

Positive Disintegration Podcast
Episode 5: Researching Overexcitability

Chris Wells, Emma Nicholson, and guest Frank Falk
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Emma: Hello, happy listeners. Welcome back to Positive Disintegration, a framework for becoming your authentic self. I'm Emma Nicholson, your host. I'm from the Adults with Overexcitabilities YouTube channel. And I also write the Tragic Gift blog. With me again is my co-host and resident expert, Chris Wells, a Dąbrowski scholar, researcher, and practicing social worker.

Chris: Hi Emma. It's nice to see you again. I'm envious, you said it's summer there.

Emma: Yeah, well it's finally showed up. It's close to 90 degrees Fahrenheit outside. So summer's come back with a vengeance. How's things in chilly Colorado?

Chris: It's been okay. It hasn't been too cold yet. We've only had snow once, which is very strange.

Emma: I don't even know what to make of the thought of snow at all, to be honest.

Chris: Oh yeah, that's right. Well, normally we've had much more snow by now and I've at least had to break out the shovel once, but not so far this year.

Emma: Speaking of the shovel, I think today's topic is going to be a little bit about hard work. We're talking about researching overexcitability with Frank Falk, and Chris, you've done some work with Frank before.

Chris: That's right. I've been working with Frank for the past four years about, but I've known him longer than that. We've known each other for about six years, and yeah, he's been an important part of my work and understanding Dąbrowski's theory. So, I'm excited to have him here with us today.

Emma: Frank Falk who's our guest today has been trained in social psychology, research methodology and statistics. He's professor emeritus at the University of Akron and director of research at Institute for the Study of Advanced Development in Colorado. Welcome, Frank.

Frank: Thank you. Nice to be here.

Chris: Thanks for being on the podcast, Frank. I thought we would start by just asking you how you first learned about Dąbrowski's theory. Take us to the beginning of your journey.

Frank: Well, it all started about 40 years ago, in which I was trying to find out about teacher burnout. And so I made an appointment to meet with Linda Silverman in the education department to get her ideas about how we might do some research on that. I showed up for the meeting a little early, and I discovered that there she was with a bunch of little kids teaching them how to play Go, the Chinese game. I knew immediately this was going to be someone more interesting to deal with than what I had originally imagined.

And that proved to be true. Immediately before I could even get into talking about stress and burn out, she started talking about an article by Michael Piechowski in the book on *New Voices in Counseling the Gifted*. And she just sold me on the idea of getting to know more about that. That ended up resulting in a research study group. We called it the Dąbrowski Study Group. It was composed of graduate students from sociology and graduate students from the gifted education program. Then several people from psychology also joined.

And that really was an interesting beginning of an intellectual effort to really try and understand what Dąbrowski was about and what Michael was about and how it related to gifted. And for some of us, how it related to nongifted. What was interesting though, was that we had very limited things available to read at that time. There wasn't a lot of access to Dąbrowski's work, but there was the two-volume series. *The Theory of Levels of Emotional Development*, that Michael had a major hand in. There was also the book *Mental Growth*, which had Kawczak and Michael assisting Dąbrowski. Then there were some *Genetic Psychology Monographs* by Michael, as well as his chapter in the book on counseling the gifted.

So that's what we had to work with. And that thought of reading was not hard to process and go through. So we ended up looking at other people in a similar kind of concern, Kohlberg's theory, Loevinger's theory, and very interesting Carol Gilligan's book *In a Different Voice*, which was kind of interesting because it really brought a feminist perspective into discussion. And then there was a summer session where a lot of different people came in to read about Dąbrowski and what was there, and also read about what Gilligan said and ask, is Dąbrowski suffering from the same antifeminist position. That was the discussion that was really going on as the heart of the issue. And the decision was no, he wasn't.

The other thing that happened was we got Michael Piechowski to come to Colorado and give us lessons in coding overexcitabilities from textual material. This was a very interesting enterprise, and we would sit around and he would give us a quotation and then ask us, what overexcitability does that represent? And at first, he would say nothing. Then he would pause more, and he would say, "Well, no," because we couldn't get it. It really was the start of learning about what content analysis is all about, and really examining the original Overexcitability Questionnaire, which was composed of originally 40 some items. And then it was paired down to 21 and later Michael added a couple of more items onto it.

What's interesting about content analysis is that it's a method in identifying properties of textual information. For example, responses to an open-ended questionnaire, which is what the Overexcitability Questionnaire does. It's interesting because content analysis is always systematic. It's reliable, it's analyzing text by putting words and themes into meaningful categories. And you really have to understand that aspect of it because it's not just anybody looking at the textual material and assuming that they know what it is, it has to be really looked at with depth. And during the eighties, and then later in the nineties, Nancy Miller and I did a lot of the training on how to analyze, what are the answers to these questions.

What you have to remember is that it's an arduous process. It takes three days to train someone to code, and once you've trained them, they have to come to a criteria of being 90% in accord with previous codings. In addition, you have to have two coders coding the same material. And then in addition to that, you have to have a consensus between the two coders to make a decision as to whether or not a particular overexcitability is there.

Now what happened in that process is that Michael and I put together a training manual was called the Criteria for Rating the Intensity of Overexcitability. It's gone through a lot of different changes over the years. But the final version we decided, we put together in 2014. What's important about that is that we still have disagreements about how we're teaching people to code. Because what we do is code intensities into one, two and three levels. The one is a mere mention and Michael always says, would enough mere mentions give a score to someone that says they're overexcited.

And then I've come up with the question, does even a level two correctly identify **over**excitability? Do you really need something even more than a clear statement of it? And what that led to later on. Well, first, we worked together from 1980 to 1985. Then I left the University of Denver and Linda left the University of Denver. So, there was a three-year hiatus where we really weren't working together on overexcitabilities. I've got to say right now, when I say I, it's not ever, I, there was always a team work with Michael Piechowski, Linda Silverman, and Nancy Miller and me. So, anything I say or talk about is really the result of conversations among the four of us, very intense and full of conflict. But we were a very close-knit group.

Chris: It's interesting to me to think about your original study group because when I met you, well, a year after we met, I got to participate in kind of a new Dąbrowski study group that was formed here in Colorado in 2016. That's where I got to know you all, you and Linda and Nancy, and also Betty and the rest of the group. But I met Frank and Nancy in 2015 at a coding

workshop at the University of Denver because someone was doing a dissertation and so they needed coders. And it is a lot of work to learn how to code overexcitability using the overexcitability questionnaire. It was so much more difficult than I expected. I remember going into the coding workshop thinking that I had a really solid understanding of what it meant and realizing that I had a lot to learn and that I also was trying to get a grasp on decades of research and work that had been done. So, it's interesting to hear about the history. I guess the next thing I wonder about is how did all of that work lead to the creation of the OEQ-II?

Emma: Sorry for people who are listening to this, can you explain to them what OEQ-II is?

Chris: Sure. Well, the OEQ-II is the more modern instrument that was developed based on all of the research that Frank just described to us that was done. Not only Michael's original research, which was done in with the OEQ, the original version, but also all the work that they did in the eighties and nineties contributed to developing this new instrument.

Frank: Once you realized that you're asking people to do the kind of content analysis that we demanded, it became very, very difficult. And in the consensus area, what happens if you have two coders that don't live in the same area, how do you do a consensus code? So these were all technical kinds of difficulties that kept cropping up. And the other thing is you wanted to do some comparison between a couple different groups. Well, it was very difficult to get that many subjects from each group and code all of that material. It took hours and hours of work. So as a result, I realized that actually from a long time earlier, that for people that wanted to have group comparisons or find out more, there had to be an objective way of measuring overexcitabilities. Now that actually was known in 1984, 1985, Sam Ammirato, a doctoral student in education, wanted to do exactly that.

The group tried to put together questions for his dissertation and within that it created a parent that this was not something that could be done easily or by a group process. So that meant that we had to go back and try and figure out how to get a set of questions, which would work. It took a lot of effort on the part of us. And Sharon Lind played a major role in this effort. She went back and looked at 300 responses to the OEQ and tried to think of questions that she could generate out of that. In addition to that, we asked all the authors, colleagues, anybody familiar with the overexcitabilities, any concept, and the theory of positive disintegration to send us any material published or unpublished that could help us to find the questions. Out of that process 140 questions were generated, then Michael, Linda and Nancy, I looked at those questions and boiled it down to 120.

We then had to do a study, and we did a study of 563 college students. We were able to come up with an instrument—which was 50 questions—that represented 10 questions for each overexcitability. We did a couple of other studies, and we ended up with a total of 887 subjects. We did a factor analysis, which is a statistical technique. We're able to identify five factors with 10 items in each one, and it satisfied the statistical criteria. And each of those had high inner reliability.

In addition to that, several years later, De Bondt and Van Petegem, Van den Broeck, and several others, in 2014, did confirmatory factor analysis programs and found that the factor structure was invariant even across gender and gendered intelligence levels.

That process took a long time before we would put together a final manual, and that manual is available along with the instrument and scoring sheet for researchers or professional counselors to use. It's not for the everyday public to try to score and understand, but what it did was it saved overexcitability research because research could be done now, all around the world by simply doing a translation of the instrument.

That instrument has been translated into seven of the major linguistic groups, that includes Chinese. It includes Korea. It includes Arabic. It includes Indo-European, and it includes Russian-style languages. So that's what it did. It provided an actual way for people to do research and talk about that. It's my belief that the instrument provided the opportunity for a discussion of overexcitabilities to continue. If it hadn't been for the instrument, I don't think that would've happened. The other thing is that because of that, I think it also provided a background for continuation of Dąbrowski's theory itself. Now an awful lot of people didn't bother to work with the theory, Dąbrowski's theory and worked more just narrowly focused on overexcitabilities, but enough other people became interested in the background. So that really to my mind is what OEQ-II has done. You could go to gifteddevelopment.org, and the instrument is available with a one-time lifetime license for researchers for \$25

Chris: With the OEQ, the original, people were answering a questionnaire with whole paragraphs. And of course, there's great variation in how much people write. Some people are very brief, some people write a lot. And so then you're having to read these sentences, look for the five different types of overexcitabilities and code for them. It's extremely labor-intensive. It's a long, tough process. And like you said, there were two coders. And so then you have to have a consensus, very difficult research to do. So, to have an objective instrument where it's a Likert scale, and so you're just choosing, not like me or this does sound like me, on the scale, then you can just easily score it.

So, that is way faster and I can tell you as somebody who has scored both questionnaires, it's a huge difference. Unfortunately, the problem is that it's much easier to not have it be as accurate with the OEQ-II. I mean with the OEQ, you could really look at comparisons between them and see the difference.

Emma: I actually understand that problem with data in responses to surveys. And I think a lot of people who work in business or have even filled in feedback surveys might be familiar this, you do any sort of customer service thing. People will say, rate out of 10 how likely you are to recommend us to someone else. And it's a number. And when you put that on a data sheet, you can compare numbers and you can make Excel or your software do nice things with making graphs and seeing hard data, but often it's the "do you have any other comments" section, which gives the real gems of insight into what your customer is thinking? And so you've got often in a customer satisfaction survey, you'll be giving a score out of 10, but you're also leaving a

feedback comment, but someone has to take those feedback comments and read them individually and try and make some meaning out of that.

So, in anything when people are filling in any sort of survey, you've got that double-edged sword of well, do we get them to give a score out of 10? And then we've got a nice, neat data set, which we can process and put through all sorts of magical formulas to sort of see patterns or do we rely on individual comments, which gives you better insight into what the customer is thinking, but you can't really quantify that as well. I know what you are saying with sometimes the data can be a bit misleading because if someone gives you a six out of 10, they can give a comment like, oh yeah, the service was fine, but it's just a subjective thing as to where it sits on an out of 10 scale. Whereas another person can give a six and go, yeah, I wasn't terribly impressed.

So, even that number can be misleading because from two points of view, six out of 10 can mean two different things. So, that's kind of the problem, I think Chris that you're alluding to, is that the numbers give us nice, neat data, but you don't always get the perspective of where it's coming from, whereas the comments are where you find your gold, and you can action things and you can take remediation from it, but it's so hard to code that stuff. And I guess that's the work that you are doing when you talk about the coding,

Chris: It's actually something that I've revisited recently in a different way. I've been working on a secondary analysis of Michael's original OEQ data with an assistant that I've been working with. First of all, we've been struck by how hard it is to just sit and code hundreds of pages of text, looking for overexcitabilities. And, of course, we're looking for other things, too. I mean, we're kind of trying to take a 21st century perspective on it. But it's been an interesting experience because Michael had 31 cases with the original data. So, they were all gifted teenagers, identified gifted adolescents. And some of them provided these incredibly rich answers where you see multiple kinds of overexcitabilities. You see subject-object in oneself, you see dynamisms, they're talking about all of this stuff.

And then you see some kids where you're like, there's no overexcitability there at all. Or they're obviously kind of self-centered and unilevel in the way that they're talking about things. When you look at the data, that way you're seeing so much of what Dąbrowski said, well, the OEQ-II, you simply can't get that kind of response. I mean, it's just numbers, one through five. And like you said Emma, it just cannot produce the kind of depth that you can get from a qualitative instrument.

Emma: Frank, I'd like to get your perspective on that because I suppose giving a number's a great level off of people from different backgrounds when Chris is talking about some people fill in an answer quite richly, perhaps they're verbose, or perhaps they're just better with English comprehension or written language in giving their answer, or maybe they're just more extroverted. So do you find having a more quantitative response sort of levels out some of those background difficulties?

Frank: It goes more deeply than that because when you construct an instrument, it has natural limitations. And working now with Chris, we're finding it has theoretical limitations also. But there's a real. I mean, it is a problem. An example, for example, we sometimes ask parents to fill it out about their child. And one of the things that's come out of that is that in the [United] States at any rate, the parents will never rate the child high on imaginal because they think imaginal is bad. And so it creates little problems like that. And we could never figure out why.

At first, we were getting these really low numbers in imaginal when we knew something about the child and knew that imaginal was a large part of their life.

Emma: No one wants to admit that their kid is a daydreamer. Is that it? No one just wants to say my kid has imaginary friends and daydreams a lot because they see it as bad.

Frank: That's exactly right. And those two are exactly two questions that are under imaginal. So you can see how you have those kinds of problems, but it goes beyond that. So you're always confronted with this. Michael, in his work, really his work has been to have exemplars that he brings forward because it's his notion that the exemplars, as he puts it, puts meat on the bones of the overexcitabilities and the levels and the dynamisms. So, that's an interesting kind of way to think about it, too. You could go from exemplars, which gives you rich detail on an individual or his book *Mellow Out*, which is just filled with some great examples of overexcitability among kids. So, you've got that at one level, then you've got the coding of OEQs at another level, and then you have the OEQ-II, which looks at a different level.

Each of them provides certain strengths and certain weaknesses. So there's no clear answer to what the right way to do it is because there isn't exactly a right way. What you're trying to do is get together a systematic way of understanding overexcitabilities and also understanding the difference between individuals and groups of individuals with regard to the characteristics of overexcitabilities. Each of these techniques allows you to do better with some things and better with other things. One of the things that's really become very important. Chris and I have started working together a lot, and we've been very fortunate to have the work of Michael and Bill Tillier. Michael has been doing some translations of original Polish work by Dąbrowski, making that available to us for the first time. And Bill Tillier has a wealth of archived information that he has provided Chris, and through Chris, me with additional input into understanding the theory and how understanding the theory changes the way you would construct both the coding of the intensities of the open-ended questions, as well as how you would construct the overexcitability to questionnaire.

That's really important. So, the 1938 paper that Michael translated and now appears in the 2020 *Advanced Development Journal* and the additional work defining Dąbrowski's work shows that we've misunderstood some of the characteristics of overexcitability. And also, we see that there has been a misunderstanding of the way in which overexcitabilities can be used and talked about. So there are real problems in this area and the measurement of human behavior and humankind is a fascinating and typical area to work in. But on the other hand, look what we can show and

look what myths we can get rid of. So those were important things.

The other paper that's really important is the one that Chris and I wrote called *The Origins and Conceptual Evolution of Overexcitability*. This is a treatment that is detailed and really shows the importance of overexcitabilities in understanding nervousness, and what Dąbrowski called psychoneurotic characteristics, and how they imply all the sort of modern ways of talking about mental health and mental illness.

Chris: Episode 4 has psychoneurosis in it. So, people will luckily be exposed to that before they hear this one. But I just want to say, while you were describing all of this Frank, I couldn't help but think of Episode 2, which was *Overexcitability and Pseudoscience*—because Frank was my co-presenter at NAGC when I was trying to explain the history of scientific inquiry behind overexcitability in Dąbrowski's theory. Just listening to you talk about these two instruments today, you really do get a sense of how much work and effort—but it really was a labor of love on the part of all of you who are doing it. I mean, you were friends and it really brought together a Dąbrowski community. All of these coding workshops. I know some of the materials that Bill shares are newsletters from the nineties.

I know that Cheryl Ackerman was the editor of the Dąbrowski newsletter for a while. Just reading about that kind of stuff. And you can see that it was, I mean, I think it was fun for the people who were doing it, but it also provided a foundation for overexcitability in the field of gifted education. So, all of this is an important part of the history of the theory. It's nice to hear about it. I know it's a lot of details for the layperson, but people want to know the science behind overexcitability. And the fact is there's been decades and decades and decades of research on overexcitability.

Frank: I'm glad you mentioned Cheryl Ackerman. I have a little story. When we were doing the trainings and getting together at Ashland University, Jane Piirto sponsored a number of summer events there where we were all together in a dorm. Cheryl Ackerman came, and she was very quiet, and she wasn't saying much. Finally she talked to somebody, and they said, you really need to talk to Frank. And she came and very hesitantly presented her idea of a research project to be done on gifted kids in Canada. I told her, what a wonderful design, what a wonderful project it would be. I gave her a few tips and things like that. And volunteered to code her data. The result of that was that Cheryl at the very beginning became a major voice. Later she co-edited a two-issue series in *Roeper Review* on the theory and the research. You couldn't have been prouder of a young person taking on this mission and taking it to the level that she did.

Chris: I've never met Cheryl. She's just one of many people, honestly, who I know their names, or I've seen their work, but I haven't had the pleasure of meeting them yet. But, well, there's going to be future congresses and conferences, so you never know.

Emma: I'm interested. And maybe this is a question that cannot be answered, but Frank alluded to the fact that these instruments aren't for the lay person. And one thing that kind of concerns me and anyone who's read my blog knows this is a bit of a passion point for me, it's a hill I'm going to die on, but the lack of resources for people to sort of freely get their hands onto. And particularly for those who don't have any sort of background in psychology. So, I mean, what's the lay person to do, perhaps they've heard about overexcitabilities, maybe it resonates with them a little bit. What are they to do apart from going and having someone else use the instrument on them? Is there any sort of things that people can turn to, to sort of see whether or not it kind of resonates. I know Chris you've talked to about the table of stuff in Michael's book, *Mellow Out*, but is there anything sort of out there that people can turn to?

Chris: Well, there is the open-ended—the original OEQ is available. In the chapter that came out, that I wrote with Michael in the Handbook for Counselors, but I'll put it in the show notes, the link to it, because it can be downloaded from my ResearchGate. It has, I think we used a 24-item version of the OEQ in that chapter, but it's the open-ended version and it's great because when you look at those questions, it's kind of for your own personal exploration of them. So, that's a resource. Just personally, I wonder why the layperson couldn't use the OEQ-II themselves to see where they land on it. I guess the problem is in the interpretation. If you give somebody who doesn't know about overexcitability, the OEQ-II, I mean, they will get these scores, but they won't really have much meaning for them, I guess.

I can say that as somebody who has—I use it with my clients sometimes—and if I just give them their scores, it's not enough. I have to explain what it means. So, even though you want to be able to give somebody an instrument and let them figure it out for themselves, it doesn't really work that way in reality. I don't think that was really clear to me until this past year when I was working with clients and using it with them to discuss their overexcitabilities. And also, I think it's problematic that we don't have enough to offer lay people. I mean, we can point them to Michael's book, *Mellow Out*. We can point them to *Living with Intensity*. We can point them to Dąbrowski's theory. It's really the best we can do at the moment.

They have your blog at this point, Emma, and they have your videos and stuff. And so it's not that there aren't places, but do we need more? Yes, we do. Do we need some kind of way for people to rate themselves? That would be cool. I wish that we did have it.

Frank: The problem, too, is that how are they to understand it? And there have been so many misinterpretations of overexcitabilities. Some of the work that Chris and I are doing is to describe and talk about the ways in which overexcitabilities can lead to mental illness. And just assuming that you have an overexcitability and you don't understand its nature and how it could be a very negative event. And it requires a particular combination of the overexcitabilities to be positive. And one of the things that I'm going to be doing is I'm going to be doing a keynote at the next conference, Congress. My title is Dąbrowski—The Existential Therapist. What I've been doing is working on understanding how he did therapy. Because in understanding that I think we get not just his words, but what his behavior was and have a better understanding of what he was trying to deal with.

Part of that is his intense desire to make the world a better place. And that is not understood and not talked about enough. He was not interested in trying to give therapy to just anybody, because he really felt that he had a special talent and I'm putting words into do his mouth, but I think we can gain a great deal, a better understanding about it in that kind of way. So, the work that Chris and I doing in defining the ways in which overexcitabilities lead to things like ADHD and lead to things like autism and obsessive-compulsive is an important part of understanding what overexcitabilities are about. So many people want to sort of take overexcitabilities and say, "Everything's okay, it's just overexcitability," without recognizing it has real implications for the behavior and the social adjustment of individuals.

I worry about giving people information without proper guidance, as Dąbrowski would say, you need an advisor. And his point is that advisor could be almost anybody as long as they have the multilevel abilities so that they can really help a person. So, he really thought that psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers could do this, but so could parents and educators. The trick is to not just tell people whether they have overexcitabilities, but to interpret it and show them where it could be good and where it could be bad. And that has not been a major thrust. Now, I have to say that I not only represent thoughts from Michael and Linda and Nancy, but also from Chris.

Chris has brought so much wealth to that understanding. And because we've been able to get so many things from Bill Tillier and also guidance from Michael, who because of the way he approached overexcitabilities caused us to move overexcitabilities only in the positive direction. And now, as I've been talking to him and Chris has been talking to him about these negative aspects, he's not happy about it, but he's encouraging me to think about it and to work on it. It's a wonderful enterprise.

Chris: But I feel really obligated to say Frank—and I agree with so much of what you said—but I just want to clarify that I don't even think of it as, that these are negative aspects of overexcitability. I mean, I think that these are challenges. Personally, I take a really affirming approach when it comes to ADHD or autism. I don't think that these are problems. You shouldn't be made to feel like there's something wrong with you because you're ADHD or autistic. The fact is, you happen to have these challenges in overexcitability that make it more difficult for you to adjust to the world.

Well, the world's not built for you. And so I think that this is just a more well-rounded understanding of what Dąbrowski meant. It's true that the more Michael has translated the Polish works, the clearer it's been for us that he was working in the 1930s with children who were in institutions. That's where he was getting this material for his early work on overexcitability. I mean, these were obviously kids with serious challenges. So, it has really enriched our modern understanding to go back to that early work. I'm grateful for Michael's efforts. He agreed with me when we spoke that in early 2022, we're going to get back at it and keep working on that book from 1935 because we've still got a way to go

Frank: For coding open ended data, it has to be done with computer analysis. It should not be left to individuals. So, we need to use qualitative data systems to really allow us to analyze the open-ended material. And we're a ways from doing that. We tried doing it. One of my graduate students tried doing that with levels and we were moderately successful, but the computer programs that Chris works with, I think could be used to really develop that. And that would be a major, major improvement from a research point of view. And then we need to rethink the OEQ-II.

Chris: We do. We need to, yeah, I agree. We need to really think about what items reflect the challenges, like I said of overexcitability, and give us a better picture of it based on all of the data we have available and all of the evidence. But I agree with you that it would be great to be able to use the qualitative data analysis software and to have a categorization dictionary. I actually have a friend who does this kind of work with AI, and we just kind of accidentally discovered that we both do this same kind of text analysis work. And it was a very cool thing to realize because he's way ahead of me when it comes to developing this kind of thing. So, I feel much more hopeful knowing him than I did even a year ago before I realized that somebody was doing something so close to what I've been trying to accomplish when it comes to studying text.

I have really pulled apart Dąbrowski's work and Michael's work and the data using these tools. So, I know that I'm just at the beginning of it and that we'll be able to make this a reality at some point, but it takes time. When it comes to the future of overexcitability, I have to say, I hope that it can transcend and break free from gifted education and make it into the world of psychology, where it can be studied by a way broader group of people. I want scientists to study it. I want medical doctors to be interested in and study the neurology of all of this. And so to me, that's an important future. I know that you're on board with that, too, Frank. We've had many conversations about this, so I'm really just putting words in your mouth.

So, yeah, it feels like it's been a long time since we met at this point. I was trying to figure out what I was going to do and where I was going to go with all of this. We've had so many discussions at this point about Dąbrowski's work and overexcitability. And what about the research, and what about this? It's been a real journey and you've been there with me this whole way. I feel equally grateful for Michael and Bill for all that they've brought to our understanding.

Frank: Yeah, it's a wonderful enterprise.

Chris: It is. You're all my mentors. I told Bill this week that, of course, I'm working on this book about Michael. And I see Michael as my mentor, but I said Bill and Frank are my mentors, too. So, I'm grateful for you for coming on and talking with me and Emma.

Frank: It's been fun.

Chris: I'm glad to hear that.

Emma: Thanks, Frank, it's been really insightful for me. I think for people who aren't in the field of research, they may enjoy it as well. Sort of getting an insight into how scientific this is, and not only how scientific is, but how much hard work. Chris, as you alluded to before, there's a lot of effort that's gone into this. And people like me who are starting down that journey of sort of discovering themselves are very grateful that there's something out there to discover and that there are people putting the effort in because at the end of the day, it is about the individuals whose life this touches. So, thank you. And thanks for coming on the podcast.

Frank: My pleasure.

Emma: Thank you, as well, Chris, for joining us once again on our podcast, it's been a delight as always.

Chris: Thank you. Again, yes. It's been a delight.

Emma: And thank you to our listeners. We always appreciate you joining us on the podcast. If you've got any questions, comments, or feedback, please feel free to reach out to us. You can contact us by email at PositiveDisintegration.pod@gmail.com or find us on Twitter and Instagram, and, as always, keep walking that path to your authentic self.