

AM I GIFTED?

A GUIDE FOR SELF DISCOVERY



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A Guide for Self Discovery

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Introduction

Much of what you are about to read in *Am I Gifted?* comes from my own life experiences, which have been a long and winding path to self-understanding and acceptance. Other information is provided by the many gifted people I know and experts on this topic.

Like you, I was born blessed with certain naturally occurring gifts of which I wasn't aware or didn't comprehend. I later developed other abilities for which I had the innate capacity at birth.

I grew up never knowing what “normal” for gifted people meant. Neither my family of origin nor society at large helped me make sense of nor embrace my differences, and I ventured in several directions to find the answers I sought.

I attempted to hide my “true” self for far too long, trying to fit in and avoid condemnation. This led to my having low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, addictions, abusive relationships, and body-image issues. Today I know my tribe of belonging will not be found among those with whom I have to try to fit in.

My hurdles and heartaches brought me many valuable lessons, but it took a major commitment, open-mindedness, patience, a strong spiritual connection, supportive people, and a change in my thinking and behavior to finally gain self-recognition, approval, and the inner peace that comes with knowing I am lovable and worthy just as I am.

I have evolved but have not arrived at some holy place, as there are still challenges yet to be faced. This is why I will always consider myself to be “a work in progress.”

In hindsight, I realize the reasons for and blessings of my fascinating but formidable journey. Without those experiences, I

would have suffered less pain. I also would not have grown as a result of my challenges to become such an empathetic and compassionate person, nor would I have attained the knowledge necessary to write Am I Gifted?

These pages are dedicated to you with the faith that you'll come to better understand your natural gifts and unique challenges. And that you'll implement the self-loving solutions offered here.

Love & Light,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stacy". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop on the 'S' and a long tail on the 'y'.

Characteristics of Gifted People

A common misconception is that to be considered a “gifted person,” you must be a prodigy, savant or genius as measured by standard IQ tests.

This is not the case. There are many gifted people with natural talents and advanced cognitive abilities for which there currently exists no labels nor measurement tests.

Typically, the gifted brain has neural connections that are more numerous, more complex, and more active than the average person. The hippocampus, a major area involved in memory, is not as compartmentalized. There is superior activity in the frontal lobe of the fore brain. Several areas of the cortex are more differentiated, which gives gifted people superior access to their alpha brain wave power.

Gifted individuals exhibit higher than average levels of emotional, imaginal, intellectual, sensual, and psychomotor excitability.

The more you use your natural gifts and develop skills that reinforce them, the stronger they become.

Linda Kreger Silverman Ph.D., of the Institute for Advanced Development, offers the following checklist to assist in identifying gifted adults. If you demonstrate at least twelve of these traits, it is likely that you are gifted.

GIFTED ADULTS CHECKLIST

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Sophisticated, global thinking | 9. Desire for moral integrity |
| 2. Conceptual ability | 10. Idealistic |
| 3. Unusual sense of humor | 11. Multi-capable |
| 4. Truth-seeking | 12. Perfectionist |
| 5. Individualistic | 13. High energy |
| 6. Experimental | 14. Skeptical |
| 7. Curious | 15. Strong drive for self-development |
| 8. High sensitivity and intensity | 16. Excellent foresight |

Einstein did not speak until
he was four years old,
and didn't read until he was seven.
His teacher described him as
"mentally slow, unsociable, and
adrift forever in his foolish dreams."
He was expelled from school.

Types of Intelligence

Another way to understand the ways in which you are gifted is to look at the different types of intelligence you and others possess. Being aware of these can be extremely helpful in navigating life successfully. Knowing your unique proclivities empowers you to make choices that are aligned with your innate abilities and capacities. Self-determination and focused intention offer the greatest opportunity for satisfaction and happiness on your personal journey.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ)

Intelligence quotient (IQ) is intended to be a measure of a person's ability to reason, solve puzzles, complete activities, and their short- and long-term memory. An IQ test is supposed to gauge how well someone can use information and logic to answer questions or form conclusions. There are two main components: verbal and non-verbal. The score on an IQ test indicates how far above or below his or her peer group an individual stands in terms of mental ability.

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to manage one's own emotions and understand the emotions of others. There are five key elements to EI: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. People with high EI can identify how they are feeling, what those feelings mean, and how those emotions impact their behavior and, in turn, other people. High EI overlaps with strong interpersonal skills, especially in the areas of conflict management and communication.

Multiple Intelligences (MI)

Multiple intelligences (MI) refers to human beings having eight different kinds of intelligence of equal importance that reflect

different ways of interacting with the world. Everyone possesses them all to some extent, but there is always a dominant, or primary, form. Each intelligence has the potential to be nurtured and strengthened, or ignored and weakened. Similar to fingerprints, no two individuals have them in the same exact configuration.

This theory was developed by Dr. Howard Gardner, a psychologist and professor of neuroscience at Harvard University. I have summarized them here and, in some cases, added my own viewpoint to his descriptions:

Linguistic-Verbal Intelligence: People with high verbal-linguistic intelligence have the capacity to think in words and to use language to express complex meanings. They understand the order and meaning of words and are typically good at reading, writing, telling stories, word memorization, and languages.

Intrapersonal Intelligence: People with high intrapersonal intelligence have the capacity to be self-reflective and introspective, to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and what makes them unique. They are typically able to predict their own emotions, responses, and reactions.

Interpersonal Intelligence: People with high interpersonal intelligence have the capacity to understand and interact effectively with other human beings. They are effective verbal and nonverbal communicators and have sensitivity to moods, temperaments, and motivations. They also possess the ability to empathize easily, entertain multiple perspectives, discern distinctions in people, and cooperate as part of a group. They often enjoy discussion and debate.

Musical Intelligence: People with high musical intelligence have the capacity to discern sounds, rhythms, melodies, tones, pitches, beats, timbres, and meter. They are typically able to sing, play musical instruments, or beat-mix music. They also possess the ability to

recognize, create, reproduce, and reflect on music. There is often an affective connection between music and emotions. Mathematical and musical intelligences may share common thinking processes.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence: People with high logical-mathematical intelligence have the capacity to understand logic, abstractions, reasoning, and numbers. They are typically critical thinkers who can calculate, quantify, consider propositions and hypotheses, and carry out complete mathematical operations. They also possess the ability to perceive relationships and connections, understand the underlying principles of some kind of causal system, and use abstract, symbolic thought, sequential reasoning skills, and inductive and deductive thinking patterns. Logical reasoning is closely linked to fluid and general intelligence.

Visual-Spatial Intelligence: People with high visual-spatial intelligence have the capacity to think in three dimensions or the ability to visualize with the mind's eye. Their core abilities typically include mental imagery, spatial reasoning, image manipulation, graphic and artistic skills, and an active imagination.

Naturalistic Intelligence: People with high naturalistic intelligence have the capacity to easily distinguish patterns in nature and have a sensitivity to and appreciation for them. They may readily be able to make consequential distinctions in the natural world and to use this ability productively. They typically have an affinity for growing things. Their ecological receptiveness is deeply rooted in a sensitive, ethical, and holistic understanding of the world, including the role of humanity within the greater ecosphere.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: People with high bodily-kinesthetic intelligence have the capacity to use a variety of physical skills, a keen sense of timing, and a clear sense of the goal of a

physical action. They typically have the ability to control one's bodily motions, train its responses, and handle objects skillfully.

Based on an awareness of my own intelligences (gifts) and those of countless others, I strongly believe there should be seven additional intelligences added to Gardner's original eight. The names and descriptions I have ascribed to them are:

Empathic Intelligence: People with high empathic intelligence have the capacity to emotionally understand what others feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine themselves in their place. They are highly sensitive, like a human tuning fork, and tend to feel things very deeply. They are typically attentive, empathic listeners, have an innate compassion for all living things, and have a strong desire for or ability to heal pain and suffering.

Intuitive Intelligence: People with high intuitive intelligence have the capacity to perceive more than just the five basic human senses of touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste. They also possess the ability to have knowledge about something instinctively and immediately, without the need for inference, observation, or conscious reasoning. Intuition may manifest as being able to see, hear, feel, or just know information. Everyone is born with this intelligence, but some people naturally possess it to a greater degree.

Humor Intelligence: People with high humor intelligence have the capacity to illicit laughter in others because they instinctively know what is funny. They tend to have more highly developed intellectual and emotional IQs than others and are able to observe, process, react, and respond quickly.

Teaching Intelligence: People with high teaching intelligence have the capacity to explain difficult or complex ideas and concepts in simple and engaging ways. They can hold the attention of others, are often good storytellers, and possess skills in communication, listening,

adaptability, empathy, and patience. Teachers are often an exceptional source of encouragement and inspiration for their students.

Existential Intelligence: People with high existential intelligence have the capacity and sensitivity to ponder and seek answers to deep questions about human existence, their life's purpose, and what happens after death. They value peace, love, wisdom, goodness, truth, and harmony. They are typically highly evolved people who look for meaning beyond the visible physical universe, have an ongoing interest in spiritual and energetic knowledge and practice, and consider their body to be a vessel for the soul.

Visionary Intelligence: People with high visionary intelligence have the capacity to envision future possibilities beyond what is currently evident. They typically have powerful imaginations and clear, distinctive, and specific ideas. They are often able to put together pieces of something that already exists in an entirely new way, so as to create something totally unique and original. Visionaries can be political, religious, environmental, social, technological, or existential in nature.

Interspecies Intelligence: People with high interspecies intelligence have the capacity to understand, interact, cooperate, and communicate with one or more other species. Although most often experienced with pets, this ability can include mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and insects, as well as beings from other dimensions and universal locations. Mutually beneficial exchanges may lead to loving, respectful, and long-lasting bonds. In some cases, those with this intelligence also possess the ability to communicate telepathically through thoughts, feelings, images, or intentions.

Unique Challenges of Gifted People

The exceptional qualities gifted people possess also contribute to their unique challenges as human beings.

Most of us have never been given an adequate explanation about what is "normal for the gifted" or encouraged to be who we really are. So, in order to fit in and avoid disapproval, we learned to hide certain parts of our authentic selves and instead display a facade to the world. We internalized the question, "What's wrong with me?" rather than "What's right with me?"

Our experience has shown that when we dared to display our abilities, loved ones and strangers alike have reacted with disbelief, accusation, unjustified hostility, and even a desire to do physical harm because they are ignorant, jealous, or fearful of a person's gifts.

Feeling like something is inadequate or unsuitable within them often leads gifted people to experience confusion, frustration, sadness, anger, and despair.

These emotions are only compounded by the uneducated, unsympathetic, and disapproving attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of others.

The outcome of receiving repeated negative messages from multiple sources over the course of time usually results in the internalization of those messages. It's no wonder, then, that gifted people often suffer from self-esteem issues.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), which is the "Bible" of the American Psychiatric Association, does not in any way acknowledge or take into consideration the existence of gifted people in their diagnostic criteria.

Very few psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, psychiatric nurse specialists, alcohol and drug counselors, or life coaches have any knowledge about or training in how to best provide counseling or coaching to people with extraordinary abilities.

In addition, gifted people are all too frequently misdiagnosed by the psychiatric profession as having a mental health disorder when none really exists.

The absence of feeling truly understood can render a therapeutic or personal growth experience non-cathartic, non-productive, or devoid of meaningful benefit, leading to feelings of despair and hopelessness.

What's more, a psychiatric misdiagnosis can stigmatize and traumatize a person, leading to feelings ranging from confusion and self-doubt to alienation and anger.

Sadly and ironically, a gifted person may develop adverse mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, self-destructive behaviors, etc. as a direct result of a psychiatric misdiagnosis.

When unnecessary mind-altering pharmaceutical medication is added to the mix, it can both adversely affect that person's gifts as well as her or his affect, personality, and other forms of self-expression.

The good news is “there is a light at the end of the tunnel,” so read on...

Self-Loving Solutions

First and foremost, know that there is nothing wrong with you. Quite to the contrary, you are very, very special, and humanity is lucky to have you in the world!

Do you believe this to be true? I mean, do you really know it throughout the fabric of and down to the very core of your being? If not, be aware that healing may need to take place. If you do believe it, then shine, baby, shine!

You may have found (or will find) that being truly “seen,” connected to, and supported by like-minded others is necessary to feel happy.

Whether or not you realize in this moment how precious you are, it is essential on a personal level for gifted people to actively seek out a family of choice. Through our tribe, we can obtain life-sustaining connections with others who recognize and appreciate us.

Surround yourself with people who love and encourage you. Let them remind you just how amazing you are. Reach out to family, friends, supportive people, healers, and whomever else you need to help you through the tough times. You do not need to struggle alone.

“Weed your garden” of toxic relationships to make room for “beautiful flowers” to grow. Although this can be difficult, especially with family members and long-standing relationships, sometimes it must be done to protect your well-being. Anyone who treats you poorly is adversely affecting the vital energy you need.

Be mindful of the external stimuli you take in and how they make you feel. For example, if you watch the nightly news on TV, do you feel energized or depleted afterward? Conversely, do you notice how

watching a positive video or listening to uplifting music raises your vibration?

When you are understood, accepted, valued, and supported by yourself and those around you, there is no challenge you could have, do, or face that is too difficult to overcome!

One of the most self-loving things you can do is to live authentically. This means the life you're living on the outside is in alignment with who you truly are on the inside. If you haven't done so already, it is time to shed any facade you may be showing to the world in order to be in integrity with your true self.

If doing that feels like too big of a leap at the moment, you may first need to do some work on your thinking and self-image. This can be accomplished by consciously changing the neural pathways in your brain through neuroscience.

Just as computers are hard-wired with electrical connections, your brain is hard-wired with neural connections that link together its various lobes and also link sensory input and motor output with the brain's message centers, allowing information to come in and be sent back out.

Every thought releases brain chemicals. Being focused on negative thoughts produces cortisol (the stress hormone) in the brain. On the flip side, thinking positive thoughts produces serotonin, which creates a sense of well-being.

Try to get as many really good "bear" hugs from those you trust every day. A 20-second hug releases the chemical Oxycontin from your pituitary gland. This neurotransmitter helps boost your physical, mental, and emotional wellness and is an enjoyable way to bond with others.

Forgive all those you perceive to have done you harm. not for their sake but for yours. Forgiveness does not mean pretending what happened is okay with you. Instead, it is realizing that letting go of resentment, ill will, or bitterness is the only way to truly become free of the pain associated with those emotions.

Carrying around negative “baggage” is poison to the mind, body, and spirit. It harms us over and over again, even to the extent of causing physical illnesses, yet does nothing to the person for whom we are harboring hurt or angry feelings.

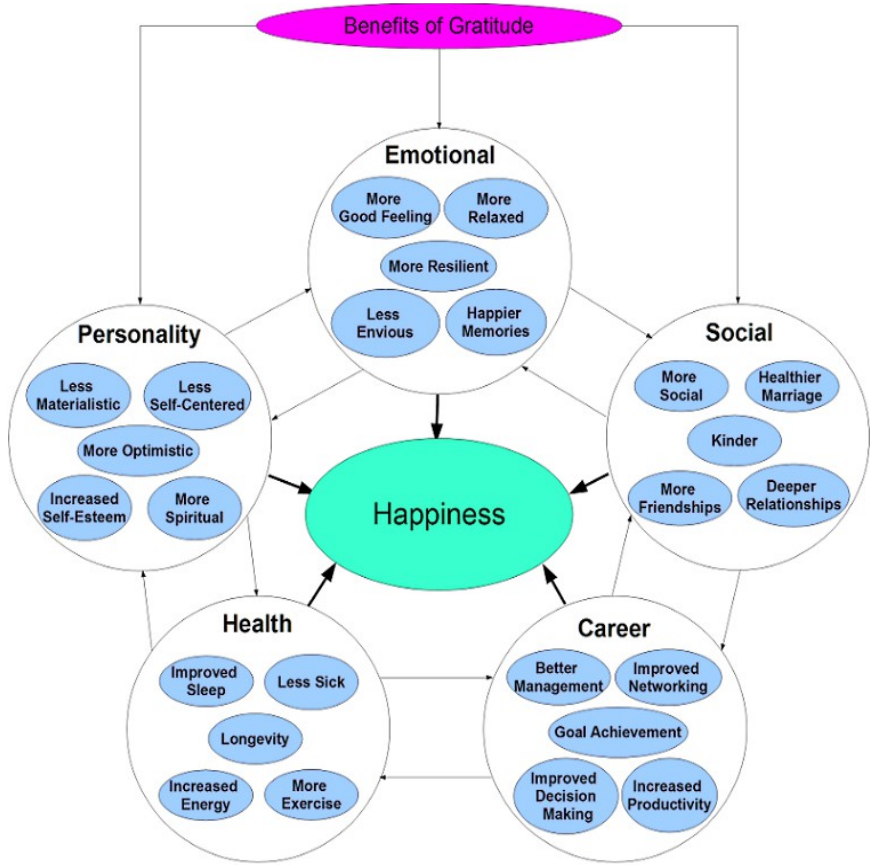
Actively seek to heal past traumas with other gifted people who can help you on emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical levels.

Eat healthfully with nourishing food and drinks that make your body thrive. Get plenty of rest and exercise, and remember to have fun!

Fully accept and love your whole self. This includes what you perceive to be your flaws and the natural gifts that make you so special.

Doing so will mark the beginning of a bold and “Beauty~Full” new chapter in your life!

You can find something to be grateful for every day and enjoy the benefits outlined in the Benefits of Gratitude illustration on the following page.



* Illustration from www.happierhuman.com

Our Deepest Fear

by Marianne Williamson

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves,
Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world.
There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that
other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do.

We were born to make manifest the
glory of God that is within us.

It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.
And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously
give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others.”

About the Author

Stacy Zemon discovered some of her gifts at an early age and awakened to others later in life.

The five intelligences she identified in her youth were Linguistic-Verbal Intelligence, Existential Intelligence, Intuitive Intelligence, Interspecies Intelligence, and Humor Intelligence. The eight additional ones Stacy recognized as an adult include Musical Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence, Empathic Intelligence, Visionary Intelligence, Teaching Intelligence, Naturalistic Intelligence, and Visual-Spatial Intelligence. She has actively cultivated all of these, and they have increased as a result.

A woman of vision, purpose, and heart, today Stacy alchemizes a unique blend of her gifts, exceptional skills, and spiritual guidance into helping people further awaken, evolve, and transform their lives for the better.

As Chief Enlightenment Officer at Open Lotus Productions, she provides enlightening services, workshops, trainings, and events. Her signature sacred services include intuitive readings, soul guidance, spiritual mentoring, life coaching, energy healing, and success consulting for holistic practitioners and lightworkers. They are available through her website, StacyZemon.com.

Stacy's educational credentials include honorary doctorate degrees in metaphysics and divinity, associate degrees in applied science and addiction counseling, life coaching certification, and ministerial licensure.

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