Coaching creative, talented and gifted (potential) drop-outs in their search for meaning

Speakers:
Desirée Houkema & Albert Kaput
Coaching creative, talented and gifted (potential) drop-outs

NTCN Conference, November 15th 2018

Desirée Houkema & Albert Kaput
Ingrid (17)

- Highly intelligent, very creative and sensitive
- At home actively involved with many things
- Warm, supporting family
- Successfully performing till 5th year of secondary school (5 vwo)
- Little contact with classmates and teachers
- Withdrawn behavior, sitting in the back of the classroom
- More and more often ill, or not attending school
- Depressive, doesn’t experience any purpose or meaning in life
- No idea of who she is and what to strive for
- No future perspective
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Walter (14)

- Very high intelligence
- Exceptionally musical (piano), absolute pitch
- Headstrong, rigid when experiencing injustice
- Hosophobia, anxious, always alert
- Defiant and extreme behavior
- Parents fight frequently, many conflicts with father (who’s extremely gifted)
- Has been severely bullied
- Sustains till second year of secondary school (2 vwo, at age 14)
- Lack of social skills, also with ‘like-minded peers’
- Walks away from home, foster family (at age 16)

25%
Invisible girls...

75%
Many boys...
How does she experience herself?

Recognizable?
Which child (or adult) can you think of?

Share your experiences (in pairs, for max. 5 minutes)

Diverse – Unique – Intense – Complex
Do you SEE and UNDERSTAND ME for who I am?

I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING TO MOTIVATE HER!

YOU COULD JUST ASK ME.
How can gifted children be seen?

Communication tools

Available in English!
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I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.

(Albert Einstein)

izquotes.com
“Giftedness is asynchronous development in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm. This asynchrony increases with higher intellectual capacity. The uniqueness of the gifted renders them particularly vulnerable and requires modifications in parenting, teaching and counseling in order for them to develop optimally.”

Self-awareness
"What matters most is how you see yourself"
How to develop an ‘open mindset’ geared towards personal growth?

Towards an inquisitive attitude & growth mindset

- Are you a **stayer**, who doesn't give up when things go wrong, even when they go wrong again and again?
- Are you ready to **rise up to new challenges**?
- Do you welcome **criticism** and see it as a platform for **improvement**?
- Do you derive your **inspiration** from other people's success?
**Model**

'Talent in Development'
Houkema & Kaput (2011)

Strength-based approach!

**Expressed talents**
(Unusual?) accomplishments
- sports
- arts
- science
- technology
- music
- languages
- leadership
- interpersonal skills

**Talents**
Different areas:
- verbal-linguistic
- logical-mathematic
- musical
- visual-spatial
- kinesthetic (tactile)
- naturalistic
- interpersonal
- intrapersonal

Each and everyone to it's own potential, related to:
personal characteristics and surroundings
Challenges
• Working on your personal weaknesses or pitfalls
• Developing self-compassion and resilience
• Leaving your comfort zone
• Dealing with asynchronous development
• Developing self-management

Personal qualities
• Character strengths
• Core competencies for example: being driven, communicative, tenacious, flexible, ...

Constraints
• No support or not enough space
• Poor social-economic background
• Lack of understanding at home, at school or with (age) peers
• No stimulating surroundings in which you learn to accept responsibility

Opportunities
• Stimulating surroundings
• Like-minded peers
• Others who see and understand you for who you are
• Others who share your passion
• Someone who believes in you
Escalator Temporary Stairs...

Talent in Development
from feeling stuck to a perspective on (personal) development
Making real contact with the pupil

Acknowledging the pupil in his situation

Discovering WHO the pupil is

Connecting identity and meaning

Connecting future perspective and reality

Investing and taking responsibilities

Houkema & Kaput (2016)

Exploring by experiencing

Thought experiment...
What's your personal goal?
When do you feel that time is flying?

Flow is being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

When do you feel that time is flying?
Brainstorming

What are your personal qualities / challenges?

Where are you?
What do you want to accomplish?

Which opportunities do you see?
The first step... (from now)

Matt Cutts: Try something new...

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Ready to take this challenge and go for it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do I want?</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who am I?</td>
<td>Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I believe?</td>
<td>Beliefs and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can I do?</td>
<td>Capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I do?</td>
<td>Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where am I?</td>
<td>Surroundings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Bateson’s logical levels of change]
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Passion
Connection
Space
Growth
Trust
Safety
Relatedness
Autonomy
Competence

SELF-MANAGING
AUTONOMOUS
ADJUSTED
SUCCESSFUL
UNDERGROUND
AT-RISK
CHALLENGING
CREATIVE
TWICE
EXCEPTIONAL
AT-RISK

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AUTONOMY
COMPETENCE
RELATEDNESS

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If this need is met, you experience

- a connection with peers and adults, at home and in school
- that you are understood by others, and that others try and understand you
- that others appreciate you for who you are
- that you are expected to make a contribution, and that your contributions are valued
- that it is worth engaging with others.
**Autonomy**

Opportunities to make your own choices and to assume responsibility

If this need is met, you experience

- the space to decide for yourself how to tackle a particular problem
- the space to express your ideas
- that your feelings and opinions count
- that you are regularly able to make your own choices
- involvement in important issues at home and in school.
If this need is met, you experience

- that you are capable of learning interesting new skills
- that you can succeed in the things you do
- that you will have plenty of opportunities in the future for demonstrating your abilities
- that you can devote yourself fully to new tasks, without being hindered by any constraints
- self-confidence and the approval of others, at home and in school.
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