



Dabrowski Center

Annual Report

2023 Activities

The Dabrowski Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the mission of actively promoting mental health through the application, exploration, research, and dissemination of the theory of positive disintegration. We alleviate suffering by reframing mental illness through the lens of positive disintegration. The Center is the international home of Dąbrowski's theory, and we encourage people from around the world to reach out to us for help, services, and resources.

Dabrowski Center was formed on February 2, 2022 with three members of the Board of Directors: Chris Wells, Tina Harlow, and Jason Wells. On January 28, 2023, the board voted and unanimously approved Emma Nicholson as our Vice President.

Our major programs include maintaining an archive of work about the theory as well as related topics such as giftedness. We sponsor the Positive Disintegration Podcast and host the Positive Disintegration Study Group. We provide a variety of professional services such as speaking engagements and consulting. Community building will continue to be a priority for our work, as well as making archive materials available on the website.

In 2024, we are hosting the 16th International Dabrowski Congress, which will be held at the University of Denver, Denver, Colorado, on July 11-14, 2024. We're planning to publish an online course about the theory of positive disintegration as well as a Dabrowski 101 video for YouTube. We are creating a program to train people who have been through the process of positive disintegration to support others in their development.

This report of activities from the 2023 calendar year was compiled by Chris Wells, PhD, LSW, our President and CEO.

Positive Disintegration Podcast

The podcast was launched on October 25, 2021, and is hosted on Substack by co-hosts Chris Wells and Emma Nicholson. It is a syndicated podcast available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and all other major podcast platforms.

At the beginning of January 2023, Listen Notes ranked *Positive Disintegration* in the top 10% of all podcasts, and we started the year with 18,028 downloads. On December 31, 2023, we were ranked in the top 3% of all podcasts on Listen Notes, and we had 57,241 downloads.

On January 1, 2023, we had 326 subscribers on Substack, 360 followers on Apple Podcasts, and 435 followers on Spotify. At the end of December 2023, we had 760 subscribers on Substack, 719 followers on Apple Podcasts, 1,075 followers on Spotify.

In 2023, we introduced a new format called “Quick Bites,” which are brief episodes (~20 minutes) with Chris and Emma.

Twenty-five new episodes were released in 2023:

1/3/23: Ep 25: Experiences Being Profoundly Gifted: Part 1 with Nth Bar-Fields and Joi Lin

1/10/23: Ep 26: Experiences Being Profoundly Gifted: Part 2 with Nth Bar-Fields and Joi Lin

1/29/23: Ep 27: Through the Neurodivergent Mirror with Tracy Winter

2/13/23: Ep 28: Positive Disintegration in Organizations with Kate Arms

2/25/23: Ep 29: The Disintegrating Duck

3/12/23: Ep 30: Celebrating Neurodiversity, Overexcitabilities, and Giftedness with Katy Higgins Lee

3/29/23: Ep 31: Gifted Connections with Celi Trépanier

4/13/23: Ep 32: You Are Not Alone! With Sophia Elliott

5/1/23: Ep 33: A Personal Journey of Self-Discovery with David Sweeney

5/23/23: Ep 34: Mental Health Awareness

6/5/23: Ep 35: Dabrowski's Theory in Practice with Patty Gatto-Walden

7/7/23: Ep 36: Fostering Gifted Growth at Yunasa

7/20/23: Ep 37: Self-Directed Education with Marni Kammersell

8/7/23: Ep 38: Quick Bite on Regret

8/14/23: Ep 39: Disintegration and Neurodivergence with Joey Lawrence

8/24/23: Ep 40: Quick Bite, Writing on Substack

9/18/23: Ep 41: Emotional Tension, the Shadow, and Personal Growth with Catherine Zakoian

9/25/23: Ep 42: Dynamisms, Personality Ideal, and Inner Work with Catherine Zakoian

10/3/23: Ep 43: Quick Bite, Trauma and Disintegration

10/12/23: Ep 44: Complexity, Intensity, and Multiple Perspectives with Matt Zakreski

10/20/23: Ep 45: Quick Bite, Dabrowski Congress 2024

10/25/23: Ep 46: Quick Bite, Two Years of Positive Disintegration

11/5/23: Ep 47: Harry Potter and the Path of Positive Disintegration with Katy McDaniel and Emily Strand

11/28/23: Ep 48: Piechowski's Insights on Positive Disintegration with Michael M. Piechowski

12/18/23: Ep 49: Quick Bite, Battling Socialization

Positive Disintegration Study Group

In October 2023, Chris launched a second cohort of the Positive Disintegration Study Group, which meets on Fridays at 4 pm Mountain Time. The original cohort meets on Saturdays at 11 am Mountain Time.

Both cohorts connect via hidden, private groups on Facebook, and meets via Zoom once per month for 90 minutes to discuss a topic or reading that is of interest to the group. Chris Wells facilitates these discussions, with Emma Nicholson on Fridays, and attendance ranges between 10-14 members.

At the end of 2023, the Friday cohort included 19 members in the Facebook group and the Saturday cohort had 25 members. Not all members join the monthly Zoom gatherings. Marni Kammersell helps out as an admin in the Facebook groups.

There is a suggested donation of \$10 per session, and members contributed \$3,376.57 in 2023.

The Saturday cohort met on the following days in 2023:

1/28/23: Reading, Grant & Piechowski's (1999) "Theories and the Good: Toward a Child-Centered Gifted Education."

3/4/23: Topic, discussion of Ellen Fiedler's interview with Annemarie Roeper.

3/25/23: Reading, 4E model of cognition with reading on Enactivism shared by Richard Edelman.

4/22/23: Reading, Dabrowski's foreword to Piechowski's (1975) "A Theoretical and Empirical Approach to the Study of Development."

5/27/23: Topic, Autopschotherapy, including episode 6 with Kate Arms and excerpts from Dabrowski's work.

7/8/23: Reading, Dabrowski (n.d.), *Developmental Psychotherapy*, Intro and Chapter 1

8/26/23: Reading, Dabrowski (n.d.), *Developmental Psychotherapy*, Chapter 1

9/23/23: Reading, Dabrowski (n.d.), *Developmental Psychotherapy*, Chapter 1

10/28/23: Reading, Dabrowski (n.d.), *Developmental Psychotherapy*, Chapter 2.

11/25/23: Reading, Nick Walker, “Throw Away the Master’s Tools: Liberating Ourselves from the Pathology Paradigm.”

12/16/23: Topic, the work of Michael M. Piechowski, and episode 48 with Michael.

The Fridy cohort met on the following dates in 2023:

10/20/23: Reading, Wells & Falk (2021) “The Origins and Conceptual Evolution of Overexcitability.”

11/24/23: Reading, Mika (2006) “Giftedness, ADHD, and Overexcitabilities: The Possibility of Misinformation” and Hartnett, Nelson, & Rinn (2004) “Gifted or ADHD? The Possibilities of Misdiagnosis.”

12/29/23: Our topic was a podcast, Conversations on Gifted Trauma, Ep. 13, with Jen Harvey Sallin & Eva Bruchez.

Presentations

3/14/23: Chris Wells & Nicole Mattingly presented a webinar for the Davidson Institute, "Differentiating Giftedness from Achievement and Mitigating the Risks of Each."

10/8-10/10/23: WATG (Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted) conference, Wisconsin Dells, WI, Chris Wells presented “Empowering Students with a Neurodiversity Affirming Perspective.”

11/9-11/12/23: NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children) conference in Orlando, FL. Chris Wells “Overexcitabilities and Dabrowski’s Theory: Correcting the Course in Gifted Education.

Guest Appearances

3/14/23: Chris Wells was interviewed on *Quark Human Range* by Lin Lim-Goh (YouTube) “Dabrowski Center—Finding Me/Us.”

4/21/23: Chris was a guest on the KALA radio show and podcast *ROI: Relevant or Irrelevant* with Jay Swords and history buffs Brett Monnard and Rick Sweet, Episode 506: “The Theory of Positive Disintegration.”

4/24/23: Chris Wells and Emma Nicholson were guests on the podcast *Stories Lived. Stories Told*. With Abbie VanMeter, Episode 44: “Positive Disintegration and Overexcitability.”

Social Media Presence

Dabrowski Center

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/dabrowskicenter>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/dabrowski.center/>

LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/dabrowski-center>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@dabrowskicenter>

Positive Disintegration Podcast

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/positivedisintegrationpod>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/positivedisintegration_podcast/

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@positivedisintegrationpodc401/>

Other Activities

- In 2023, the Dabrowski Center website had 7,368 visitors and 39,647 pageviews.
- Stacie Brown McCullough joined the Center first as an intern and later as a contract employee upon her graduation from Texas Woman's University in May 2023. Stacie helped us produce our first newsletter, and we released newsletters via Constant Contact on 2/2/23, 3/2/23, 4/6/23, 7/20/23, and 10/6/23. Following the October newsletter, we decided to use Substack for future Dabrowski Center updates until future notice. Chris and Stacie met 24 times in 2023 via Zoom.
- Jack Wells worked with Chris as the archive assistant scanning documents.
- Chris Wells attended the Yunasa planning meeting in Pasadena, CA on February 10-12, 2023, and worked as a Facilitator at Yunasa West (Colorado), June 9-18, 2022, and Yunasa East (Michigan), July 21-29, 2023
- Chris Wells attended the SENG Denver Area Meetup on April 4, 2023, at the Kachina Southwestern Grill in Westminster, CO.
- Chris Wells contributed 29 pro bono consulting hours in 2023.
- We made significant progress in adding to the archives on the Dabrowski Center website. The Piechowski Archive includes nearly all of Michael's published works. We added "Quote Collages" from Chris to the Dabrowski and Piechowski Archives as well as a book review of Dabrowski's 1972 book *Psychoneurosis is Not an Illness* from Emma.
- Chris Wells reviewed a total of five papers for *Gifted Child Quarterly* (2), *Gifted Child Today*, *Roeper Review*, and *Roczniki Psychologiczne* [Annals of Psychology]. Chris also reviewed

proposals for NAGC 2023 (Conceptual Foundations Network) and gave feedback on two unpublished book manuscripts.

- Chris traveled to Wisconsin in October to present at WATG and record Positive Disintegration Podcast Episode 48 with Dr. Michael M. Piechowski in person at his home on October 13, 2023.

- Chris is an admin in the Facebook groups: **Parents of Gifted and Twice-Exceptional Kids** (with Kate Arms, Jen Merrill, Stephanie Smart, & Jen Curry), both **Positive Disintegration Study Groups** (with Marni Kammersell & Emma Nicholson, *Friday* and Marni Kammersell, *Saturday*), and **Dabrowski Center and Positive Disintegration Podcast Community** (with Marni Kammersell & Emma Nicholson).

Dabrowski Center Team

Chris Wells, PhD, LSW, CEO & President

Emma Nicholson, Vice President

Tina Harlow, MSW, LCSW, Secretary

Jason Wells, Treasurer

Stacie Brown McCullough, Intern and Contractor

Jack Wells, Archive Assistant

* This report was submitted to the Board of Directors and approved on February 14, 2024.