine most behavior.
 - A difficult level to break free of because integration creates a strong sense of belonging and security (“security of the herd”).
 - Inner harmony: most conflicts are external, inner sense of “always being right,” of selfish entitlement, “don’t worry about the other guy’s problems.”

Dąbrowski's Level I #2.

- Integration: “Consists in an organization of instinctive, emotional and intellectual functions into a coordinated structure” (1972, p. 296).
- Primitive Integration (primary integration, Level I):
 - “An integration of all mental functions into a cohesive structure controlled by primitive drives” (1972, p. 302).
 - “Individuals with some degree of primitive integration comprise the majority of society” (1964, p. 4).
 - “Among normal primitively integrated people, different degrees of cohesion of psychic structure can be distinguished” (1964, p. 66).
 - “Psychopathy represents a primitive structure of impulses, integrated at a low level” (1964, p. 73).

Dąbrowski's Level I #3.

- An illustrative hierarchy of Level I: (from E. Mika)
 - Average person exhibiting psychoneuroses
 - Average person showing social conformity ["1b"]
(dominant type in the population)
 - Psychopath but largely maintaining social conformity (CEO who "bends the law," takes advantage wherever possible) Asocial
 - Psychopath exhibiting antisocial behavior ["1a"]
- The more rigid one's initial integration, the harder it is to disintegrate, change, and to grow.

Dąbrowski's Levels – II, III and IV.

- 3 levels describe varying degrees of disintegration:
 - **Level II** – Unilevel Disintegration: Horizontal conflicts create ambiguity and ambivalence. Very stressful, chaotic period, maximum *dis* – ease:
 - High risk of falling back or falling apart.
 - Dąbrowski described this as a transitional level.
- Paradigm shift: multilevel, vertical aspects appear.
 - **Level III** – Spontaneous: Multilevel, vertical conflicts arise spontaneously, create disintegration.
 - **Level IV** – Organized (Directed): We now see and actively seek out vertical conflicts, we play a volitional role in “directing” crises and our own development.

Paradigm Shift from UL to ML.

- Transition to multilevelness is the “greatest step.” Dąbrowski said that the shift from the unilevel to the multilevel / vertical perception of life is the key to development.
 - Once one truly sees and appreciates the vertical, there is no turning back to a unilevel existence.
 - Dąbrowski compared this with Plato’s cave: once one breaks free and “sees the [sun]light,” one can no longer be happy returning to live in the darkness.
 - The shift takes energy and places major demands on the person: one may initially feel self-alienated and be overwhelmed with depression and despair.

Secondary Integration #1.

- Secondary Integration (Level V): “the integration of all mental functions into a harmonious structure controlled by higher emotions such as the dynamism of personality ideal, autonomy and authenticity” (1972, p. 304).
- “The embryonic organization of secondary integration manifests itself during the entire process of disintegration and takes part in it, preparing the way for the formation of higher structures integrated at a higher level” (1964, pp. 20-21).
- Secondary integration is not the endpoint of mental development – it continues throughout life via the personality ideal and the instinct for self-perfection.

Secondary Integration #2.

- Full realization of multilevelness and personality ideal.
- One's unique hierarchy of values directs behavior.
- Personality ideal and third factor direct autonomous, volitional, unique personality – “a good person” – this is what is right – *for you*.
- Exemplars describe and show us this highest level.
- Inner harmony: we are satisfied that our values and behavior now reflect our “true” self as we feel it ought to be – no *internal* conflict.
- May have more *external* conflicts – strong sense of social justice motivates social action and reform.
- Rarely seen (but the future trend in evolution?).

Secondary Integration #3 – The IPM.

- “These inner psychic milieu dynamisms show distinct integrative force and strong interconnections. All of them, including the disposing and directing center, are gradually identified with personality and approach its ideal, which is the supplier of mental energy on the highest accessible level” (1973, p. 115).
- In secondary integration, the dynamisms of the [IPM] come under the influence of one’s personality ideal. “They stop acting individually; the whole personality acts as an entity” (1973, p. 100).
- “Not until a person has inwardly understood himself and then sees the course he is to take does his life gain peace and meaning” (Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 10).

- 1.6 Disintegration.

Disintegration.

- Disintegration: “Loosening, disorganization, or dissolution of mental structures and functions” (1972, p. 293).
- “The term disintegration is used to refer to a broad range of processes, from emotional disharmony to the complete fragmentation of the personality structure, all of which are usually regarded as negative” (1964, p. 5).
- Dąbrowski described various types of disintegration:
 - Unilevel / Multilevel.
 - Negative / Positive.
 - Spontaneous (Unpredictable) / Organized (Directed).
 - Partial / Global.

Role of Crises in Life #1.

- “Every authentic creative process consists of ‘loosening,’ ‘splitting’ or ‘smashing’ the former reality. Every mental conflict is associated with disruption and pain; every step forward in the direction of authentic existence is combined with shocks, sorrows, suffering and distress” (1973, p. 14).
- “The chances of developmental crises and their positive or negative outcomes depend on the character of the developmental potential, on the character of social influence, and on the activity (if present) of the third factor. . . . One also has to keep in mind that a developmental solution to a crisis means not a reintegration but an integration at a higher level of functioning” (1972, p. 245).

Role of Crises in Life #2.

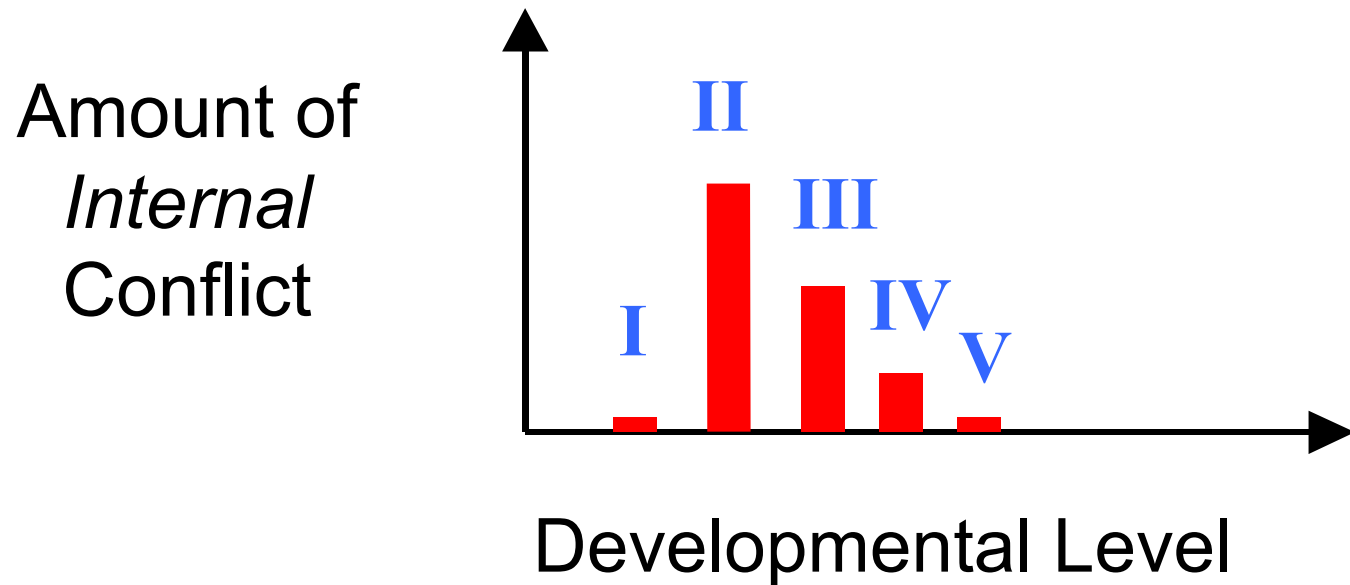
- “Crises are periods of increased insight into oneself, creativity, and personality development” (1964, p. 18).
- “Crises, in our view, are brought about through thousands of different internal and external conflicts, resulting from collisions of the developing personality with negative elements of the inner and external milieus” (1972, p. 245).
- “Experiences of shock, stress and trauma, may accelerate development in individuals with innate potential for positive development” (1970, p. 20).
- “Inner conflicts often lead to emotional, philosophical and existential crises” (1972, p. 196).

Role of Crises in Life #3.

- “We are human inasmuch as we experience disharmony and dissatisfaction, inherent in the process of disintegration” (1970, p. 122).
- “Prolonged states of unilevel disintegration (Level II) end either in a reintegration at the former primitive level or in suicidal tendencies, or in a psychosis” (1970, p. 135).
- Inner conflict is a *cause* of positive disintegration and subsequent development – conflict acts as a motive to redefine, refine, and discover one’s “new” values.
- Inner conflict is also the *result* of the process of positive disintegration and the operation of the dynamisms of development.

Internal Conflict.

- Dąbrowski believed that *dis-ease* is necessary as a motivation to change the status quo. The amount of inner conflict is linked to the degree of change – maximum at Level II and in the borderline region between Level II and III:



Positive Disintegration #1.

- Definition of positive: “By positive we imply here changes that lead from a lower to a higher (i.e. broader, more controlled and more conscious) level of mental functioning” (1972, p. 1).
- Definition of Positive Disintegration: “Positive or developmental disintegration effects a weakening and dissolution of lower level structures and functions, gradual generation and growth of higher levels of mental functions and culminates in personality integration” (1970, p. 165).

Positive Disintegration #2.

- “The term positive disintegration will be applied in general to the process of transition from lower to higher, broader and richer levels of mental functions. This transition requires a restructuring of mental functions” (1970, p. 18).
- “Loosening, disorganization or dissolution of mental structures and functions” (1970, p. 164).
- “Positive when it enriches life, enlarges the horizon, and brings forth creativity, it is negative when it either has no developmental effects or causes involution” (1964, p. 10).

Positive Disintegration #3.

- Recovery from a crisis can lead to a reintegration at the former level and equilibrium or to a more healthy integration and new equilibrium on a higher level.
- If a person has strong developmental potential, even severe crises can be positive and lead to growth.
- “The close correlation between personality development and the process of positive disintegration is clear” (1964, p. 18).
- “In education, the theory emphasizes the importance of developmental crises and of symptoms of positive disintegration. It provides a new view of conduct difficulties, school phobias, dyslexia, and nervousness in children” (1964, p. 23).

Summary of Disintegration #1.

- Creates the *possibility/opportunity* of higher growth.
- Strong OE gives everyday experience an intense and unsettling quality: one is “jolted” into seeing “more.”
- One becomes aware of a continuum of higher versus lower aspects of both inner and outer reality.
- Developing multilevelness creates ‘vertical’ conflicts and a new, vertical, upward sense of direction.
- Developmental instincts and one’s emotions naturally and intuitively draw one toward higher choices.
- Our lower instinctual and socially based values and habits are brought under conscious scrutiny and disintegrate to be replaced by self-chosen values.

Summary of Disintegration #2.

- A “hierarchization” of life develops: guided by emotion and one’s ability to *imagine* higher possibilities, a vertical perception and categorization helps create an autonomous, consciously chosen hierarchy of values.
- These inner values form the basis of a person’s own unique personality ideal: his or her own sense of who he or she ought to be.
- One’s behavior slowly comes to reflect these higher, internal values.
- At higher levels of development, individuals form **unique** hierarchies of values. Some of these values converge among people and reflect **universal values**.

- 1.7 Developmental Potential.

Advanced Development is Rare #1.

- In TPD, people dominated by their lower instincts seem to have little potential to develop or to change.
- People dominated by socialization may possess potential to develop but social forces and peer pressure are strong and vigorously resist change.
- Some people appear to have strong autonomous potential to develop (can't be held back). Often go on to become exemplars of advanced development.
- Dąbrowski studied exemplars of personality development and described common traits he saw in them that he called Developmental Potential (DP).

Advanced Development is Rare #2.

- Growth “occur[s] only if the developmental forces are sufficiently strong and not impeded by unfavorable external circumstances. This is, however, rarely the case. The number of people who complete the full course of development and attain the level of secondary integration is limited. A vast majority of people either do not break down their primitive integration at all, or after a relatively short period of disintegration, usually experienced at the time of adolescence and early youth, end in a reintegration at the former level or in partial integration of some of the functions at slightly higher levels, without a transformation of the whole mental structure” (1970, p. 4).

Advanced Development is Rare #3.

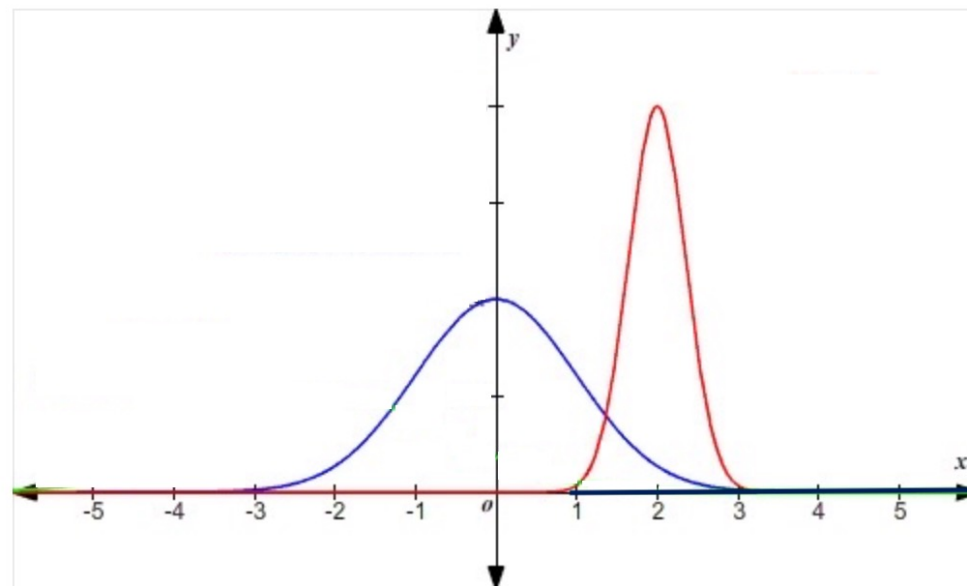
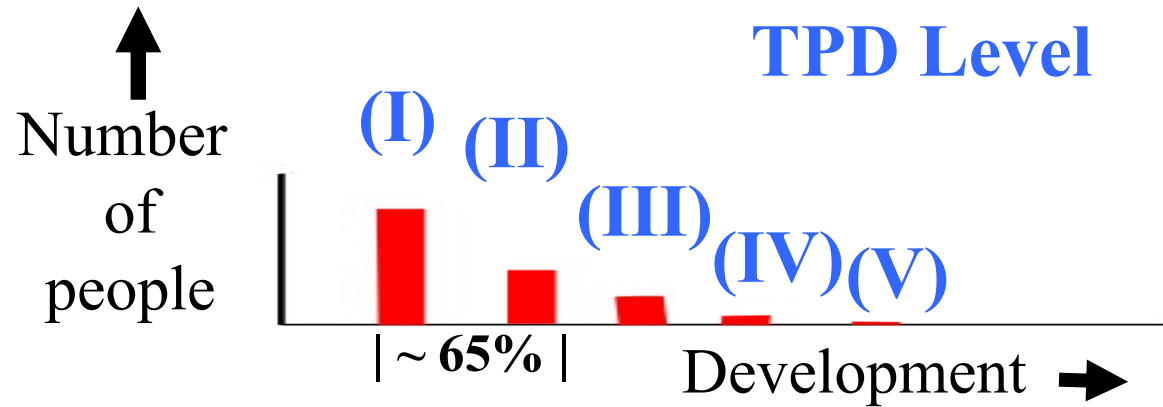
- “A fairly high degree of primary integration is present in the average person; a very high degree of primary integration is present in the psychopath. The more cohesive the structure of primary integration, the less the possibility of development; the greater the strength of autonomic functioning, stereotypy, and habitual activity, the lower the level of mental health” (1964 p.121).
- Note: Dąbrowski’s usage of the term psychopath reflects the European connotation of the term: an individual with strong “constitutional factors” that act to inhibit potential development (in contrast with the sociopath; one having social factors that block development). Still, his usage reflects contemporary views of psychopathy and highlights its developmental nature.

Advanced Development is Rare #4.

- Ideal maturation is prolonged:
 - [People with strong developmental “endowment”] “must have much more time for a deep, creative development and that is why you will be growing for a long time. This is a very common phenomenon among creative people. Simply, they have such a great developmental potential, ‘they have the stuff to develop’ and that is why it takes them longer to give it full expression” (1972, p. 272).
- Exemplars are role models of higher levels:
 - Dąbrowski was optimistic that exemplars of the highest levels are role models who represent the next steps in Human psychological evolution.

Where are we Today?

- In all existing psychological models, including TPD, advanced development is rarely seen.



- The population distribution of developmental potential.

The Developmental Process.

- “The developmental process in which occur ‘collisions’ with the environment and with oneself begins as a consequence of the interplay of three factors: developmental potential, . . . an influence of the social milieu, and autonomous (self-determining) factors” (1972, p. 77).
 - “By higher level of psychic development we mean a behavior which is more complex, more conscious and having greater freedom of choice, hence greater opportunity for self-determination” (1972, p. 70).
 - “The individual with a rich developmental potential rebels against the common determining factors in his external environment” (1970, p. 32).

Traditional Developmental Features.

- In traditional approaches, cognition is the key component of higher levels:
 - Cognition and reason overcome or control emotion.
- TPD reframes and revises traditional roles of mental excitement, emotion and pathology in development.
- Excess excitability, strong emotion, and “pathology” traditionally are seen negatively in mental health.
 - “Excess” excitability has been medicated and is often linked to various pathologies, learning disabilities and delinquency.
 - “Excess” emotion has often been equated with hysteria.
 - “Pathology” traditionally indicates a weakness or defect needing to be treated, ameliorated, palliated, and removed.

Developmental Potential is Genetic.

- Definition: “The constitutional endowment which determines the character and the extent of mental growth possible for a given individual” (Dąbrowski, 1972, p. 293).
- DP can be positive, promoting development; negative and inhibiting development; or equivocal.
- “The relations and interactions between the different components of the developmental potential give shape to individual development and control the appearance of psychoneuroses on different levels of development” (Dąbrowski, 1972, p. 78).
- Just as IQ varies in the population, so does DP.
- Most have too little DP to allow for advanced growth.
- A few have strong DP and achieve the highest levels.

Developmental Potential (DP): Overview.

- Several complex and interrelated components of DP:
 - The three factors of development.
 - Dynamisms.
 - Psychoneuroses and positive disintegration.
 - Emerging, internal features of the self [Hierarchy of aims, Hierarchy of values, Inner Psychic Milieu, Third Factor, Personality Ideal, etc.].
 - The developmental instinct, the creative instinct, and the instinct for self-perfection.
 - Overexcitability (Five types).
 - Special talents and abilities.

Key Features of DP #1.

- DP influences how one perceives the environment and determines one's unique developmental course.
- DP, especially OE, works hand-in-hand with psychoneuroses and positive disintegration to change one's perception of reality, predisposing development.
- Development is defined by movement towards self-determination and autonomy – toward the third factor, toward self-perfection, and the personality ideal.
- Adjustment to “what is” is generally a developmental. Initially, maladjustment results from conflicts with the social environment. A shift to “what ought to be,” leads to a new type of positive adjustment and harmony.

Key Features of DP #2.

- Developmental potential may be:
 - positive or negative / general or specific / strong or weak / expressed or not expressed.
- The most misunderstood aspect of DP is OE:
 - OE is usually not appreciated by others or by society.
 - OE is often suppressed or hidden by the individual.
 - OE needs to be understood in the context of DP and TPD.
 - OE may be hard to manage and may be overwhelming.
 - OE heightens the joys but also intensifies the lows of life.
 - OE needs to be validated – not seen as an abnormality.
- Many aspects of DP have received negligible attention.
- One must “transform” 1st and 2nd factors to develop.
- One with “a rich DP rebels” against “his external environment” and “the laws of biology” (1970, pp. 32-33).

Key Features of DP #3.

- “Environmental influences collide with those potentials, strengthen or weaken them, but their outcome always depends on an individual’s hereditary endowment:”
 - “(1) If the developmental potential is distinctly positive or negative, the influence of the environment is less important. (2) If the developmental potential does not exhibit any distinct quality, the influence of the environment is important and it may go in either direction. (3) If the developmental potential is weak or difficult to specify, the influence of the environment may prove decisive, positively or negatively” (1970, p. 34).
- “In the vast majority of cases, the phenomena of disintegration point to a very great developmental potential” (1970, p. 39).

Developmental Potential: Assessment.

- To assess DP, Dąbrowski described 3 main aspects:
 1. Special talents and abilities (e.g. IQ, athletic ability, musical or artistic ability).
 2. Overexcitability (OE).
 3. “Third Factor” (a strong internal drive to express one’s unique self – factor of autonomous choice).
- “The developmental potential can be assessed on the basis of the following components: psychic overexcitability special abilities and talents, and autonomous factors (notably the Third factor)” (1972, p. 293).

Overexcitability #1.

- The roots of the idea of overexcitabilities and their importance *might* first appear in William James:
 - “Wherever a process of life communicates an eagerness to him who lives it, there the life becomes genuinely significant. Sometimes the eagerness is more knit up with the motor activities, sometimes with the perceptions, sometimes with the imagination, sometimes with reflective thought. But, wherever it is found, there is the zest, the tingle, the excitement of reality; and there is ‘importance’ in the only real and positive sense in which importance ever anywhere can be” (James, 1899, pp. 9-10).

Overexcitability #2.

- Definition: “Higher than average **responsiveness** to stimuli, manifested either by psychomotor, sensual, emotional (affective), imaginal, or intellectual excitability or the combination thereof” (1972, p. 303).
- A physiological property of the nervous system: “Each form of overexcitability points to a higher than average **sensitivity** of its receptors” (1972, p. 7).
- “Psychic hyperexcitability is one of the major developmental potentials, but it also forms a **symptom**, or a group of general psychoneurotic symptoms” (1970, p. 40).
- Intense overexcitability, especially emotional, may magnify life’s traumas and **suicide** is a major concern.

Overexcitability #3.

- “The prefix **over** attached to ‘excitability’ serves to indicate that the reactions of excitation are over and above average in intensity, duration and frequency” (1996, p. 7).
- OE affects how a person sees reality: “One who manifests several forms of overexcitability, sees reality in a different, stronger and more multisided manner” (1972, p. 7).
- Dąbrowski called OE “a tragic gift”:
 - As both the highs and lows of life are intensified.
 - Because the world is not yet ready for people who feel at such deep levels.

Overexcitability #4.

- “Because the sensitivity [excitability] is related to all essential groups of receptors of stimuli of the internal and external worlds it widens and enhances the field of consciousness” (1972, p. 66).
- “Individuals with enhanced emotional, imaginal and intellectual excitability channel it into forms most appropriate for them” (1972, p. 66).
- The “big 3”: “Emotional (affective), imaginal and intellectual overexcitability are the richer forms. If they appear together they give rich possibilities of development and creativity” (1972, p. 7).

Overexcitability #5.

- “A person manifesting an enhanced psychic excitability in general, and an enhanced emotional, intellectual and imaginal excitability in particular, is endowed with a greater power of penetration into both the external and the inner world” (1972, p. 65).
- “. . . These couplings determine a closely woven activity of different forms of enhanced excitability, especially emotional, imaginal and intellectual; they also determine how to make use of the positive aspects of sensual and psychomotor overexcitability by subordinating them to the other three higher forms of overexcitability” (1972, p. 66).

Overexcitability #6.

- Dąbrowski linked overexcitability with disintegration:
 - [First] “Hyperexcitability also provokes inner conflicts as well as the means by which these conflicts can be overcome” (1970, p. 38).
 - Second, hyperexcitability precipitates psychoneurotic processes.
 - Third, conflicts and psychoneurotic processes become the dominant factors in accelerated development.
- “It is mainly mental hyperexcitability through which the search for something new, something different, more complex and more authentic can be accomplished” (1973, p. 15).

Overexcitability #7.

- Overexcitability helps to differentiate higher from lower experiences and facilitates a multilevel view:
 - “The reality of the external and of the inner world is conceived in all its multiple aspects. High overexcitability contributes to establishing multilevelness” (1996, p. 74).
- Individuals will usually display a characteristic response type – one of the five forms will be dominant, and one will direct one’s OE accordingly: “For instance, a person with prevailing emotional overexcitability will always consider the emotional tone and emotional implications of intellectual questions” (1996, p. 7).

Overexcitability #8.

- “Individuals with enhanced emotional, imaginal and intellectual excitability channel it into forms most appropriate for them” (1972, p. 66).
- “Nervous children, who have increased psychomotor, emotional, imaginative, and sensual or mental psychic excitability and who show strength and perseveration of reactions incommensurate to their stimuli, reveal patterns of disintegration” (1964, p. 98).
- “Excessive excitability is, among others, a sign that one’s adaptability to the environment is disturbed. These disintegration processes are based on various forms of increased psychic excitability, namely on psychomotor, imaginative, affectional, sensual, and mental hyperexcitability.” (1967, p. 61).

96 Neuroscience Support for Overexcitability #1.

- It is beyond the scope of this introduction to fully explore this complex topic (see Tillier 2018).
- In the individual neuron, there are both intrinsic levels of excitability and an ongoing modulation of excitability. These levels are controlled by both genetics – different individuals have slightly different genetics – and, as well, by epigenetics – one’s life experience will modify both the architecture and functional expression of one’s neurons and subsequently adjust neuronal excitability (Armstrong, 2014).
- As neurons operate in microcircuits and as part of larger networks, neuronal control of the balance of excitability and inhibition is a critical factor.

97 Neuroscience Support for Overexcitability #2.

- Many systems require strict homeostatic control (e.g. blood pressure, temperature and respiration). Other systems must be plastic and respond to rapid change (e.g. to remember and learn).
- Genes that control voltage-gated ion channels and calcium transport are consistently found in psychiatric GWAS (Ament et al., 2015). These genes control cellular electrical excitability and calcium homeostasis in neurons (Smoller, 2013). “Alteration in the ability of a single neuron to integrate the inputs and scale its excitability may constitute a fundamental mechanistic contributor to mental disease, alongside with the previously proposed deficits in synaptic communication and network behaviour” (Mäki-Marttunen et al. 2016, p. 1).

98 **Neuroscience Support for Overexcitability #3.**

- The proof of concept for the neurophysiological mechanisms and genetic (and epigenetic) control of neuronal excitability have now been established (e.g., Gullledge & Bravo, 2016; Mäki-Marttunen et al., 2016; Meadows et al., 2016; Rannals et al., 2016; Remme & Wadman, 2012).
- Experience alters the architecture and functional expression of individual neurons and dynamically modifies levels of brain/network variability, flexibility and connectivity (Zhang et al., 2016). . . . These changes impact neuronal excitability (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Meadows et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2016).

99 **Neuroscience Support for Overexcitability #4.**

- Summary: Contemporary research generally supports Dąbrowski's approach to overexcitabilities and presents several plausible explanations to account for a hypothesized continuum of levels of excitability occurring between individuals: excitability varies in the population, with “average” excitability as the norm and “overexcitable” individuals as the exception. The control of excitability largely occurs within the individual neuron – each neuron monitors its own firing and can modify its rate of firing, so as to maintain overall network stability. Neurons show intrinsic levels of excitability and ongoing modulation of excitability.
- For key sources see master references:
<http://www.positivedisintegration.com/ref.pdf>

Three Factors of Development #1.

- Dąbrowski: genetic features are the foundation of both the lower instincts and of the higher features of developmental potential, including the basis of several emergent aspects that eventually eclipse their genetic roots. Dąbrowski described these features as 3 “factors” that influence behavior and development.
- First Factor: the expression of basic genetic instincts.
 - Most basic: primal biological survival instincts.
 - Primitive, reflexive instincts and reactions.
 - Also contain the roots of developmental potential.
 - Today, we see this expressed in our “dog-eat-dog” mentality and social obsession on material success.
 - Reflected in egocentrism: Focus on self-satisfaction, feeling good, regardless of costs to others.

Three Factors of Development #2.

- First Factor – “hereditary, innate constitutional elements”
 - “May be more general or more specific, more positive or more negative” (1970, p. 33).
- First Factor contains both lower and higher elements.
- “General excitability, nuclei of the inner psychic milieu, general interests and aptitudes are examples of general and positive potentials. Specific forms of hyperexcitability such as emotional, imaginal or sensual hyperexcitability, as well as specific interests or aptitudes, such as musical, choreographic or mathematical aptitudes, constitute specific and positive potentials” (1970, pp. 33-34).

Three Factors of Development #3.

- Second Factor: “the influences of the external environment, mainly family and social milieu” (1970, p. 72).
 - Most people incorporate and follow social values, rules and roles; learned through parenting and education.
 - Moral authority and criteria for good behavior are derived from external (social) values (heteronomy).
 - Most people live life under the day-to-day influence of second factor, for example: Kohlberg’s conventional level of moral reasoning.
 - Dąbrowski rejected unreflective conformity and saw people who function primarily under social influence as “mentally unhealthy.”

Three Factors of Development #4.

- Most people become socialized and conform without thinking deeply about life – without comparing how things are versus how things could be or ought to be.
- Developmental potential and the environment:
 - “If the developmental potential is distinctly positive or negative, the influence of the environment is less important. If the developmental potential does not exhibit any distinct quality, the influence of the environment is important and it may go in either direction. If the developmental potential is weak or difficult to specify, the influence of the environment may prove decisive, positively or negatively” (1970, p. 34).

Three Factors of Development #5.

- Dąbrowski discussed Plato's allegory of the cave as an illustration.
 - We live in a cave, facing a blank wall. Shadows are projected on the wall by unseen puppeteers (education and politics). We sit passively, mistakenly accepting these shadows as reality: second factor. If a person can break free and reach the exit leading out of the cave and up, into the sun, he or she can wake up and start to think independently: third factor. For Plato, this person can become a philosopher and discover real knowledge [Truth].

Three Factors of Development #6.

- The third factor arises from genetic roots but later “emerges” and becomes an autonomous dynamism:
 - Third factor becomes an emergent force, eventually expressing our sense of who we ought to be and controlling the direction of our development – it transcends its genetic roots.
 - As third factor develops, it compels us to make choices that express our authentic self: to choose what is “more me” and to reject what is “less me.”
 - More than just “will” or “will power” – the third factor is the totality of our unique autonomous features and forces.

Three Factors of Development #7.

- Third Factor: “the autonomous factor of development.”
 - “The dynamism of conscious choice (valuation) by which one affirms or rejects certain qualities in oneself and in one’s environment” (1972, p. 306).
 - “A dynamism of conscious choice by which one sets apart both in oneself and in one’s environment those elements which are positive, and therefore considered higher, from those which are negative, and therefore considered lower. By this process a person denies and rejects inferior demands of the internal as well as of the external milieu, and accepts, affirms and selects positive elements in either milieu” (1996, pp. 38-39).

The Third Factor #1.

- The third factor: “The third factor is independent from and selective with regard to heredity (the first factor), and environment (the second factor). Its selective role consists in accepting and fostering or rejecting and restraining qualities, interests and desires, which one finds either in one’s hereditary endowment or in one’s social environment. Thus the third factor being a dynamism of conscious choice is a dynamism of valuation. The third factor has a fundamental role in education-of-oneself, and in autopsychotherapy. Its presence and operation is essential in the development toward autonomy and authenticity. It arises and grows as a resultant of both positive hereditary endowment (especially the ability for inner psychic transformation) and positive environmental influences” (1970, pp. 178-179).

The Third Factor #2.

- “The principal periods during which the third agent appears distinctly are the ages of puberty and maturation” (1964, p. 56).
- “During the period of puberty, young people become aware of the sense of life and discover a need to develop personal goals and to find the tools for realizing them. The emergence of these problems and the philosophizing on them, with the participation of an intense emotional component, are characteristic features of a strong instinct of development and of the individual’s rise to a higher evolutionary level” (1964, p. 56).

The Third Factor #3.

- Dąbrowski said the usual route of maturation leads to a “premature” integration of mental structures based on “the desire to gain a position, to become distinguished, to possess property, and to establish a family” – “the more the integration of the mental structure grows, the more the influence of the third agent weakens” (1964, p. 57).
- “The third agent persists – indeed, it only develops – in individuals who manifest an increased mental excitability and have at least mild forms of psychoneuroses” (1964, p. 57).

The Third Factor #4.

- In ideal, advanced development, the maturational period is “protracted” and “is clearly accompanied by a strong instinct of development, great creative capacities, a tendency to reach for perfection, and the appearance and development of self-consciousness, self-affirmation, and self-education” (1964, p. 57).
- “Because of the third factor the individual becomes aware of what is essential and lasting and what is inferior, temporary, and accidental both in his own structure and conduct and in his exterior environment. He endeavors to cooperate with those forces on which the third factor places a high value and to eliminate those tendencies and concrete acts which the third factor devalues” (1964, p. 53).

The Third Factor #5.

- “All such autonomous factors, taken together, form the strongest group of causal dynamisms in the development of man. They denote the transition from that which is primitive, instinctive, automatic to that which is deliberate, creative and conscious, from that which is primitively integrated to that which manifests multilevel disintegration . . . from that which ‘is’ to that which ‘ought to be’ . . . The autonomous factors form the strongest dynamisms of transition from emotions of a low level to emotions of a high level” (1970, p. 35).

112 The Third Factor Creates a Dilemma #1.

- Dąbrowski saw his approach creates a dilemma:
 - Where do autonomous forces come from?
 - “It is not easy to strictly define the origin of the third factor, because, in the last [traditional] analysis, it must stem either from the hereditary endowment or from the environment” (1973, p. 78).
 - “We can only suppose that the autonomous factors derive from hereditary developmental potential and from positive environmental conditions; they are shaped by influences from both. However, the autonomous forces do not derive exclusively from hereditary and environment, but are also determined by the conscious development of the individual himself” (1970, p. 34).

113 The Third Factor Creates a Dilemma #2.

- As third factor grows and development advances, the forces of development become autonomous:
 - “The appearance and growth of the third agent is to some degree dependent on the inherited abilities and on environmental experiences, but as it develops it achieves an independence from these factors and through conscious differentiation and self-definition takes its own position in determining the course of development of personality” (1964, p. 54).
 - “According to the [TPD], the third factor arises in the course of an increasingly conscious, self-determined, autonomous and authentic development” (1973, p. 78).

114 The Third Factor Creates a Dilemma #3.

- “The genesis of the third factor should be associated with the very development with which it is combined in the self-consciousness of the individual in the process of becoming more myself” i.e., it is combined with the vertical differentiation of mental functions (1973, p. 78).
- “The third factor is a dynamism active at the stage of organized multilevel disintegration. Its activity is autonomous in relation to the first factor (hereditary) and the second (environment)” (1973, p. 80).
- “This approach is close to some of the ideas of Henri Bergson (1859-1941) who maintained that more can be found in the effects than in the causes” (1973, p. 78).

- 1.8 Key Constructs.

Psychoneurosis #1.

- Definition: “those processes, syndromes and functions which express inner and external conflicts, and positive maladjustment of an individual in the process of accelerated development” (1973, p. 151).
- Dąbrowski saw a positive role for psychoneuroses in advanced development:
 - “Connected with the tension arising from strong developmental conflicts” (1973, p. 149).
 - “contain(s) elements of man’s authentic humanization” (1973, p. 152).
 - Dąbrowski’s approach is almost unique: at odds with the traditional views of Freud, Maslow, and most others.

Psychoneurosis #2.

- Psychoneuroses is a challenging construct in TPD, the term or its derivatives appear some 1560 times.
- “The psychoneurotic may have conflicts in relation to his external environment, but usually his conflicts are internal ones. Unlike the psychopath, who inflicts suffering on other people and causes external conflicts, the psychoneurotic himself usually suffers and struggles with conflicts in relation to himself” (1964, pp. 74-75).
- “Psychoneurotic children clearly demonstrate the large field of disintegration and the great variability of its symptoms” (1964, p. 99).
- The different psychoneuroses form an “inter-neurotic” hierarchy. (see 1972, pp. 109-110).

Psychoneurosis #3.

- “the numerous forms of neuroses and psychoneuroses constitute indispensable developmental processes, then – extending the thus far accepted meaning of the term psychotherapy and treating it as a method of education and self-education in difficult developmental periods, in conditions of great tensions and conflicts in the external environment and in the internal environment” (1967, p. 188).
- “according to our theory we don’t deal here with a psychoneurosis as an illness, but rather with the symptoms of the process of positive disintegration in its multilevel phase,” (1967, p. 195).

Psychoneurosis #4.

- Psychoneuroses “are the protection against serious mental disorders – against psychoses” (1973, p. 162).
- “Emotional and psychomotor hyperexcitability and many psychoneuroses are positively correlated with great mental resources, personality development, and creativity” (1964, p. 19).
- Dąbrowski said don’t try to “help” psychoneurotics, rather, learn from them, appreciate their uniqueness, their creativity, their values, their sensitivity:
 - See Dąbrowski’s poem, “Be Greeted Psychoneurotics” (1972).
<http://www.positivedisintegration.com/greet.pdf>

Adjustment: Four Types #1.

- 1). **Negative maladjustment** – antisocial, selfish ego dominates behavior that flaunts social mores:
 - Expression of primitive first factor: **criminals**.
 - Unethical **CEOs** some **politicians** (see themselves above law, manipulate laws and others).
 - Level 1(a), primary integration.
- 2). **Negative adjustment** – “ordinary” socialization:
 - “Robotic” and uncritical adjustment to “what is.”
 - **Conformity** to prevailing social norms and values.
 - Level 1(b), primary integration: second factor.
 - Antisocial and lower impulses are repressed so we can “fit in” (but autonomy is also repressed).
 - Adjustment to a “sick” society is to also be sick.

Adjustment: Four Types #2.

- 3). **Positive maladjustment** – **rejection** of what is, in favor of what ought to be:
 - Creates crises, psychoneuroses, and disintegrations.
 - Initial expression of third factor (autonomy).
 - Pits one against social norms and mores – often mislabeled as “ordinary” antisocial maladjustment.
- 4). **Positive adjustment** – **adjustment** to a sense of what ought to be: to one’s personality ideal.
 - Expression of highest personal values.
 - Seen at Level V – secondary integration.
 - Carefully evaluated and consciously chosen values.
 - Ideal society: everyone is operating at this level.

Adjustment and the Factors.

- **Negative maladjustment:** Expression of First Factor.
- **Negative adjustment:** Expression of Second Factor.
 - The status quo: society is currently “primitive and confused” (1970, p. 118).
 - “The individual who is always adjusted is one who does not develop himself” (1970, p. 58).
- **Positive maladjustment:** **Initial** expression of Third Factor (autonomy).
- **Positive adjustment:** Full expression of the Third Factor.
 - “Positive adjustment may be called adjustment to ‘what ought to be.’ Such adjustment is a result of the operation of the developmental instinct” (1970, p. 162).

Dynamisms in TPD #1.

- “Biological or mental force controlling behavior and its development. Instincts, drives, and intellectual processes combined with emotions are dynamisms” (1972, p. 294).
- Linked to emotion – from the Latin “*emovere*” – move through or out – to motivate movement.
- Psychoanalysis is a **psychodynamic** approach. It refers to the underlying forces that move matter or mind toward activity or progress.
- Dąbrowski used “dynamism” and “instinct” interchangeably: his descriptions of instincts parallel and supplement the dynamisms.

Dynamisms in TPD #2.

- Dynamisms play a critical role in development and form a major part of the theory.
- Initially act as vague motivators of growth but later, develop and emerge into processes that actively shape and guide development.
- Dąbrowski described a hierarchy of dynamisms, some 20+ in total, reflecting the levels of development.
- The ultimate growth dynamisms are the developmental instinct, the creative instinct, and the instinct of self-perfection.

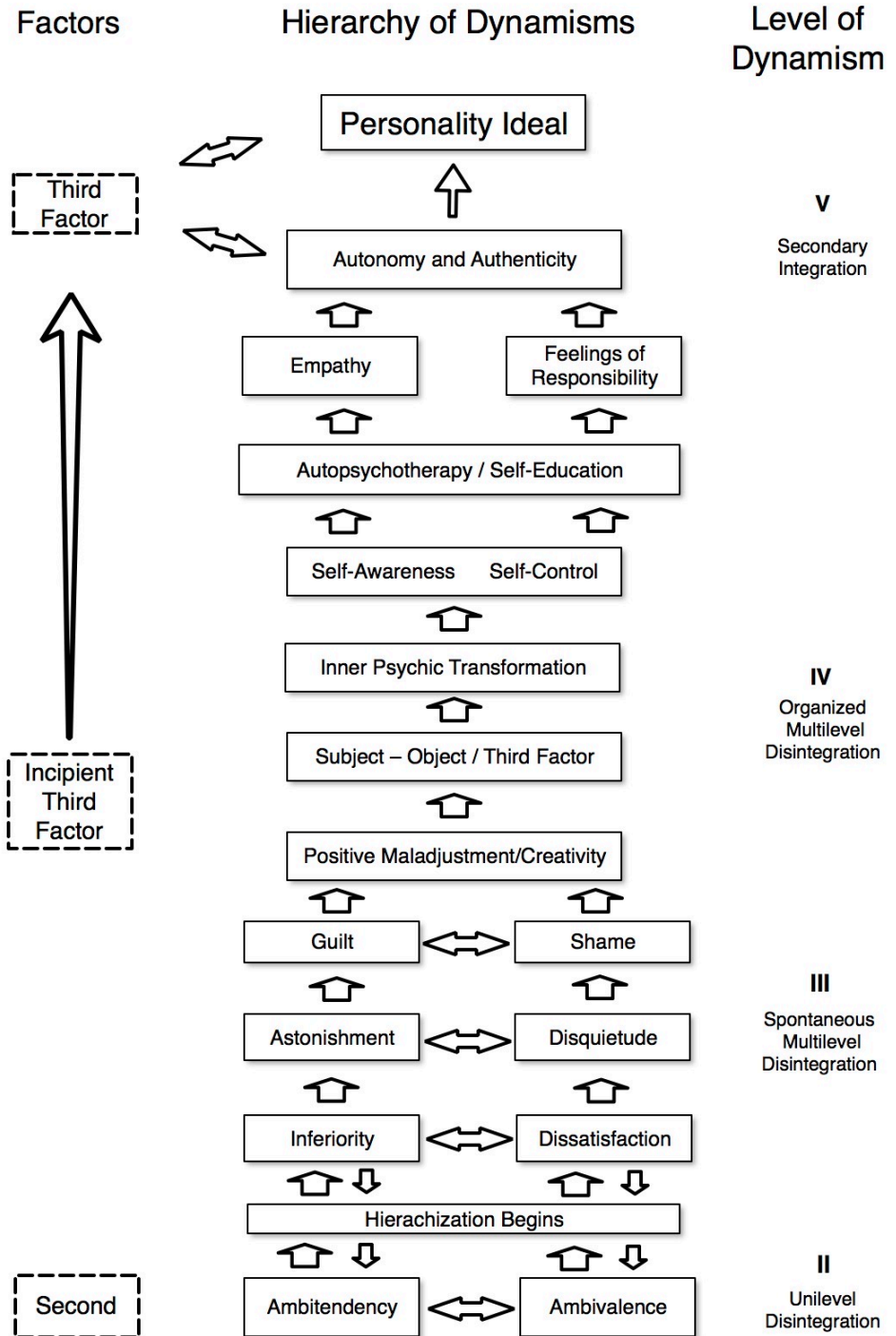
Dynamisms in TPD #3.

- 1. Disintegrative dynamisms: anxiety over oneself, dissatisfaction with oneself, feelings of shame and guilt, and the feeling of inferiority in relation to oneself.
- 2. Dynamisms consciously organizing the disintegrative process: the “subject-object in oneself,” and the third factor as a dynamism.
- 3. Dynamisms of secondary integration: the personality ideal, and the disposing and directing center at a higher level. (1967, p. 157).
- “The dynamisms that have their source in the structure of the personality ideal play the fundamental role in the process of disintegration in the development of personality” (1967, p. 201).

Dynamisms in TPD #4.

- Unilevel: Ambivalence, Ambitendency, 1st/ 2nd Factor.
- Spontaneous multilevel dynamisms: Astonishment with oneself and one's environment, Disquietude with oneself, Dissatisfaction with oneself, Feelings of inferiority toward oneself, Feelings of shame and guilt, Positive maladjustment, and Hierarchization.
- Organized multilevel dynamisms: The Third Factor, Self-awareness and self-control, Self-Education, Autopsychotherapy, Inner psychic transformation, Subject-object in oneself, Empathy and identification with oneself and with others, Autonomy, Authenticism, Personality Ideal.

- Tillier's Chart of the Hierarchy of Dynamisms



Personality Ideal #1.

- Used a positive definition of mental health (Jahoda), characterized by development and uniqueness.
- This was not popular in personality theory. Maslow said aspiring for ideals just creates opportunities for failure and guilt. Gordon Allport said “a normal personality is one whose conduct conforms to an authoritative standard and an abnormal personality is one whose conduct does not do so” (Allport, 1969, p. 1).
- Dąbrowski said mental health should not be defined by the presence or absence of symptoms: definitions must look at people as they *ought to be*, by their potentials; by desirable, developmental qualities, by their ability to become an authentic human being.

Personality Ideal #2.

- Personality ideal: “An individual standard against which one evaluates one’s actual personality structure. Personality ideal is shaped autonomously and authentically, often in conflict and struggle with the prevalent ideals of society” (1970, p. 175).
- “The tendency to adjust to the ideal of personality is a form of tendency to adjust to what ought to be and refusal to adjust to lower level emotions and urges” (1970, p. 175).
- “Unfaithfulness to the ideal of personality” may cause “shock” and inferiority toward oneself (1970, p. 169).
- The “experiential awareness of one’s personality ideal” is a key characteristic of personality (1970, p. 174).

Personality Ideal #3.

- “Concomitant with an increase in awareness and clearness in visualization of the personality ideal, an individual is increasingly conscious of his distance from it” (1972, pp. 158-159).
- “The processes of self-education, autopsychotherapy, and inner psychic transformation; the dynamisms of empathy, autonomy, and authenticity; and the disposing and directing center on a high level are structures and functions nearest to the ideal of personality” (1973, p. 100).
- “The ideal of personality is the model of the development of personality; an intuitive, synthetic goal of the development of a human individual; and an aim of his planned multilevel developmental efforts” (1973, p. 100).

Personality Ideal – Autonomy #4.

- “Autonomy expresses the consciously chosen attitude, which, on the one hand, becomes more and more independent from its own lower traits and from nondevelopmental, harmful influences of the environment and, on the other hand, becomes increasingly coordinated with and dependent on a new consciously developed hierarchy of values and the ideal of personality” (1973, p. 90).
- “the expression of the developmental process from lower to higher levels, from that which ‘is’ to that which ‘ought to be’ The result . . . is a consciousness of being independent in thinking, experiencing and behaving” (1973, p. 89).
- “the gradual acquisition of independence from the lower levels of internal and external reality” (1973, p. 89).

Personality Ideal – Authenticity #5.

- Authenticity: “A human individual is authentic, if he has developed an autonomous attitude toward himself, his environment and his ideal of personality; if he has achieved a high level of synthetic inner psychic transformation, consciousness, self-consciousness, empathy, hierarchization and a strong feeling of his essentialist existence” (1973, p. 94).
- “All tendencies to autonomy, authenticity, and self-determination, to the formation of a hierarchy of values and localization of the disposing and directing center on a higher level, express ‘deviations’ from, or rather a climbing, beyond the biological life cycle of man” (1973, p. 133).

Personality #1.

- Personality: “a self-conscious, self-chosen, empirically elaborated, autonomous, authentic, self-confirmed and self-educating unity of basic mental, individual and common qualities” (1973, p. 111).
- “We could associate personality with the concept of a complete human individual who, in regard to the scope and levels of his functions, represents a coherent and harmonious structure of a high degree of insight into himself, into his aims and aspirations (self-awareness)” (1973, p. 108).

Personality #2.

- “The first quality of personality – that is to say, self-awareness – is relatively clear and does not need much comment” (1973, p. 109).
- “Those qualities which were chosen at the time of the ‘birth of personality’ and later, authentically developed as central and most important, do not undergo qualitative changes. They will grow quantitatively and may be supplemented by new qualities” (1973, p. 109).
- “Personality is the force which integrates mental functions on a high level” (1973, p. 108).

Personality #3.

- “The quality of being self-chosen involves the process of development, the repeated acts of choosing one’s personality many times until the moment of the final choice” (1973, p. 109).
- “Those qualities which were chosen at the time of the ‘birth of personality’ and later, authentically developed as central and most important, do not undergo qualitative changes. They will grow quantitatively and may be supplemented by new qualities” (1973, p. 109).
- You become fully aware of the qualities that make you a unique self. Once this inner milieu of qualities is formed, the core does not change (but may be added to). “The ‘essence’ of an individual is formed by the central qualities of his personality” (1973, p. 109).

Personality #4.

- Dąbrowski's definition links personality to advanced development and to ML: personality is achieved through a series of value choices, coalescing only at higher levels of development and multilevelness.
- “The essence of this choice consists in distinguishing what is ‘higher’ and ‘lower,’ what is ‘less myself’ and ‘more myself, what is closer to and what is more distant from personality, what is changeable and what is lasting . . . It is a conscious and self-determined choice . . . At a certain level of choice the individual becomes aware of what is his own ‘essence;’ that is to say, what are his aims and aspirations, his attitudes, his relations with other people” (1973, p. 109).

Personality #5.

- An unusual conclusion: individual personality is not universally, or even commonly, achieved. The average “well socialized” person lacks a unique, individual personality and therefore is not mentally healthy – the “state of primary integration is a state contrary to mental health” (1964, p. 121).
- This construct was so radical, I think it was widely misunderstood or rejected by Dąbrowski’s peers.
- Maslow seemed to support Dąbrowski’s view: “healthy people [self-actualizers] are so different from average ones, not only in degree but in kind as well, that they generate two very different kinds of psychology” (Maslow, 1954, p. 234).

Instinct.

- Instinct: “A fundamental dynamism (force) in animals and men that has a great intensity, a significant degree of compactness and cohesiveness, its own sphere of activity, and its own direction” (1970, p. 170).
- “The creative instinct and the instinct of self-perfection are specifically human. . . . such forces as the sexual instinct appear in animals and man, but both are differentiated into levels.” (1973, p. 11).
- In the instincts, “there exist transforming dynamisms, for which the conflictive experiences and participation of gnostic mechanisms are fundamental factors in the development of man” (1967, p. 51).

Developmental Instinct.

- Developmental instinct: “The whole process of transformation of primitive drives and impulsive functions into more reflective and refined functions occurs under the influence of evolutionary dynamisms which we call the developmental instinct” (1973, p. 22).
 - “The developmental instinct acts against the automatic, limited, and primitive functional patterns of the biological cycle of life” (Dąbrowski, 1970, p. 28).
 - “Source of all mental developmental forces” (1972, p. 293).
 - “Conceives man as a being destined to undergo developmental transformations” (1970, p. 121).

Hierarchy of Instincts.

- At the lowest level are primitive instincts for survival and self-preservation: basic to primary integration.
- (1). The developmental instinct is the driving force of all development.
- (2). The instinct of self development begins to guide multilevel growth leading to the more deliberate and volitional expressions of autonomy moved by
- (3) the instinct of creativity.
- (4). At the highest level, the instinct of self-perfection merges with the dynamism of personality ideal to create the final synthesis of personality.

Self-education #1.

- Education of oneself; self-education; auto-education.
- “Without the feeling of inferiority toward oneself no process of self-education is possible. For self-education there must be a conscious personality ideal and a desire to ascend to this ideal” (1964, p. 49).
- “Self-education leads to the emotional experience of dualism in oneself, that is, an attitude of ‘object-subject.’ The attitude expresses the relationship between what is educated and what educates” (1964, p. 49).
- “Self-education does not occur without the presence of inferiority feelings in relation to both the internal and the external environment—especially the former” (1964, p. 51).

Self-education #2.

- “Education-of-oneself and autopsychotherapy. The action of the third factor leads to certain characteristic changes. The, individual becomes less affected by influences from lower levels, he begins to feel the need to direct his own development: but more, he becomes conscious of being able to direct his own progress towards an integrated personality. Thus the third factor generates the dynamism of education of-oneself” (1970, p. 75).
- “Education-of-oneself requires a significant degree of authenticity and a stronger than ever reference to the personality ideal. It is a dynamism that makes one take his fate in his own hands” (1970, p. 75).

Self-education #3.

- “Self-education is the process of working out the personality in one’s inner self. Self-education begins with positive disintegration and the appearance of the third agent. Self-determination then starts to replace heterodetermination little by little” (1964, p. 49).
- The basic condition is a high level of self-awareness, the ability to recognize the state of one’s internal environment. This contributes to the development of self-control and self-approval – further elements in the process of self-education. Self-education also assumes the presence of a clear and dynamic personality ideal. (see Dąbrowski, 1964, p. 49).

Self-education #4.

- “Self-education is the highest possible process of a psychological and moral character” (1967, p. 41).
- “The process of self-education consists in admitting to consciousness all that may stimulate and educate” (1967, p. 42).
- “The daily routine of self-education consists in the realization of particular educational aims, stemming from one’s personality ideal” (1967, p. 43).
- “The fundamental method for the development of personality is self-education” (1967, p. 146).

Autopsychotherapy #1.

- “Autopsychotherapy is the process of education-of-oneself under conditions of increased stress, as in developmental crises, in critical moments of life, in neuroses and psychoneuroses. Autopsychotherapy is an indispensable component of the dynamism education-of-oneself” (1970, p. 76).
- “The dynamism of autopsychotherapy controls and transforms mental disturbances. The disturbances are then not as debilitating as analogous symptoms at lower stages of development since their more pernicious effects are counteracted at this level by higher protective and developmental dynamisms” (1970, p. 100).

Autopsychotherapy #2.

- Definition: “Autopsychotherapy. Psychotherapy, preventive measures, or changes in living conditions consciously applied to oneself in order to control possible mental disequilibrium.” (1972, p. 292).
- “It is an off-shoot of education-of-oneself operating at the borderline of Levels III and IV. As development advances through spontaneous to organized multilevel disintegration, the conflicts, disturbances, depressions, and anxieties are handled consciously by the individual himself.” (1996, p. 40).

Inner Psychic Milieu (IPM) #1.

- Inner psychic milieu (IPM): “the totality of mental dynamisms in a distinct or hierarchical setup” (1973, p. 116).
 - “A complex of mental dynamisms characteristic for a given individual” (1970, p. 62).
 - “At a primitive stage of mental development or in psychopathy, the [IPM] does not exist. It arises and is noticeable only at the stage of unilevel disintegration, when a certain sensitiveness appears” (1973, p. 114).
- “[the] multilevel inner psychic milieu [which] is the basis for a hierarchization of values, for self-consciousness and self-control” (1973, p. 137).

Inner Psychic Milieu (IPM) #2.

- “Inner psychic milieu is a dynamic mental structure which appears significantly only at advanced stages of mental development, basically at the time of multilevel disintegration” (1970, p. 24).
- Developmental dynamisms are linked to the IPM:
 - the third factor,
 - subject-object in oneself,
 - self-awareness,
 - self-control,
 - empathy,
 - autonomy,
 - authenticity and
 - autopsychotherapy

- 1.9 Emotion and Values in Development.

Emotion and Values in Development #1.

- The theory distinguishes various levels of development of “emotional and instinctive functions.” The level of these functions reflects one’s values and one’s general level of development. Dąbrowski called these “levels of emotional development analogous to the levels of intellectual development” (1970, p. 19).
- Dąbrowski (1996) could not accept that psychology had so embraced the study of cognitive development and so eschewed the study of emotional development.
- For Dąbrowski, “a general theory of human development is not possible if it does not include emotional factors” (1996, p. 6).

151 Emotion and Values in Development #2.

- In constructing his general theory of development, Dąbrowski included traditional cognitive development and added a new role for emotional factors, where “emotional factors are not considered merely as unruly subordinates of reason but can acquire the dominant role of shapers of development” (1996, p. 6).
- Traditional theories of development rely on **ontogeny** – the idea that development automatically unfolds according to some pre-programmed biological sequence of events: Each subsequent step unfolding on the foundation of, and predicated upon, the features of the previous stage. E.g.: the stages from the time of fertilization of the egg to the adult form.

Emotion and Values in Development #3.

- Dąbrowski's observations of emotion lead him to conclude that emotion does not conform to ontological development (ontogenesis), rather, it is determined by, and emerges from, "other" conditions and factors.
- A key implication is that emotional development may not match cognitive development – as cognitive growth follows ontogenesis, and may achieve advanced levels, emotional functions may or may not follow.
- This lopsided situation was referred to by Dąbrowski as **one-sided development** and created a perilous situation: where cognition is allowed to act as an instrument to first and second factor influences without the benefit of emotional and moral guidance or constraints.

Emotion and ML in Development #1.

- Dąbrowski said that making multilevelness a central tenet of his approach was the key to being able to describe and understand the development of different aspects of human behavior and how they interact.
- A ML view of emotions is a critical tool in TPD analysis.
- To understand a given behavior, emotion or value requires a multilevel examination: Each psychological function and behaviour will be expressed differently and have different meanings at each level of development. Only when we see this can we understand human behaviours in the context of a developmental and vertical perspective.

Emotion and ML in Development #2.

- “To each level of mental development, there is a corresponding level of value experience. Mental development of man and the development of a hierarchy of values are, in fact, two names for the same process. One cannot separate the two” (1970, p. 98).
- “The sense of values provides a standard of measure for behavior and gives inner support or disapproval to one’s own actions” (1964, p. 44).
- “Above a certain level of development there is more universal agreement in valuation, i.e. highly developed (eminent) people tend to share the same values” (1970, p. 93).

Emotion and ML in Development #3.

- As an individual develops and moves through the levels, he or she experiences new views of reality, new challenges, develops new values and forms new interpretations of both internal and external reality.
- Development must involve the experience of multilevelness, and this discovery triggers the emergence and creation of one's personality ideal – the core from which all development will then flow.
- The appreciation and experience of emotions in multilevelness provides a new yardstick to help measure behavior and to guide a person in the formation of values that reflect both one's essence and one's emerging sense of who one ought to be.

Emotion and ML in Development #4.

- The validity of development through the levels can be reliably observed using a multilevel approach.
- Emotional overexcitability is the central component of development because it predisposes the discovery and awareness of higher-level (multilevel) emotions.
- Accentuated by acute emotional awareness, multilevelness brings into focus the contrast between higher and lower phenomena both in the internal and external milieu, and this in turn triggers the vertical conflicts Dąbrowski felt were so important in development – breaking our attachment to lower levels and creating the possibility for higher-level behavior.

Emotion and Values Merge #1.

- Emotions and values eventually merge and play a predominant role in development:
 - “‘Psychoneurotic experiences’ by disturbing the lower levels of values help gradually to enter higher levels of values, i.e., the level of higher emotions. These emotions becoming conscious and ever more strongly experienced begin to direct our behaviour and bring it to a higher level. In this way higher emotions play a dynamic role in our development and give meaning to our life. As new and higher values the higher emotions slowly begin to shape our ‘new harmony’ after the collapse of the primitive harmony of lower level” (1972, p. 3).

Emotion and Values Merge #2.

- As the preceding quote illustrates, we develop as individuals as we consciously rise up to meet the new standards *we feel*, based upon our emerging awareness and experience of the higher levels of emotion, and informed by our unique essence.
- As we continue to allow ourselves to be guided by our experience of higher-level emotions, emotions and values merge – we come to value what we feel is right and we feel right about what we value.
- The hierarchy of values becomes a hierarchy of emotions contributing to, and becoming part of, advanced development.

- 1.10 Applications of the TPD.

General Applications of TPD #1.

- Dąbrowski outlined 9 applications (1970, pp. 116-129):
 - **Psychology** (a new approach based on the TPD).
 - **Psychiatry / Psychotherapy** (contrast between a developmental and a nondevelopmental psychiatric approach, insight and autopsychotherapy).
 - **Education:** All-around education and development of personality which culminates in at least partial transcendence of the biological cycle of life and in at least a partial change of the psychological type. The first educational precept derivable from the theory of positive disintegration is that one should foster authenticity. (Did not mention gifted education).
 - **Philosophy of Man and Ethics** (ML/developmental view).
 - **Philosophy of Science and Humanities** (need to incorporate vertical views).

General Applications of TPD #2.

- **History** (apply TPD to better understand history and historical events).
- **Sociology** (development of cultures and societies mirrors individual growth?).
- **Politics** (move from 'is of practice' to 'ought of long term goals,' The distinction of levels of mental functions seems to be the foundation of any long-range political program of development and social progress.).
- **Pastoral Guidance** (understand deep, universal religious truths. The hierarchy of developmental levels of positive disintegration may be considered an attempt at empirical scaling of the road toward perfection).

Applications: Psychiatry, Therapy #1.

- “The generation of a genuine autonomous, moral awareness in an individual and its gradual growth towards higher levels of emotional maturity and responsibility is the paramount question in psychiatry” (1970, p. 118).
- Symptoms are only meaningful in the context of the individual’s overall potential for development.
- Key idea: to see if a symptom reflects a unilevel or a multilevel disintegration and to adapt our therapeutic techniques accordingly.
- Therapy is based on the premise the individual will conduct auto-psychotherapy and self-education.

Applications: Psychiatry, Therapy #2.

- Therapeutic Goal: For the person to conduct auto-psychotherapy and autonomously manage and shape his or her energy, personality, and development.
- Uses a unique “descriptive-interpretative diagnosis.”
 - “The aim of diagnosis is to grasp all the positive factors, to introduce the patient to them and to make him a co-author of his diagnosis” (1972, p. 252).
 - “The multidimensional, detailed and synthetic diagnosis comprises essentially half of psychotherapy . . . For most patients the discovery of their originality, creativity, symptoms of accelerated development and even talents, and the program of development of such functions, very often gives them a clear sense of life” (1972, p. 253).

Applications: Psychiatry, Therapy #3.

- “Medical treatment and psychotherapeutic efforts will be replaced by counselling which would consist mainly in the clarification of the developmental nature of nervous tension and symptoms of disintegration” (1970, p. 119).
- Therapy should start with a “multidimensional diagnosis of the developmental potential of a given individual. Only in this way can one help in the development of personality—not by ‘treatment,’ but by explanation and awareness of the inevitable stages of growth” (1967, p. vii).
- “It is the task of therapy to convince the patient of the developmental potential that is contained in his psychoneurotic processes” (1972, p. viii).

Social Applications #1.

- Social levels can be examined in a developmental and multilevel context:
 - Today, we can see how people who succeed in the “dog-eat-dog” society are rewarded and how sensitive people are treated: this “indicates that the society itself is primitive and confused” (1970, p. 118).
 - Our society is not receptive to sensitive people or psychoneurotics and this creates a tragic aspect of having DP and OE.
 - Alienation from a sick, low level society is an example of positive maladjustment: an indication of healthy individual development.

Social Applications #2.

- The social level may reflect individual development:
 - “The growth of societies may be subject to laws of disintegration comparable to those evident in the process of positive disintegration in individuals. It may be possible to describe and distinguish primitively integrated, monolithic and stagnant societies from those which undergo process of differentiation and developmental conflicts” (1970, p. 126).
 - “The distinction of levels of mental functions seems to be the foundation of any long-range political program of development and social progress” (1970, p. 128).

- 1.11 Applications in Education.

168 Cognition Versus Emotion in Education

- Education is based on cognitive models:
 - Very old tradition – Socrates, Plato and Aristotle:
 - Plato: emotion is disruptive and confusing, impairing learning (cognition must control and rein in emotion).
 - Cognition: reflects “mind” and higher “noble” goals.
 - Emotion: reflects body and lower impulses/desires.
 - View cemented by utility of I.Q. tests and Piaget’s work.
 - Focus on: cognition, memory and rote performance.
 - Psychology and psychiatry also have a cognitive bias.
- Some exceptions have been seen:
 - Waldorf schools based upon Rudolf Steiner’s work.
 - Montessori Method (based on Maria Montessori).

Criticisms of Traditional Education.

- Education creates intelligent “robots”:
 - History shows “Intelligence” alone is not sufficient to ensure healthy decision making and behavior.
- Dąbrowski: Education tends to “train” not educate. Creates a society of conformers and “social achievers” who follow group based mores, not individuals with minds (personalities) of their own.
 - Education is wrongly used to promote political and social values and goals, for example, to promote consumerism and material wealth.
 - Individual achievement is valued over individual character.
- “We are faced with the paradoxical fact that education has become one of the chief obstacles to intelligence and freedom of thought” (Russell, 2000, p. 356).

Goals of “Dąbrowskian” Education.

- Goal: the creation of unique individuals, capable of autonomous thought and self analysis based on an integration of feelings about issues and one’s thoughts about issues (not a rote recital of “the facts” or of prevailing social mores/scripts).
- Self-awareness: Personal hierarchy of values / ideals.
- Global, empathetic and durable attitudes.
- Teach people how to critically evaluate issues and develop autonomy – help individuals to create autonomous values and a unique personality.
- Establishes a new hierarchy where emotion “directs” cognition; intelligence now *serves* higher values.

Dąbrowski, K. (nd). On Authentic Education. Unpublished manuscript.

Dąbrowski's Basic Approach.

- Education must strive to nourish the whole individual, balancing cognitive and emotional aspects.
 - One's emotional life can have a dramatic impact on learning style, learning potential and performance.
- A student's potential must *first* be seen in the context of his or her *overall personality*; *then* within the classroom, family and society. Performance and behavior must also be viewed and evaluated in these contexts.
- “An awareness of the effect of multilevel disintegration on the inner psychic milieu is of basic importance for educators” (1964, p. 23).

TPD and Education.

- Dąbrowski advocated “humanistic education, that is, true human education and not mere training as the methods of an animal trainer might be described” (On Authentic Education, p. 2).
- Emphasized that children are unique:
 - Two avenues to achieve education:
 - 1). General education designed to enhance common traits that all kids share,
 - 2). Specialized education focused on the unique traits of each child.
- “Authentic education is designed to encourage the child to transgress mediocre statistical qualities and to develop his own hierarchy of values and aims which he is then taught to realize” (On Authentic Education, pp. 33-34).

Implications for All Students.

- Students need to be individually supported and nurtured on both emotional and cognitive dimensions.
- When a Dąbrowskian diagnosis supports a positive interpretation, “symptoms” should be accepted:
 - OE should be understood and supported where possible.
 - Crises should be expected and framed in a developmental context when appropriate.
 - Awareness of self-harm and suicidal potential must be paramount.
 - The rich tradition of ML and other OE individuals can be emphasized to reduce feelings of alienation.
- “A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another” (Mill, 63).

- 1.12 Applications in Gifted Education.

TPD and the Gifted #1.

- Today's application to the gifted field is largely justified by one study Dąbrowski conducted with children:
 - Reported in Dąbrowski (1967) and again in (1972).
 - Examined 80 children: 30 “intellectually gifted” and 50 from “drama, ballet and plastic art schools” (1967, p. 251).
- Found “every child” showed “hyperexcitability,” various psychoneurotic symptoms and frequent conflicts with the environment.
- “The development of personality with gifted children and young people usually passes through the process of positive disintegration” (1967, p. 261).
 - This hypothesis has not yet been tested.

TPD and the Gifted #2.

- In the manuscript, *On Authentic Education*, Dąbrowski said: “The nervous and psychoneurotic individual is present in an overwhelming percentage of highly gifted children and youths, artists, writers, etc. [The] tendency to reach beyond the statistical norm and mediocre development presents the privilege and drama of psychoneurotic people” (p. 50).
- “The extremely sensitive child, in contact with conflict in everyday life (with death and injustice), and the child who deeply experiences feelings of inferiority can develop, in spite of his intellectual gifts, anxiety psychoneurosis: be afraid of darkness, loneliness and aggressiveness in others” (p. 59).

TPD and the Gifted #3.

- Dąbrowski's hypotheses: as a group, students identified as gifted will tend to display stronger DP (and OE), increased levels of psychoneuroses, and will be predisposed to experience positive disintegration:
 - Many students should display “symptoms” that may reflect higher potentials:
 - May display unusual sensitivity, frequent crises, anxieties, depression, perfectionism, etc.
 - May express strong positive maladjustment:
 - Strong sense they are different, don't fit in.
 - Have conflicts with social (unilevel) morality.
 - Feel alienated from others, from their peers.
 - Significant potential for self-harm and suicide.

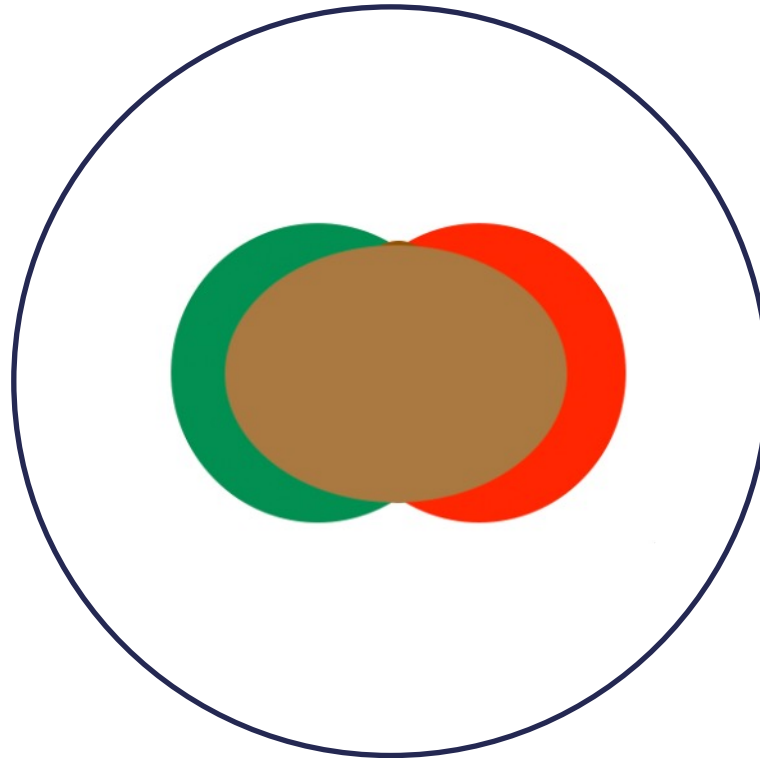
TPD and the Gifted #4.

- Piechowski introduced OE to gifted education (1979).
- Piechowski developed the OEQ test of OE (not a test of full DP) (Lysy & Piechowski, 1983).
- Ackerman (1997) found problems with the OEQ:
- A revised test, the OEQ-II, was developed (Falk, Lind, Miller, Piechowski, & Silverman, 1999).
- OE was popular because parents easily related and research was aided by having the OEQ and OEQ-II.
- Over the past 40+ years, many research projects and papers have addressed OE, most in the context of gifted populations (see Mendaglio & Tillier, 2006).

Ackerman: The Gifted Subgroups #1.

- In an influential study, Ackerman (1997) identified three groups as shown:

24%
Classified as gifted by the school, but little OE was seen.



35%
Classified as nongifted by the school and showed OE. Classified as gifted by Ackerman.

71%
Classified as gifted by the school and who showed OE.

Ackerman: The Gifted Subgroups #2.

- Ackerman (1997, p. 235) concluded the **35% non-gifted with OE** are *actually* gifted but were not identified by conventional testing: “The results indicated that gifted subjects were differentiated from their nongifted peers based on their higher psychomotor, intellectual, and emotional OE scores. While this was an unexpected finding, it clearly illustrates that scores on the OEQ can differentiate between gifted and nongifted students.”
- This report influenced the gifted field and today, many now consider OE and gifted to be synonymous.
- To my knowledge, the important implications of this study and the three discrete groups have not been further replicated, elaborated or researched.

Fundamental Measurement Problems #1.

- Dąbrowski described each overexcitability level by level. Each OE has a different nature and expression on each level of development. Thus far, testing efforts have not taken this into account and have collapsed each OE into one dimension.
- Example, here are the items measuring emotional OE from the OEQII: (Falk et al, 1999, pp.7-8).
 - I feel other people's feelings
 - I worry a lot
 - It makes me sad to see a lonely person in a group
 - I can be so happy that I want to laugh and cry at the same time
 - I have strong feelings of joy, anger, excitement, and despair
 - I am deeply concerned about others
 - My strong emotions moved me to tears
 - I can feel a mixture of different emotions all at once
 - I am an unemotional person
 - I take everything to heart

182 **Fundamental Measurement Problems #2.**

- These items do not seem to reflect the complexity of the constructs of the overexcitabilities as Dąbrowski described them; therefore these tests seem questionable in yielding valid estimates of one's level.
- OE is a discontinuous construct with a non-normal distribution. The OEs are interrelated; these important research issues were ignored by past researchers.
- Most research on OE today is questionable as it ignores the above features and uses analyses that assume a normal distribution, continuous variance and independence between variables.

Research Findings #1.

- Mendaglio & Tillier (2006) reviewed the literature.
- Michael Pyryt (2008) meta-analyzed the research results concluding:
 - 1). Gifted individuals are more likely than those not identified as gifted to show signs of intellectual OE, but based upon the research strategies and testing done to date, the gifted do not consistently demonstrate “the big three,” intellectual, imaginational and emotional OE.

Research Findings #2.

- 2). Pyryt (2008): “it appears that gifted and average ability individuals have similar amounts of emotional overexcitability. This finding would suggest that many gifted individuals have limited developmental potential in the Dąbrowskian sense and are more likely to behave egocentrically rather than altruistically” (p. 177).
- Warne (2011b, p. 688) stated, “It has never been clear what exactly the OEQII measures . . . Further psychometric studies on the instrument should be conducted before the instrument gains widespread acceptance.”

Research Findings #3.

- “Those who use the OEQII or read studies containing data produced by the instrument [should] use caution in interpreting group or individual differences because such score differences are likely partially psychometric in nature and not psychological” (Warne, 2011a, p. 590).
- The OEQII is sound and should “enable the counselors and the teachers to better understand their students’ intelligences” (in contravention of the limitations of the test outlined in its manual). (Al-Onizat, 2013, p. 61).
- The OEQII is difficult to administer and has questionable reliability; further research is needed to develop a more appropriate instrument to measure overexcitabilities (Carman, 2011).

Research Findings #4 – Summary.

- The meta-analysis of the last 20 years of research by Pyryt (2008) calls for caution in concluding that as a group, the gifted disproportionately display overexcitability compared to non-gifted groups.
- More and improved research is needed.
- Many of the problems and misunderstandings of TPD seen today appear to be the result of poor academic standards and questionable assumptions.

Research Findings #5 – Questions.

- Current research focuses on OE but not DP.
- Current testing has questionable validity.
- The following questions remain unanswered:
 - Does OE act as a valid marker for giftedness?
 - Do the gifted disproportionately show other signs of developmental potential, for example, the third factor?
 - Do the gifted disproportionately demonstrate psychoneurosis and positive disintegration?

Research Findings #6 – Questions.

- How do the gifted who display OE differ from those gifted who do not display OE?
- For the 35% of students identified with OE but not classified as gifted: Is their non-gifted classification accurate? If so, what are the educational, counselling, and other implications for them.
- Dąbrowski: we *can* have DP and not be “gifted” although he suggested that above average intelligence (110+) was a necessary but not sufficient condition for advanced development (see Nixon, 2005).

Broader Research Questions #1.

- *Most* authors say that gifted students do not display higher anxiety, depression or suicide compared to those not identified as gifted (Cross, Cassady, & Miller, 2006; Hyatt & Cross, 2009; Neihart 1999, Neihart, Robinson, Reis, & Moon, 2002).
- “What do we know? Intellectually or academically gifted children who are achieving and participate in special educational program for gifted students are at least as well adjusted and are perhaps better adjusted than their nongifted peers. These children do not seem to be any more at-risk for social or emotional problems” (Neihart, 1999, p. 16).
- Contemporary research does not help clarify the psychological differences (if any) of the gifted versus non-gifted and no clear consensus emerges.

Broader Research Questions #2.

- Cross and Cross (2018, p. 72) concluded:
- “[First lesson] Students with gifts and talents are in many ways the same as their average peers, and what little research has compared their suicide ideation has found no statistically significant difference. This indicates that research from the general population can inform our explorations. Exceptional abilities, however, alter the lived experience for these students and, quite possibly, the way they think about that experience and the possibility of suicide, itself. Risk factors may differ when they are experienced in the context of exceptional abilities.
- A second lesson represents areas that seemingly are specific to students who are gifted. For example, the descriptions of overexcitabilities in all of the psychological autopsies are believed by many to be unique among students with gifts and talents. Using Dąbrowski’s theory may afford suicidologists hints as to the more vulnerable among gifted students.”

Broader Research Questions #3.

- The examination of psychological autopsies by Cross and Cross (2018) of gifted students who committed suicide (just quoted) raises serious concerns.
- Given the gravity of the issues around mental health and the gifted, especially self-harm and suicide, the existing literature is disappointing and unhelpful: no clear picture emerges on the issues.

- 1.13 Current and Future Issues.

Controversies Over the Theory #1.

- This review will not examine the veracity of these claims, simply bring them to the readers' attention.
- “Openness to experience is the personality domain or factor that appears equivalent to OEs when comparing conceptual descriptions. This factor is also called openness/intellect by several researchers to adequately describe the subfactors that most closely represent it” (Vuyk, Kerr, & Krieschok, 2016, p. 64).
- “This study provides initial evidence for the strong association among openness facets and OEs and serves as ground to support the shift from OEs to openness to experience” (Vuyk, Kerr, & Krieschok, 2016, p. 66).

Controversies Over the Theory #2.

- “Rost et al. (2014) . . . stated that given empirical results, the OE construct was not useful; it did not serve for giftedness identification, and it did not describe behaviors that could not be explained by other sources. Thus it is a redundant construct. Practice should be based on sound science, but science behind OEs is not sound” . . . (Vuyk, Kerr, & Krieschok, 2016, p. 68).
- “A conceptual change from OEs to openness to experience would reflect the shift from a static and essentialist conception of giftedness to a talent development perspective” (Vuyk, Kerr, & Krieschok, 2016, p. 68).

Controversies Over the Theory #3.

- “Based on the results, openness to experience and OEs seem to represent largely the same construct” (Vuyk, Krieschok, & Kerr, 2016, p. 198).
- “Openness facets and OEs appear to represent the same construct, and thus the giftedness field would benefit from discussing the construct as the personality trait of openness to experience” (Vuyk, Krieschok, & Kerr, 2016, p. 205).
- A reply by Grant (2021, p. 132) stated: “A fair literature review gives equal attention to the flaws and virtues of the TPD and of the FFM”
- “Our current state of knowledge is that OEs are similar to, but not equivalent to, OtE facets” (Grant, 2021, p. 136).

Controversies Over the Theory #4.

- In a strange rebuttal to Grant, Vuyk and Kerr stated: “While we acknowledge that extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence, we are also aware that as female scholars, we often must make bold claims in order to be heard and cited. Our keen awareness of gender and privilege also inform our approach to OEs” (Vuyk & Kerr, 2021, p. 140).
- “OEs were developed by European and European American White men; its research primarily on White or Asian high-socioeconomic (SES) students. The practice of gifted education based on OEs is largely performed by White, middle-class women. Women, people of color, and poor people cannot afford to celebrate their OEs” (Vuyk & Kerr, 2021, p. 140).

Controversies Over the Theory #5.

- Vuyk and Kerr show a striking misunderstanding of TPD when they describe OEs as problems needing treatment — while OEs may present challenges they are seen as the basis of personality growth in TPD.
 - “Calling OEs ‘innate and enduring characteristics’ (Lind, 2011) to be celebrated may seem to discourage intervention, and encourage a bright-sided, laissez-faire attitude that prevents children from getting the treatment they need” (Vuyk & Kerr, 2021, p. 140).
- Mendaglio (2021, p. 10) stated: “I have concluded that, in essence, OE is treated as if it were atheoretical, that it has meaning in and of itself. However, like virtually all of the Dabrowskian constructs, OE is qualitatively different from mainstream psychological constructs, and must be understood and investigated with respect to the theory in which it originated.”

Future Issues #1.

- Are five OE enough?
 - William Hague suggested considering spiritual OE.
- How can we help people to achieve their full DP?
- How can we better understand those in crises?
- How do DP/OE/Bipolar Disorders/ADHD inter-relate?
- What role does the third factor play? Is it related to focus? Motivation? Eventual measures of success?
- The theory is fluid, open to further research and theory building. How can we best balance future theory building and refinement with operationalization (validation, testing, assessment, etc.)?
- Emerging findings in neuroscience should be reviewed for support of Dąbrowski's constructs.

Future Issues #2.

- How can we best disseminate the theory?
 - The theory has many subtleties and ambiguities and is open to different interpretations and understandings.
 - Each reader seems to have a unique emphasis.
- More sophisticated, more sensitive, valid, reliable measurements of OE, DP, and the other constructs of TPD need to be developed.
- The hypotheses that gifted students will show positive disintegration and psychoneurosis still need to be explored and tested.
- Applications to psychotherapy have not yet been developed and the powerful concepts of autopschotherapy and self-education lay fallow.

Future Issues #3.

- Issues concerning the construct of OE and Aron's approach to hypersensitivity (HSP) and Vuyk's claims regarding openness to experience will need to be explored, compared and contrasted.
- Piechowski's concerns need to be satisfactorily addressed while still keeping the integrity of TPD. The ideal resolution: Piechowski publishing his own theory, allowing scholars to properly evaluate the two.
 - See the section in the appendix for issues between Piechowski views and Dąbrowski's.
- Ideally, future refinements to TPD will be guided by sound observation, logic and substantial and relevant research findings.

- 1.14 Conclusion.

Conclusion #1 – Dąbrowski

“Human and social reality appears to be submitted to the law of positive disintegration. If progress is to be achieved, if new and valuable forms of life are to be developed, lower levels of mental functions have to be shaken and destroyed, and a sequence of processes of positive disintegration and secondary integrations are necessary. Consequently, human development has to involve suffering, conflicts, inner struggle” (1970, 16).

Conclusion #2 – Aeschylus.

He shall be found the truly wise.

'tis Zeus alone who shows the perfect way

Of knowledge: He hath ruled,

Men shall learn wisdom, by affliction schooled.

Aeschylus (525 #456 B.C.). Agamemnon.

{ess ka less}

{agg ga num non}

Eliot, C. W. (Ed.). (1909). *Nine Greek dramas*.

The Harvard Classics. Volume 8. New York, NY: Collier. (11).

Conclusion #3 – The Little Prince.



de Saint-Exupéry, A,
(1943). *The Little Prince*.
New York, NY: Harcourt
Brace.

Here, then, is a great mystery. For you who also love the little prince, and for me, nothing in the universe can be the same if somewhere, we do not know where, a sheep that we never saw has – yes or no? – eaten a rose . . . Look up at the sky. Ask yourselves: is it yes or no? Has the sheep eaten the flower? And you will see how everything changes . . . And no grown-up will ever understand that this is a matter of so much importance!