

Gifted Multipotentialites Course

Sample Course Syllabus

Course Preparation & Logistics

Partial list of books to purchase or borrow (any desired format):

- *Gifted Grownups: The Mixed Blessings of Extraordinary Potential*, by Marylou Kelly Streznewski
- *Refuse to Choose! Use ALL of Your Interests, Passions, and Hobbies to Create the Life and Career of Your Dreams*, by Barbara Sher
- *The Manager's Communication Toolkit: Tools and Techniques for Leading Difficult Personalities*, by Tina Kuhn (Note for the gifted multipotentialite: This works in reverse also; this is effectively a guide to how to communicate with and manage your managers and others in authority, as well as coworkers.)
- *We Can Work It Out: Resolving Conflicts Peacefully and Powerfully*, by Marshall P. Rosenberg
- *Genius in Residence*, by Audrey Grost

I maintain a list of suggested links for ordering these books (in case of need) and will share it with course participants once there are enough signups to schedule the course launch.

A few more books will very likely be added to this list, depending on the needs that become evident as we progress through the course. If there is a plurality of active gifted creatives in the course, some readings are bound to differ from what I note below. While workplace and family experiences tend to predominate in the course, creatives often have an additional range of needs. But everyone has to earn a living; thus, issues arising in the context of working for money will be repeatedly addressed. Note: many course readings are web-based (not books.)

Readings and Written Homework:

Readings are provided at least three weeks in advance. Written homework is done in advance and shared with the other class participants and facilitator three days prior to each class meeting. Homework questions related to the next meeting's topics will be assigned at least two weeks in advance, but after the previous course meeting.

Course Signups, Scheduling, Meetings, Confidentiality:

All signups require InterGifted and instructor approval. The instructor chooses the date of the first course meeting in consultation with the first two participants who sign up. The course announcements on InterGifted's website and in InterGifted's Facebook groups are then revised to include this date. Dates for the next two course meetings will be scheduled at the first course meeting. (If there's a need to choose successive dates before the first course meeting, dates will be negotiated and agreed on with all participants, via email.) Course meetings last 3 ½ hours.

Successive course meetings are scheduled and verified one or two months at a time, by the participants, during the prior month's class meeting. All participants must agree on the date/time. If a participant has an emergency and cannot be present for the scheduling discussion, the class will choose two potential date/times and the absent participant will be consulted by email before a final choice is made. Meetings are typically on Saturdays (U.S.) but the day of the week can vary by agreement of every participant. The time frame of meetings is determined by the combination of the geographic location (time zone) of the first participant to sign up and the time zone of the instructor. The instructor lives in the U.S., in Pacific Time.

All meeting discussions, course materials and contact information is confidential and may not be shared outside the course. Course meetings may be recorded only if all participants consent.

Class Attendance:

Discussion is the heart of this course, and thus attendance at every class meeting is expected. For unavoidable absences (emergencies, illness that substantially impacts functioning, unexpected major job interference, family crisis), InterGifted has a makeup policy: Individuals who miss a class meeting can make it up via a one-hour individual session with the coach/course instructor, at a date/time mutually agreed on. The advance payment made for the missed class meeting will cover this session. Makeup sessions should be completed prior to the next scheduled class meeting. If you have to miss a course meeting, please notify the instructor as soon as you can, so we can make alternate arrangements.

Dropping the course is permitted when extraordinary circumstances make it necessary, such as sudden job loss, having to become a family caregiver, or extended medical situations. Sometimes, after (or during) the first or second class session, a participant may realize that the course is not a good fit for them after all. In such a case it is wise to drop the course. A participant may drop the course by notifying the instructor in email that they need to drop, preferably with a brief explanation. No course payment for a class session will be refunded once that session is under way.

Advance Payment for Class Sessions:

Participants pay InterGifted for each class session in advance, once the session is scheduled. The course fee is \$295 USD per class meeting. A reduced fee to accommodate financial need is available by negotiation on a case-by-case basis; \$250 USD.

All course payments are made to InterGifted's PayPal paylink: www.paypal.me/intergifted Once you have been approved to enroll, you register for the course by paying for the first session, using this link. Please indicate in the Notes field that your payment is for the Gifted Multipotentialites Group, and note the session number you're paying for. Please be sure your payment is made in USD (not CHF, which is the default payment currency for InterGifted's account).

Course Outline

First Course Session: Giftedness and Multipotentiality

Prepare in advance:

Reading for discussion:

- Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of *Gifted Grownups*
- Bios of the other course participants

Written assignment to share:

A bio of yourself, at least two pages. Where you grew up, what areas of interest you've pursued (both formally and informally.) Include a brief outline of your family situation, for both your family of origin and your current family (if any.) Are you raising, or have you raised, children? For this class it's quite pertinent to share your job/career involvement, but also your creative activities, how you have fun, what makes you happy, what you find meaningful, and what you perceive to be your life's purpose. Please include something of your understanding of how your gifted and multipotentialite capabilities have shaped your life thus far. What questions has your experience brought up for you?

Please prepare at least one "burning issue" question around an issue or challenge you're dealing with in your life right now, something on which you'd like input from the other gifted multipotentialites in the class. We will be addressing these questions one or two at a time throughout the course.

In-class activities:

Background on multipotentiality and how it tends to interact with giftedness; patterns that often show up in gifted multipotentialites' lives. Q&A on these topics. Facilitated discussion around related items that participants shared in their written bios. (about 2 hours).

Short break

Wisdom from the group: Facilitated discussion of one or two "burning issues."
(Note: these issues may or may not overlap with the topics raised in participants' bios.)

Second Course Session: Occupations, Earning a Living and Educational Choices

Prepare in advance:

Reading for discussion:

- Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of *Gifted Grownups*, plus other material on giftedness and careers/jobs.
- *Refuse to Choose! Use ALL of Your Interests, Passions, and Hobbies to Create the Life and Career of Your Dreams*
- Web-based reading: facilitator will assign a bio of a polymath (specific choice based on prior class discussions and participants' expressed needs/interests.)
- Other readings as assigned.
- Read the shared written homework of the other participants.

Written assignment to share:

Questions for written homework will center around participants' experience of jobs, careers, schooling and their interactions with what the world expects in these areas and what participants have encountered in real life—what worked for you, what didn't. Issues and discrepancies having to do with the mismatch between gifted multipotentialite needs and capabilities and what has been on offer in participants' workplaces, educational institutions and volunteer settings. Learning to see the patterns in your own experience and what has or has not worked for you to address them.

In-class activities:

Background on gifted multipotentialites and careers/jobs/higher education; grad school (or not.) Q&A on these topics. Facilitated discussion around topics arising from the readings and written homework. Often this discussion centers heavily around workplace issues but may range outside that realm, as the same patterns tend to show up across contexts. This may include more discussion of some of the information participants included in their bios (about 2 hours).

Short break

Wisdom from the group: Facilitated discussion of one or two "burning issues."

Third Course Session: Communication and Effectiveness in Non-gifted and Non-Multipotentialite Workplaces (and in Non-work Settings)

Prepare in advance:

Reading for discussion:

- Part 1 and Part 2 of *The Manager's Communication Toolkit*
- Web-based reading: facilitator will assign a bio of a polymath (specific choice based on prior class discussions and participants' expressed needs/interests.)
- Other readings as assigned.
- Read the shared written homework of the other participants.

Written assignment to share:

Questions for written homework will center around participants' experiences of communication challenges and communication successes on the job, in higher education and/or in the family. Which modes of communication work best for you; which ones you find more challenging; why. Weak spots and repeated patterns of communication breakdown.

In-class activities:

Background on typical communication challenges (patterns of dysfunction) that can arise when working with and for neurotypical persons. We'll consider the book's functional analysis of personality types and the behavior patterns that go with them, and step through the practical application of this information in choosing which communication tools to try in a given situation. Facilitated discussion: How gifted multipotentiality/having multiple developed competencies, and automatically seeing a bigger picture, can interfere with clear communication with neurotypical colleagues. Approaches to getting around various common challenges (e.g, offering TMI.) Ideas on how to better make your strengths work for you. Discussion on other topics arising from the readings and written homework (about 2 hours).

Short break

Wisdom from the group: Facilitated discussion of one or two "burning issues."

Fourth Course Session: Handling Conflict and Confrontation; Conflict Resolution, Compassionate Confrontation and using Nonviolent Communication; Imposter Syndrome

Prepare in advance:

Reading for discussion:

- Part 3 of *The Manager's Communication Toolkit*, plus Rosenberg's *We Can Work It Out*
- Web-based readings and videos about practicing non-violent communication; listening and needs-based understanding of conflict; conflict styles and their basis in past trauma.
- Web-based reading: facilitator will assign a bio of a polymath (specific choice based on prior class discussions and participants' expressed needs/interests.)
- Web-based reading, and possibly another book, on imposter syndrome. Time and depth devoted to imposter syndrome will depend on participants' needs to address this topic.
- Read the shared written homework of the other participants.

Written assignment to share:

Questions for written homework will center around participants' experiences with handling conflict and accountability situations; functioning in leadership roles (career/job, family, volunteer work.) Avoidant behavior and difficult conversations. How we have recognized and handled specific fears in self and others; whether we have recognized ourselves experiencing imposter syndrome, and if so, what associated patterns have shown up in our own behaviors.

In-class activities:

Background and facilitated discussion on topics arising from the readings and written homework. Handling conflict, accountability issues and bullying behavior--since most people don't want to face these things, bringing others to account often means you must take the lead. Gifted people are often at higher risk for imposter syndrome; inappropriate schooling and subordinate roles/isolation within our family of origin can contribute to this. These factors can make it harder to become an effective leader or entrepreneur. We may engage a discussion of factors such as trauma, marginalization in society, dysfunctional gender roles and codependent behavior. These factors pose challenges and may contribute to imposter syndrome (2 hours).

Short break

Wisdom from the group: Facilitated discussion of one or two "burning issues."

Fifth Course Session: The Squishy Stuff: Family, Partners, Relationships, Responsibilities and Needs

Prepare in advance:

Reading for discussion:

- Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of *Gifted Grownups*
- Web-based reading: facilitator will assign a bio of a polymath (specific choice based on prior class discussions and participants' expressed needs/interests. For this course module, expect to read about the personal-life experiences of a polymath who is known for achievements other than their relationship skills.)
- *Genius In Residence*
- At least one reading focused on questions to support developing clarity on your needs/wants
- Other readings as assigned.
- Read the shared written homework of the other participants.

Written assignment to share:

Questions for written homework will center around participants' experiences with family/partner situations and conflicts arising from multipotentialite drives and gifted needs. Experiences with gifted families and mixed (gifted/non-gifted) families and partnerships, being a gifted kid, raising gifted kids, negotiating with people you love who depend on you to whatever degree. Multipotentialite career and creative needs vs. limited time, money, attention and others' needs; when a sacrifice was worth it to you, when it wasn't.

In-class activities:

Background and facilitated discussion on topics arising from the readings and written homework. Expect to encounter issues that speak to your own gifted childhood. If some participants are parents with kids at home, we will likely spend some time exploring the joys and limitations of multipotentialite parenting. If some participant(s) is working on finding a compatible partner, or working to maintain the partnership they have, we'll discuss partnerships for multipotentialites. Issues that tend to arise from multipotentialite needs competing with the needs of others with whom they are sharing resources. How to know and communicate beforehand about your needs within the context of committed relationships, so that negotiation and problem-solving can take place before a crisis develops. Managing expectations--your own, and others'--regarding partnership and family. If you're effectively married to one or more careers, you still have commitments and people who depend on you (2 hours).

Short break

Wisdom from the group: Facilitated discussion of one or two "burning issues."

Sixth Course Session: How You Thrive: Consciously creating your sustainable gifted multipotentialite life

Prepare in advance:

Reading for discussion:

- Chapters 11 and 12 of *Gifted Grownups*
- Web-based reading: facilitator will assign a bio of a polymath (specific choice based on prior class discussions and participants' expressed needs/interests.)
- Two web-available articles by your facilitator
- Other readings as assigned.
- Read the shared written homework of the other participants.

Written assignment to share: Questions for written homework will center around participants' experiences of learning more about themselves in this class, and making meaning in their lives. As you look back over your life to date, what stands out as most meaningful to you so far. What patterns do you notice in that review. How do you practice self-care, physically, mentally, emotionally. Do you engage a spiritual or meditative practice; if so, why, and what results have you experienced from it. What do you want from your future—do you have unmet goals and have they shifted over time. What has changed in you and for you as you have worked through the process of this course.

In-class activities:

Background and facilitated discussion on topics arising from the readings and written homework. Expect to discuss purpose, meaning, the bigger picture of your gifted multipotentiality and what you would like to explore further. In any research project worth its salt, there is always much scope for future work. Your project is your life; the choices you make, the meaning you create from it. What motivates you to move forward?

Short break

Wisdom from the group: Facilitated discussion of one or two “burning issues.”
Giving each other permission to stay in contact after the course ends (if desired).