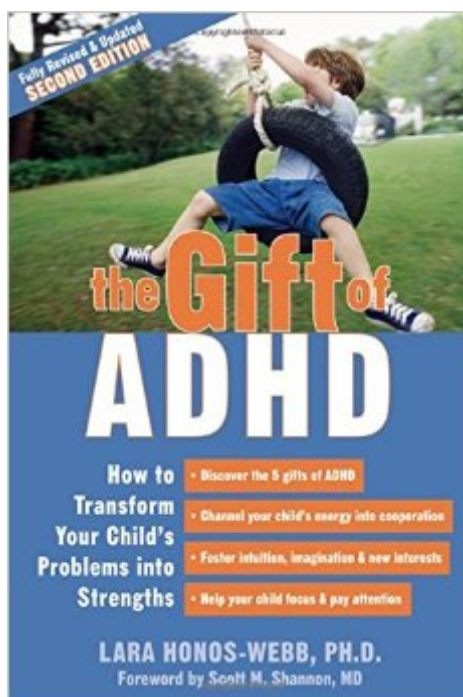


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# The Gift Of ADHD: How To Transform Your Child's Problems Into Strengths



## Synopsis

As a parent, you already know that your child has many gifts. What you may not know is that attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) related symptoms—the very qualities that lead him or her to act out and distract others—may be among them. This second edition of *The Gift of ADHD* includes compelling new research indicating that the impulses that lead your child to act exuberantly may correspond with unusual levels of creativity and a heightened capacity for insight into the feelings and emotions of others. Could it be that ADHD is not a hindrance, but an asset in our fast-paced digital age? ADHD expert Lara Honos-Webb presents the evidence for this revolutionary concept and explains how you can help your child develop control over inattentive, hyperactive behavior and enhance the five gifts of ADHD: creativity, attunement to nature, interpersonal intuition, energetic enthusiasm, and emotional sensitivity. Filled with easy skill-building activities you and your child can do together, this book will help your child transform problematic symptoms into strengths, then build the self-esteem they need to let those gifts shine.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you have already tried many of the conventional approaches for "managing" ADHD or if you are simply tired of the way professionals speak of you or your loved one as needing treatment to remedy some "deficit" in character then read this book. Unlike many popular theories that view ADHD as a difficult-to-treat brain condition that adversely affects school performance, social relations, and self-esteem, Dr. Honos-Webb reframes ADHD as an opportunity for growth and

exploration. At its heart, this book challenges the reader to view a child diagnosed with ADHD as possessing such "gifts" as creativity, interpersonal intuition, and keen emotional sensitivity. I found myself easily pulled in to the deft way that she weaves existing psychological research with her own personal and professional experience to argue for a more progressive approach to working with those diagnosed with ADHD. As a psychologist who works with children and adolescents diagnosed with ADHD, I find that there exist two diametrically opposed camps with respect to how best approach diagnosing and treating this condition. The first camp argues that ADHD is all about brain chemistry and requires medication. The second camp argues that ADHD is a wildly overdiagnosed condition and may be nothing more than society's discomfort or dislike of certain behaviors or individuals. The middle ground between these two positions is the territory covered in this book. Advice for working with mental health professionals (who tend to populate the first camp) while maintaining an advocacy role for your child is a particularly strong emphasis. After reading the chapter entitled, "How to Become Your Child's Advocate, Not Apologist" I felt compelled to photocopy it and send it to everyone I've known who has felt a sense of powerlessness in dealing with insensitive school personnel, psychologists, psychiatrists, etc. It is evident that Dr. Honos-Webb honors those diagnosed with ADHD. This book is definitely for those who want to get active in their child's care. I particularly enjoyed the number of exercises designed to increase self-esteem, parental involvement, and the parent-child bond. With titles such as "Force-Field Control," "What Went Right?," and "Gamma Ray Bursts" you are sure to find something that works for you and your child. I suspect some exercises will feel too hokey to some but there probably is something for everyone. All things considered, I found this book to be a persuasive argument for approaching ADHD as a gift rather than a nuisance. The writing is generally crisp with tons of examples; as such, it flows nicely and makes for an "easy read." If you are committed to transforming your relationship with your child and those responsible for his or her care then this book will move you in that direction with confidence and a new sense of compassion. A standout addition to the ever-expanding collection of ADHD books!

I, too, applaud this book for the way it reframes difficulties that kids, adults, and families with ADHD experience. But it takes a lot of energy to keep that perspective all the time. My concern about this book is that it perpetuates the view that there are just two possible (and seemingly conflicting) answers: medication or coping skills. Besides a mention of neurofeedback, it doesn't fully describe the benefits of this well-researched and very effective therapy. My daughter had such severe ADHD that she finally had to drop out of high school and take a GED degree. After several years she very

much wanted to go on for higher education but felt afraid when she thought of the attentional demands it would make on her. She did about three months of neurofeedback and entered acupuncture school. Now she calls me and says that she is learning, remembering very complicated details, more organized, completing assignments on time, and extremely happy. The most important thing she said was that the neurofeedback "didn't change her personality and abilities but it took away the behaviors that kept her from being who she was." Instead of seeing ADHD as a chemical imbalance or a gift, another perspective is that the behaviors are produced by a brain that is under or over activated. Neurofeedback is totally non-invasive and consists of a person playing a computer game with their brain. It is accomplished by the use of several electrodes placed on the head that measure frequency and amplitude of the brain waves at the site of the electrode(s). Nothing is done to the brain. The game simply makes suggestions as to how to shift the balance of brain arousal and gives feedback (rewards) to the brain. As it learns, the result is modification of the person's behavior. After a number of sessions, the behavior usually becomes permanent. And the person gets to keep her or his abilities and uniqueness. Now, that's a GIFT.

While I appreciate the attempt to shift my paradigm, as an adult with ADHD I see much of this book as rubbish. The author makes unsubstantiated statements such as "drugs work not by fixing brain pathology but by making children high so they are more motivated and feel better about themselves and their behavior improves." The implication and much of the message of the book is that if we feel better about ourselves, we will be better students. She clearly has not been in the thoughts of an ADHD person on stimulants. We're not more motivated because we feel high; we notice the mess, we think about organization, we filter out inappropriate remarks, we worry about deadlines and we ignore distractions. Much like those nongifted, unexuberant, normal folks do. I felt great about myself just before I made a silly remark that cost me my job. Perhaps my boss and the people I offended simply needed to change paradigms and be more accepting of inappropriate behavior...Lara, if you read this, please rethink the messages you are sending people. They are dangerous and unethical.

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