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# *Foreword*

Dorothy Sisk is a venerable giant in the field of gifted education, enlightening us over the years regarding the moral sensitivity, creativity, leadership ability, and spiritual development of the gifted. Her newest book, *Making Great Kids Greater: Easing the Burden of Being Gifted*, is a treasure for gifted young people, as well as their parents, teachers, counselors, mentors, and friends. This book integrates insights regarding the social and emotional characteristics of the gifted, brain research, Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration, and the rich literature on planetary consciousness. Dorothy has the gift of making complex concepts accessible to the reader.

Teachers will find this volume a gold mine of effective classroom strategies to develop the affective domain. Gifted adults will discover themselves in these pages. Anyone interested in the emotional development of the gifted will be delighted by the contents of *Making Great Kids Greater*. Asynchrony, perfectionism, moral courage, sensitivity, empathy, creativity, reflective thinking, tranquility, balance, and meaning are all explored. The book is replete with wonderful examples of children from Dorothy's long career, as well as the voices of teachers.

A lifelong learner, Dorothy obtained a second doctoral degree in psychology, studying the overexcitabilities of teenage gifted girls in a summer program that she designed. This research informs the first chapter of this book. In the second chapter, she elaborates on the distinction between socialization and social development, providing excellent strategies for building positive social development. The discussions of mentors, biographical study, journaling, and bibliotherapy make Chapter 2 particularly useful for teachers.

The third chapter deals with the bane of giftedness: perfectionism. Dorothy describes the difference between healthy and dysfunctional perfectionism, and provides curriculum materials, self-regulation projects, and simulation games for the classroom. Counselors and therapists will appreciate her ideas for group discussion of attitudes about perfectionism. Moral courage takes center stage in Chapter 4. Counselors, teachers, and

parents will learn more about dealing with moral dilemmas, overcoming fears, and helping children establish core values. Again, the study of eminent individuals comes into play as a means of introducing students to moral exemplars.

“Know Thyself” is the focus of Chapter 5. Sociodrama, role-playing, and activities to build self-understanding are among the strategies offered to help children learn more about their emotions, talents and actions. In Chapter 6, the sensitivity and empathy of the gifted are explored. Problem-based projects and social action activities allow gifted students to overcome feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. Anyone who works with young people will enjoy learning about care pairs, journaling, identifying helpers, modeling, perspective taking, and activism for young people.

In Chapter 7, the reader encounters reflective thinking. This powerful chapter enables children and teachers to understand how to reprogram the brain for self-efficacy. Chapter 8 is packed with teaching methods for enhancing the creativity of students. While teachers are shown how to identify creatively gifted children, they will be able to use these ideas with all students. Chapter 9 describes strategies for attaining peace, tranquility, mindfulness, and higher consciousness. Negotiation and conflict resolution techniques are addressed. All readers will benefit from this chapter. The book ends with a chapter on achieving balance and finding purpose. The moral exemplars described are inspirational.

Gifted individuals can make a difference in the world. This book provides a road map of how to channel empathy and compassion into a life of service.

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