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High Potential Pupils: Specific Characteristics and Openness to a Broader Definition as Awareness Personality (AP) for Better Support

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Abstract
There is consensus on one point in the definition of *high potential*: the recognition of an intelligence quotient above 130. This definition seems to be extremely restrictive, as it is limited to a cognitive level, whereas other levels, in particular emotional and relational, are specific to what can be described as high potential in a broad sense. These different facets are expressed at school and are often a source of incomprehension for teachers and even academic malaise for pupils. Brain imaging (Gauvrit, 2014) has shown that high-potential individuals function differently in the brain, arguing for a neuro-cognitive definition of high potential. A number of terms are used to describe the specific characteristics of high potential, such as giftedness and talent, or zebra (Siaud-Fachin, 2008) for children with an atypical profile. At school, different policies have been put in place to accommodate children whose profiles are so specific that they may require special arrangements. After presenting the consensus on the definition of high potential, this paper will provide a brief overview of national policies in support of these pupils with special profiles. We will then describe our research in an adult psychotherapy clinic, based on a qualitative approach to the discourse of patients defined as high potential. Based on their experiences in school, particularly in terms of common and salient points, we will identify the specific features of this atypical profile and propose an evolving nomenclature for the concept of high potential. By incorporating Dabrowski and Piechowski's (1977) concept of hyperexcitability, this nomenclature will be extended to include the concept of awareness developed by Perls et al. (1951). This paper aims to provide a better understanding of how so-called high-potential pupils function and to propose a new, more consensual term – *awareness personality* – to help teachers understand these pupils better and to help them accept their difference better.

Keywords: awareness personality, giftedness, high potential, pupil, school.

Foreword

Clinical vignette

> "Louis, a pupil like no other... and so revealing of so many others!"
>
> *It's raining on the playground. Inside his classroom, 14-year-old Louis is tapping his foot in time to the rain. In the silence, the other pupils in the class concentrate on the math exercises they have been given. Louis has done his work perfectly, in far less time than expected. Carried away by his musical inspiration, he drums on his desk with his pencil, much to the annoyance of those around him. Absorbed in his thoughts, Louis seems oblivious to the fact that his habits are a source of annoyance to others. He is also dismayed by his classmates. He wants to make friends at school but regularly finds that his interests are completely different from those of his classmates. He remains confused and keeps a certain distance from the group. The situation is difficult at school and everywhere else. As an adult, he remains perplexed by the world around him. At the age of 43, Louis was assessed and identified as gifted, with "high intellectual potential".* (Osorio, 2021)

1. Introduction

The definition most commonly used by experts to describe an individual with high intellectual potential (HIP) is based primarily on an assessment of their intelligence quotient (IQ). An individual is generally described as gifted or as having HIP if their IQ is above 130, following an assessment using recognized and validated psychometric tests such as the WISC or the WAIS, which are the only ones officially recognized in France. Other names exist, such as "precocious child", "gifted", and "zebra" (Siaud-Fachin, 2008), but there is no consensus on a common name in the scientific community. *Gifted* refers to "a person, especially a child, whose intellectual abilities, as measured by tests (especially IQ), are well above average" (Larousse, 2024). The term *precocious* refers to "a child whose maturity and intellectual development are ahead of the average" (Larousse, 2024).

High potential is a more recent term, the result of new thinking highlighting the existence of other parameters for the particularity of these profiles that go beyond the simple IQ figure. And yet, although new considerations have to be taken into account, intellectual superiority is still prominent in common sense in France. It is even a source of social pressure – what can be said about a pupil qualified as high potential who does not succeed at school? The aim of this paper will therefore be to move forward on a proposal for a name that is more consensual, especially for the individuals concerned. After looking at public policies to support these groups, we will describe what is currently accepted in the light of neuroscientific discoveries. From a psychological point of view, we examine these profiles in light of the theory of overexcitability (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977) and the Gestalt approach to a new denomination. From a methodological point of view, using a qualitative approach, we will base our analysis on the clinical testimonies of seven patients undergoing psychotherapy.

2. Support Policies for High-Potential Pupils

In France, high-potential children, that is, those with an IQ of between 130 and 160, represent around 2.3% of the total population. Of these, around 2.14% have an IQ between 130 and 145, while 0.13% have an IQ between 145 and 160. In 2024, these figures indicate that approximately 300,000 gifted children are enrolled in schools in the country.

According to data from the French National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale, 2024), 45% of high-potential children have experience repeating a year at school, while 20% do not manage to pass the "baccalauréat"[1]. In France, the first special classes offering support were set up in 1987, but there has never been a comprehensive national policy in this area. In addition to demonstrating great intellectual power, these children display a specific form of intelligence that translates into a unique approach to thinking and learning. Often, when they learn, they do so intuitively, approaching the subject holistically and synthetically. They learn by immersion, without following a step-by-step process or referring to a predefined model. On an emotional level, they often have a heightened hypersensitivity that makes them particularly vulnerable emotionally and psychologically. Unfortunately, in certain situations, this lack of integration can lead to exclusion and estrangement from other members of the group. In these children, a crisis of self-confidence emerges, characterized by an authentic search for their identity. This quest for authenticity transforms their uniqueness into an asset, helping them to stand out positively from others. However, according to the study conducted by Guignard et al. in 2021, it was observed that HIP adolescents had a weaker sense of integration with their peers. In contrast to the situation in France, it should be noted that in the majority of Nordic countries, gifted children are perceived as competent individuals, that is, they are recognized for their advanced intellectual and social abilities. In Denmark, people are treated with respect, which translates into a certain degree of autonomy and responsibility in their everyday lives, as well as in the decisions they make.

Nowadays, teachers are often quick to identify the need to screen their pupils for possible problems. Once gifted children have been identified, expectations of them are often very high. Indeed, it is common to think that their exceptional intelligence means that they will naturally excel at school. When talking about high-potential pupils, the tendency is to think that they have the ability to assimilate knowledge at an earlier and faster rate than their peers. In Israel, when these pupils reach the age of seven, they are tested to identify their abilities. Around 2% of pupils are offered the opportunity to take part in a program specially designed for children with HIP. Once a week, they come together to deepen their knowledge by exploring various fields such as astrophysics, chemistry, and the arts. In France, the situation is such that the number of adapted teaching units available is insufficient to meet the specific needs of pupils with disabilities. This shortage of suitable facilities makes it difficult to provide quality education for all children, whatever their disability may be. According

[1] The equivalent of the French "baccalauréat" in the Anglo-Saxon system is the A-Level or General Certificate of Education. (CGE). In the United States, the equivalent is the high school diploma.

to the French Education Code, special arrangements must be made to support pupils with HIP or special aptitudes. These arrangements are designed to help them develop their full potential. The 2019 *Vademecum*, a specialized educational guide, places particular emphasis on the importance of schooling for high-potential pupils (Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de la Jeunesse, 2019). This document explicitly and in detail underlines the special attention that these pupils require if they are to achieve their full potential in the education system. At present, the national education budgets allocated to these special arrangements tend to disappear, leaving French teachers to develop inclusive teaching methods on their own.

With an IQ above 140, Louis belongs to the 2.3% of the population with HIP. At first sight, this situation may seem favorable, and Louis agrees. However, he feels that he has not been able to make the most of his potential, particularly when he was at school. It would have been necessary to detect him earlier. Louis has found it difficult to accept and recognize himself because of his difference. Many adults, like Louis, are diagnosed late in life, which leads to regret for the years lost. What would have been the trajectory of Louis and other individuals if their exceptional potential had been identified earlier? What would their personal, social, and professional situations have been like if they had benefited from assistance and support? (Osorio, 2021). Today, this recognition can be based on neuroscience, which sheds valuable light on these profiles.

3. Neuroscientific Approach to High Potential

According to Gauvrit (2014), giftedness has an underlying genetic component. In the most gifted adolescents, more pronounced connectivity is observed both within each cerebral hemisphere and between the two hemispheres. The quality of information communication between the cerebral hemispheres can be considered as one of the potential factors contributing to intellectual precocity (Prescott et al., 2010). Nusbaum et al. (2019) have established, using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), that children identified as having "high potential" show significantly higher cerebral connectivity than children with a standard IQ, particularly in brain regions such as the corpus callosum, which provides the connection between the two hemispheres, and in various intra-hemispheric bundles. The transmission of information is faster both within the same hemisphere and between the two hemispheres. This initial finding corroborates the conclusions of previous research.

Working memory, which is closely linked to intelligence, plays an essential role in the storage and temporary manipulation of information during the performance of a task. It is frequently called upon in our daily activities, particularly when searching for information, thinking, or understanding texts. This increase in brain connectivity promotes optimal functioning of working memory in high-potential individuals. With their brains in constant turmoil, they often lose control, particularly when overwhelmed by their emotions. This aspect will thus be approached through the lens of Dabrowski and Piechowski's work (1977).

4. The Theory of Overexcitability

Psychologists generally share an explanatory hypothesis based on the development of emotional intelligence. This expression refers to the ability to regulate one's emotions. A precocious child is characterized by a capacity for abstract reasoning that is greater than that usually observed in children of the same age. It should be noted, however, that this accelerated development is not uniform in all aspects of the psychological sphere. Precocious children often show no intellectual precocity in the areas of social or emotional intelligence, or even lag in these areas. The combination of these two factors mentioned above is potentially tricky: gifted children can grasp frightening realities, but it is difficult for them to protect themselves from them (Gauvrit, 2014).

K. Dabrowski, a Polish psychiatrist, in his general conception of emotional development, developed the concepts of overexcitabilities as various characteristics encompassing different types of intense relationships with the world. Sensory and emotional hypersensitivities can be partially explained by Dabrowski's overexcitabilities (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977). Dabrowski's concepts were integrated into the gifted community and remain a particularly relevant and valuable theoretical framework for analyzing various aspects of giftedness to this day. According to his theory, some individuals exhibit "overexcitability" (or OE) to certain stimuli, whether they are external or internal. These individuals tend to perceive these stimuli more intensely, react to them more strongly, and actively seek them out. Since then, particularly in light of Piechowski and Colangelo's (1984) research, it has been established that overexcitabilities are more frequent in individuals with high potential than in the general population.

According to Dabrowski and Piechowski (1977), these experiences offer a deeper and more complex understanding of reality (going beyond mere hypersensitive reception) and provide greater opportunities for personal growth. Although they may conflict with certain behavioral norms, particularly in the school context, it is both impossible and counterproductive to seek to suppress or eliminate them. It would be more appropriate to identify and value them for the opportunities they offer.

There are five types of overexcitability (Izquierdo, 2018; Professeur O, 2021). *Sensory overexcitability*, sometimes equated with hypersensitivity, is characterized by an amplified perception and reaction to stimuli from all five senses. Individuals with this type of overexcitability may experience discomfort from tactile sensations, such as the rubbing of labels or the seams of certain items of clothing. Certain visual or auditory stimuli can also be disturbing, prompting them to seek out calm, pleasant environments. On the other hand, they find great satisfaction in sensory experiences such as music, and visual arts, as well as the smells and flavors of certain foods. The lights, smells, and sounds emanating from the forest or the coast can evoke deep aesthetic experiences in them.

The second type is *emotional overexcitability*. This second aspect related to hypersensitivity is characterized by complex and intense emotions and feelings. From the early stages of development, this characteristic is revealed through an intense

emotional bond toward individuals, objects, and the environment. In the presence of great empathy, it can amplify the impact of emotional representations, whether they are sad or joyful. It can also manifest through impulsive behaviors or outbursts of anger of surprising intensity, as well as marked mood fluctuations, particularly during childhood and adolescence. Social emotional intelligence frequently leads individuals to engage in actions aimed at supporting others and promoting the common good, even though this can result in significant frustrations when these actions are not successful.

Intellectual overexcitability is characterized by a great curiosity, an interest in investigation, puzzles, and analysis. The individuals concerned are actively in search of knowledge, understanding, and truth. They tend to be introspective and inclined to reflect contemplatively on ideas. Their insight and curiosity can sometimes be a source of fatigue for those around them, while their independent spirit can make them impatient with slowness or contradiction. On the other hand, they are inclined to examine systems and their dysfunctions, which makes them particularly receptive to inconsistencies and injustice.

Fourth, *imaginative overexcitability*, characteristic of overexcitement, is manifested by a strong interest in invention, creativity, and visualization. It is linked to the making of friends, complex imaginary worlds, and adventures, as well as a sense of play, theater, and the regular use of images and metaphors. The individuals involved, particularly the younger ones, tend to indulge in daydreaming, doodling in the margins, and generally enjoying creative activities.

Finally, *psychomotor overexcitability* refers to a more active neuromuscular system, resulting in an excess of energy. The individuals concerned show an appreciation for dynamism and activity and may sometimes express themselves at a very fast pace. In times of stress, they may exhibit signs of nervousness, impulsivity, or compulsivity, which can also lead to fatigue in those around them. They can be fully focused on a task while exhibiting involuntary movements, such as foot and hand gestures, as well as pacing.

Individuals identified as having high potential tend to exhibit more emotional sensitivity than the general population. However, it should be noted that this trait is not systematic among all individuals identified as such. Emotional, intellectual, and imaginative abilities seem to be more strongly linked to high-potential individuals (Piechowski & Colangelo, 1984). The profiles and intensities of these abilities vary from one individual to another. A study by Alias et al. (2013) noted, however, that gifted individuals identified with overexcitability often have more of it. From our point of view, it is relevant to establish a link between the concept of overexcitability and the concept of awareness introduced by Fritz Perls within the framework of the Gestalt approach.

5. The Concept of Awareness

Fritz Perls (1893–1970), German psychiatrist and psychotherapist, in his theorization of Gestalt therapy,[2] proposed a key concept in Gestalt – awareness – as an "immediate consciousness of the present" (Ginger, 1995); more precisely, a global awareness of the permanent flow of our physical sensations, ideas, preoccupations, desires, emotions, etc. Perls et al. (1951) defined *awareness* as follows: "Awareness is characterized by contact, by sensing, by excitement and by Gestalt formation. Its adequate functioning is the realm of normal psychology; any disturbance comes under the heading of psychopathology." (p.25). There is a certain similarity between the term *awareness* and the term *awake* (Spagnuolo-Lobb, 2004). In Gestalt therapy, awareness is defined as the full presence of the senses, the intentionality of contact, and the charge of excitation that characterizes the "normality" of an organism. In the 1970s, Enright (1970) gave this definition of awareness:

> "*Awareness is immediate experience developing with, and as part of, an ongoing organism-environment transaction in the present. Although it includes thinking and feeling, it is always based on current perceptions of the current situation. Awareness includes some intention and directionality of the self toward the world; in pure form, there is a momentary weakening of the self-other barrier and the 'object' of awareness seems momentarily to be included in the self.*"(p.264).

The concept of awareness represents an evolution of the Socratic notion of "know thyself" (Spagnuolo-Lobb, 2004), in which the intellectual power of knowledge and control is replaced by two elements: 1) the capacity of the human being to be fully "awake" and aware; and 2) the experiential orientation resulting from the intentionality of contact (i.e., the way in which the self situates itself at the boundary of contact with the environment, thus contributing to its creation). In Gestalt therapy, consciousness is seen as a protective function aimed at resolving internal tensions by avoiding contact through isolation (Perls et al., 1951).

Thus, neurosis is characterized by the maintenance of isolation between the organism and the environment through consciousness. Awareness plays a contradictory role, in other words, it characterizes the development of the opposite function. This consists of being naturally at the frontier of contact (Perls et al., 1951), giving this synthesis: "To make a point of maximizing automatic functioning and minimizing awareness in one's life is to welcome death before its time." (p.284). Being able to pay attention to oneself underlines the importance of true presence. This true presence could be summed up in the expression of the five types of overexcitability seen above. High-potential subjects thus feel powerfully alive, caught up in creative processes, with a keen awareness of their environment. The self as a "process" of what happens at the contact boundary between the organism and its environment thus develops in a

[2] Gestalt therapy is a psychotherapy focused on the present and the empowerment of the patient. Invented by Fritz Perls, Gestalt therapy is a method belonging to the humanistic branch of psychotherapy that involves connecting one's body and mind with their environment with the goal of daily well-being. Its principle lies in the here and now in order to live better on a daily basis and leave behind the harmful elements of the past.

hyper-awareness of this environment – which could thus be the main characteristic of what we will call "awareness personality" (AP).

> *If I had to go back to school, I would oppose it with all my might. My journey has been biased. During my schooling, numerous misunderstandings greatly contributed to my dropout. Today, I associate that time with thorny experiences, particularly in my relationships with others. I couldn't stand the noise, and communication with other classmates was difficult. For me, it was impossible to memorize or solve equations without giving them meaning. Atypical behavior, taciturn attitude, I was seen as maladjusted, delayed, and even deficient. Over the years, my desire to learn in this environment gradually dissipated. In the eyes of my teachers and classmates, the signs of a high IQ were unsuspected. Yet the diagnosis had indeed been made. The world was becoming brutal for me, sowing doubt about my abilities.* (Bitoum, 2024, 0:10)

6. Characteristics of Awareness Personality Based on Case Studies[3]

"Your teacher called me in today to talk about you. She told me that you don't talk at all in class, that you don't answer questions, and that you're always alone. She also told me that you're often in your dreams, that you wave your legs under the table a lot, and that it disturbs the other pupils. You need to be careful, at the moment your results are very good, but they're likely to go down if you don't work. We've discussed this with your dad. We've either got the option of moving you up a grade, or moving you to a school with a higher standard. My mother made me understand, a few weeks after I started CP (Preparatory Course which starts at the age of 6), that I shouldn't disturb the other pupils and that I had to satisfy the egos of my teachers by trying to listen to them. But it was hard for me to concentrate on subjects that didn't interest me or that I'd already mastered. My mind couldn't help but cut short and wander elsewhere. So, I learned to pretend I was following, paying attention to the intonations of the voices, to recognize the changes in tone when the teacher asked a question, called me out, or emphasized an important point so that I knew when I had to come out of my reverie and reconnect to reality. And all without shaking my legs. It wasn't easy and it took me many years to learn. I went through several phases. The one where I was biting my nails. The one where I kept spinning my pen endlessly. The one where I tapped on the table with my nails. And finally, I opted for the one where I played with my fingers. This was the most discreet. I was also very careful to do all the exercises I was asked to do properly, because that way I wouldn't stand out and, above all, I wouldn't put any extra pressure on my parents, who were already struggling to cope with my older brother's difficulties at school and with his behavior. So, I started school on my own, driven by my desire to please my parents, but also by my perfectionism and fear of failure. The slightest mistake obsessed me: 'How could I have got something so simple so wrong?' I thought I was a fool, and I would psychologically beat myself up for hours, even days on end. So, I'd spend my evenings studying, reading, and perfecting my skills in the subjects I was terrible at.

[3] In order to anonymize the patients, all the first names have been changed.

> But my 'nerd' status had a major impact on my social relationships. Other students refused to socialize with me because I wasn't 'cool'. While they were interested in the typical cartoons that all children of my time watched, I woke up at 5 am to watch my art and painting program. While their favorite playtime pastime was chasing each other, I preferred to hide in a corner and watch them from a distance, wondering, 'What the hell are they doing running around like that for?' While the little girls in my class were swapping Barbie and Diddle books, I was having fun reading my animal books upside down. I felt this huge gap, and it encouraged me to distance myself from the others. I didn't know what to talk about with them. I couldn't understand their conversations about Dragon Ball Z or Totally Spies. And I was ashamed to tell them that I'd never watched any of those cartoons. I found them uninteresting, but I felt so alone. So, I went to a group of children, analyzed what they were doing, and tried to imitate them. But I didn't understand the rules of their games, I couldn't run fast enough, I couldn't catch a ball or simply kick it, and these attempts at socialization led to mockery that confirmed to me that I was way off the mark. So I went back to my bubble, where I brought my daydreams to life. I saw myself as an adult, becoming a superb vet, the savior of all mistreated animals. I drew up a plan: the construction of a large park with room for a hundred or so animals, with a large number of volunteers who would take an entrance test to check their true benevolence and motivation, an intervention team that would take in abused animals, and monthly monitoring of the foster and adoptive families to check the living conditions of the animals placed. Then I saw myself as an aerial contortionist, sometimes dancing with a hoop, sometimes clinging to a fabric, performing one acrobatic move after another with ease and grace. Then I saw myself as Aelita, the heroine of the Code Lyoko series, trapped in a virtual universe, waiting for Matthieu, the boy I was in love with at the time, to come and take me out of this parallel world. Then I found myself as a candidate in a cookery competition, where I would come up with outlandish dishes, without really knowing how to make them in the real world. And so, my imagination ran wild, crossing the boundaries of time and possibility. This overflowing imagination helped me to pass the time more quickly, but also to forget about my environment, which seemed violently incoherent to me. Those long days cooped up in a school exhausted me and sleeping was no longer enough to fill my energy tank. Taking refuge in my various imaginary worlds allowed me to keep control and conserve my vital energy. But this protective bubble also cut me off from others, and I suffered from this loneliness that seemed so unfair. 'I'm not a bad person,' I said to myself inwardly. In fact, I was prepared to accept anything to stop being alone. I was dreaming of a sincere, close friendship in which I could have full confidence and in which I could be myself. In the hope of one day finding this ideal friend, I let the other children abuse me without batting an eyelid. I became the class scapegoat."

Laurence was 22 years old when I first met her for counseling. Very discreet and reserved about herself, she came to see me because she had had a lot of questions

about her current relationship with the father of her child. Through her testimony, she ticks off all the overexcitabilities as presented by Dabrowsky and Piechowski (1977). Although she had not been diagnosed as high potential by an IQ test, she had all the cognitive and emotional characteristics described above. After a year of preparing for the highly selective entrance exam to medical school, where she finished in the top five of her class in the mock exam, she was unable to take the final exam due to health problems. She then went on to study dietetics, psychology, and, finally, accountancy, which she passed with flying colors every year despite a permanent feeling of being out of step, like some of the other patients: "I feel like I don't belong in this world" (Tom, 41 years old); "My mother said to me: 'You've never been like everyone else' " (Sofia, 52 years old).

Laurence's son, Mathieu, is two and a half years old. She said this about him: "He hates not understanding. When he was two and a half, he asked me in the bath why the water was running. I tell him it's the law of gravity. He asks me: 'What is gravity?' I tell him that's what makes the water sink! He gets really angry! He gets very frustrated when he can't do things or understand things. And also, when he can't make himself understood. He asks questions: 'Why is life beautiful? Why is life hard?' He learns very quickly and at the same time doesn't want to grow up. He's hypersensitive to smell, touch, and temperature, so it's complicated to get him to eat – it has to be neither too hot nor too cold! He doesn't get on well with children his own age, preferring to play with children who are older than him and with whom he can talk. For example, he prefers his eight-year-old cousin. He asks questions at the races: 'Why is the lady fat? Why is the man black?' Last time, he asked me questions about death when he saw a cockroach turned over on the floor."

Through Laurence's testimony, the genetic dimension of precociousness is addressed, and for Gauvrit (2014), "it seems in any case confirmed that precociousness does indeed have a partly genetic basis." Another common factor is that high potential can be experienced at extremes, like the top 2% of the Gaussian curve of intelligence that characterizes an IQ above 130 (Meljac, 2003).

7. Toward a New, More Consensual Definition

Cathy, aged 41, said the following: "I make a link between my profile and quantum physics... everything is there at the same time!" Cathy said of this perception, this unique way of *being in the world*: "I don't like it when doctors try to explain to me what I'm going through!" As the mother of three children, she said: "Before, my children weren't my priority... all my children were my priority!" In this holistic vision, Cathy confirmed that she can feel different dimensions at the same time: "I feel! I can see behind it if I want to.". Cathy's way of expressing this global perception of her environment is linked to the concept of awareness.

Marion (28 years old) explained that we need to "move away from the term high potential... and especially zebra... not be an animal!" The term that seemed to suit her is "aware personality, or the one you (The psychotherapist) suggested, 'awareness personality,' like a personality of full consciousness! You feel hyper-lucid, hyper-

connected, like a hyper-aware personality!" The concept of awareness personality (AP), which encompasses the five super-sensitivities developed above, means that high-potential subjects have heightened sensitivity and sensitivities (in the sense of physiological sensors), giving them a finer, more sensitive and, above all, more global perception of their environment. The way that they come into contact with their environment (including themselves, others, and their surroundings) is more direct, unfiltered, and immediate, seeming to suspend time. There is a flash of thought linked to moral concerns about truth and justice that is not an intellectual construct, but rather embodied evidence that can accentuate a feeling of being out of step with this world, as Laurence explained:

> "*The more I understood this world, the more I detected its inconsistencies, and the more I said to myself that I didn't belong here. Sometimes I even wondered if this life wasn't just a film or even a dream. Just like in the film The Truman Show, I had the impression of being constantly observed, like a stranger being tested and its reactions analyzed. As if anything I did outside the norm would confirm that I was different.*"

The other side of the coin for the awareness personality for Laurence was the impression that her brain is constantly working at 200%: "I have to leave my brain alone!" François (37 years old) added to this notion: "There isn't just a little monkey in my head banging on cymbals, there's a second one writing on the board and a third one showing me what is written on the board!"

8. Conclusions

The issue of high potential in pupils and children is a fairly recent concern in society. After the May 1968 revolution in France, a student revolution that sought a more egalitarian society, there was no real question of taking an interest in these profiles, for fear of falling into a form of elitism, which was opposed at the time. Even though specific measures were introduced in the French education system in the 1990s, in France, these profiles can create a sense of fear among people because of a lack of understanding. This can be done to the extent that pupils with these profiles have been classed in the field of disability as pupils with special educational needs – as if having an IQ of 130 or more could represent a flaw! Although the cognitive and emotional profiles of these unusual children do not have similar, uniform characteristics, we have tried to agree on one common point: an increased capacity to be fully present with one's feelings, with others as a whole, and with the environment. This capacity can be summed up in the term "awareness". This capacity, sought by the presence of the therapist or the meditator, appears to be a natural posture for awareness personalities. It gives them intuitions and connections between ideas and people that often lead in the right direction, guided by a moral sense of honesty and the good of others. At the end of this paper, we have another conceptual and denominative approach to high potential, which I hope will convince the main individuals concerned, so that they can better (re)know themselves, better take ownership of their history, become more fully themselves, and clear up the areas of incomprehension for everyone. "You are unique, but you are not alone!", as emphasized by Professor O (2021).

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