

Traits that go hand in hand with a high IQ	Potential challenges
Fast and complex thinking	<p>The gifted person is often not sufficiently stimulated, leading to boredom and underexertion. It is important to know that underexertion causes the same physiological stress as overexertion.</p>
High, rational-analytical skills	<p>Situations and circumstances may be made overly complex. Illogical statements are not accepted.</p>
Visual learning and thinking style	<p>Gifted people tend to grasp topics in a mosaic style: They jump quickly from one information to the next, making sensible connections in the process. They continue this process until all information is brought into a coherent system. This tendency leads to gifted people often getting very deep into one subject, in a seemingly “obsessive” manner, and they don’t stop and become calm, or lose interest, until all correlations are coherent. This enables the gifted to capture a topic in depth. From the outside, however, this process is difficult to comprehend and can seem chaotic. If a gifted person is lacking inner ways of structuring information, they may be incapable of creating consistency. In this case, symptoms are comparable to those of ADHD.</p>
Intense concentration skills, long attention span, persistence	<p>The gifted person is so absorbed that he no longer reacts to external stimuli and seems absent and dreamy. Again, he could be fixated on a topic.</p>
Tendency for imagination and synesthesia	<p>Due to the extraordinary high level of interconnectedness in the brain, stimuli are linked in a variety of ways and inner images are likely to be created. Many highly gifted people report synesthesia. In synesthesia, the qualities of stimuli merge. For example, numbers are linked with colors or tones. These phenomena are sometimes confused with pathological symptoms, such as delusions or an intense need for an imaginary friend, which leads to the gifted person being pathologized.</p>

Searching for patterns and the ability of abstraction	This can come with phenomena such as compulsiveness, an insistence on being right and rigid principles.
Divergent thinking/ creativity	This may result in the gifted person not being understood, or even rejected, if their ideas are too unusual or extensive.
Very good memory	This can come with impatience and a rejection of routine and can hinder the acquisition of basic skills and learning strategies.
Little need for practice	As a result, some gifted people acquire little or no skills or experience with respect to the processes of learning. As with the rejection of practice and routine, this makes it difficult to acquire basic skills and learning strategies.
High linguistic skills	The gifted person may appear like a know-it-all and is able to assert himself very well and dominate conversations. He thus makes himself unpopular and is avoided. Additionally, the gifted person is often not understood by peers, or understands simple statements in a much more comprehensive way, which leads to misunderstandings. A gifted person's humor and jokes are often very differentiated and therefore misunderstood as well, which leaves the gifted person feeling like an outsider.
Critical thinking	This can lead to overly frequent questioning, which is uncomfortable or even exposing for others. Some gifted people "take away the magic" of well-intended situations or interactions, criticize frequently and are often unsatisfied. This can be frustrating for others. Furthermore, critical thinking may lead to existential questions. These questions might be difficult to answer, even for older people, and can go hand in hand with depressive episodes. Sometimes, very young gifted children encounter these questions and, as a consequence, might develop intensive fears and/or anxieties.
Thirst for knowledge, interest	There is a risk that the gifted person will overtax himself and others.
Intrinsic motivation	Their very own, inherent interest in intellectual understanding can end in perfectionism.

<p>Openness and independence</p>	<p>The thirst for knowledge as well as the fast and logical thinking often exceeds the conventional framework. The gifted person is likely to make independent judgements, little-to uninfluenced by the norm, and is therefore unconventional and non-conformist. This can lead to difficulties with integration.</p>
<p>High need for input</p>	<p>Since stimuli are processed faster, and synapses tend to habituate faster, gifted individuals often have a great "appetite for stimulation" and can only feel relaxed and well with sufficient input. It can be a challenge to find the right dosage in the variety and intensity of stimuli. It can be difficult for interaction partners to sufficiently satisfy this need for stimulation.</p>
<p>High energy level</p>	<p>The high interconnectedness probably affects the activating brain centers as well. Many gifted people show a very high activity level and require little sleep. This may overwhelm interaction partners with a lower activity level.</p>
<p>High sensitivity</p>	<p>Many gifted people report phenomena of high sensitivity. I suspect that the particular, diverse interconnectedness leads to particularities in the processing of stimuli, so that that many stimuli are perceived and processed more intensely. Scientific research is just discovering this phenomenon and I hope there will be a resilient and comprehensive concept soon.</p> <p>For highly sensitive people, the stimulus dosage is a big challenge and partly conflicts with the need for input. Some highly sensitive people are overwhelmed by the stimuli of crowds, public transport and the like. Stimuli other people don't ever, or barely register (e.g. quiet noises, smells, pain, the effect of caffeine) can be perceived as very unpleasant for a highly sensitive person. This often leads to disbelief in others, or misinterpretation and conflict ("The weirdo, he/she is making a fuss...").</p>
<p>Intensive emotionality</p>	<p>In my experience, intense emotionality is often linked to highly sensitive phenomena and may be a part of them. It is likely that the amygdala – the area of the brain responsible</p>

	<p>for emotions – is also more strongly connected. This can result in very intense feelings and difficulties regarding the regulation of emotions. There is also a discrepancy in maturation between cognitive and emotion-associated brain areas at a young age. People often seek counselling for intense tantrums, existential fears, or a very strong sense of compassion that makes it impossible to set boundaries, which can lead to social difficulties.</p>
Strong sense of justice	<p>I suspect a correlation to the intense emotionality and the tendency to look for patterns and to deal with things on an abstract level. Gifted people sometimes find it difficult to approach matters pragmatically and "look the other way sometimes". This pattern also brings with it a risk of social issues.</p>
Feeling of being different	<p>Gifted persons often consciously and subconsciously perceive a disparity between themselves and their surroundings. In many cases this leads to a (for them) inexplicable feeling of being "somehow different". In cases in which this feeling of being different involves other negative feelings, like e.g. the feeling of not fitting in or of not understanding other people or how the world works, it can turn into the so-called "Wrong Planet Syndrome": they feel as if they lived on the wrong (or an alien) planet.</p> <p>More often than not, the feeling of being different goes hand in hand with a feeling of loneliness and/or helplessness, and psychological strain.</p>
<p>Furthermore, there are various indicators of physiological correlates. This is a selection:</p>	
Physical traits	<p>Studies indicate physiological differences such as, for example, height, higher body symmetry, near-sightedness, as well as higher life-expectancy (cf. e.g. Jensen, 1998; Brand, 1987; Deary et al. 2008).</p>
Diseases	<p>There are indications of correlations to diseases, e.g. Asperger's, allergies, autoimmune diseases, asthma, speech impediments, ticks... (cf. e.g. Geshwin and Galaburda, 1987; Silvermann, 2002). All these</p>

	diseases originate from an excessive nervous system or particularities of information processing. Gifted individuals are frequently affected themselves and/or have grown up with an affected parent more often than average (50 - 80% of intelligence is inherited).
Autism Spectrum	There are correlations between autism and giftedness. An above-average number of Asperger's patients are gifted and many gifted individuals show mildly pronounced autism phenomena. For example: difficulties regarding stimulus processing (cf. high sensitivity), a strong inclination to logic as well as constraints and deficits in recognizing emotions. More recent research describes autism as a spectrum. Since many phenomena coincide, my hypothesis is that many gifted people are at the beginning of the spectrum, so that some of their difficulties can be explained by minor, non-pathological autistic particularities.
Neuro-physiological differences	Here, for example, delayed cortex reduction (cf. e.g. Shaw 2006), maturation discrepancies between brain areas associated with cognition and emotions (cf. e.g. Geake 2008) and chemical changes at the synapses associated with increased alertness, sensitivity, habituation and information processing (cf. Teuchert-Nood). This also explains phenomena such as emotional regulation difficulties, boredom and ADHD.
Hormonal differences	Research found, among other things, references to an androgynous testosterone level in the prenatal period (cf. Geschwind and Gaburda, 1987). In my practice, I've had several gifted individuals who were asexual, or who were seeking a sex change or had had it done. I have the impression that many highly gifted people have very soft facial features and look much younger than they are. This may also be due to hormonal differences.