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Recognising, and managing, the genius at work.

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Managing Change and Innovation

Chartered Management Institute

National Convention 2007

Genius at Work: Managing the Creative Personality

Angela Mansi *CPsychol*

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Overview of workshop

- Defining 'genius'
- Recognising it
- Psychological theories
- How can we foster it?
- How can we manage it?

Brain warming exercise

3 people you would call a genius?

What have they done?

Compare with partner

Agree?

Marie Curie



1867 - 1934

Physicist -
Discovered
radioactivity

2 Nobel prizes

Leonardo da Vinci



1452 - 1519

Scientist

Mathematician

Inventor

Painter

Sculptor

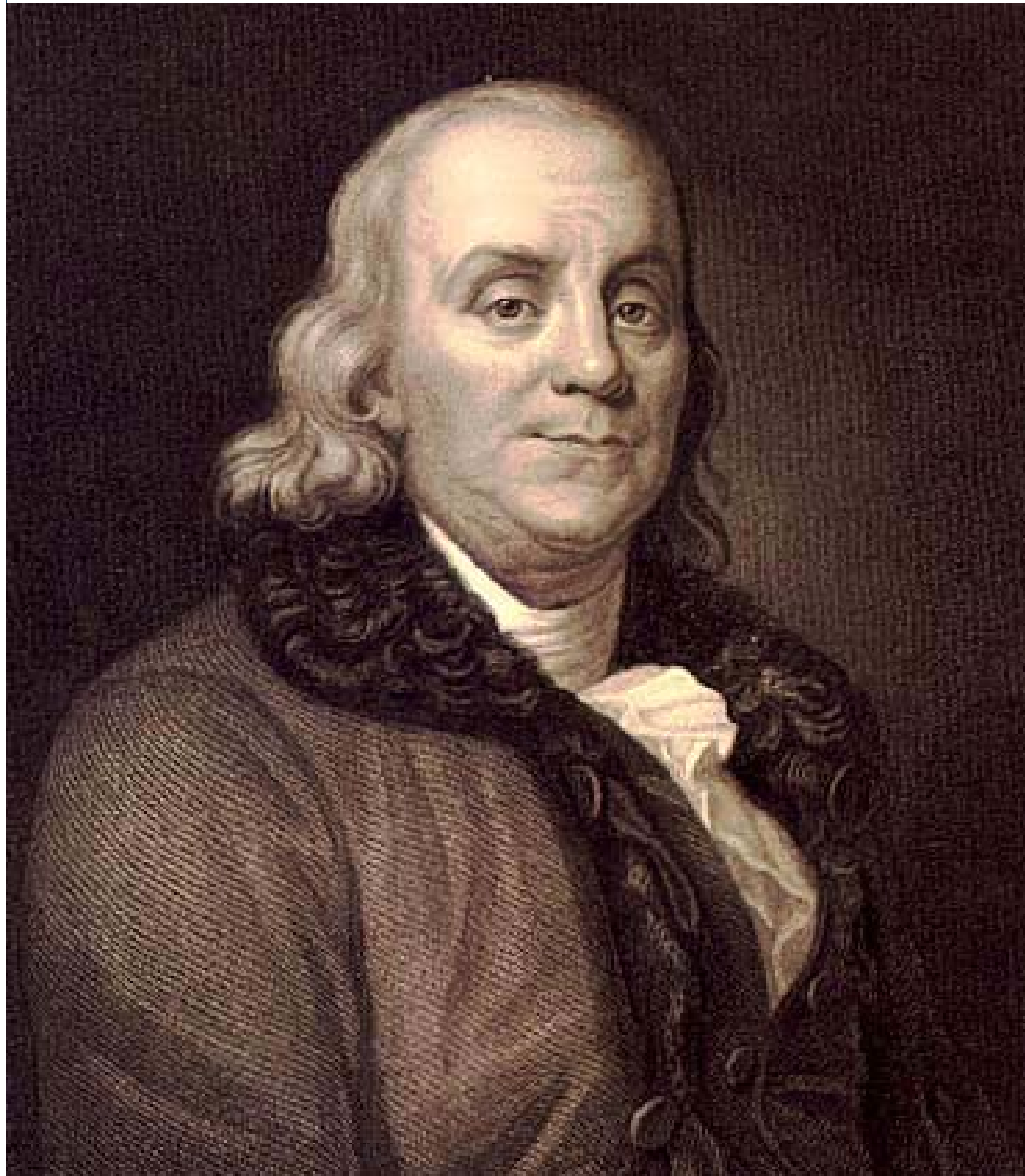
Architect

Musician

Writer

Engineer

Benjamin Franklin



1706 - 1790

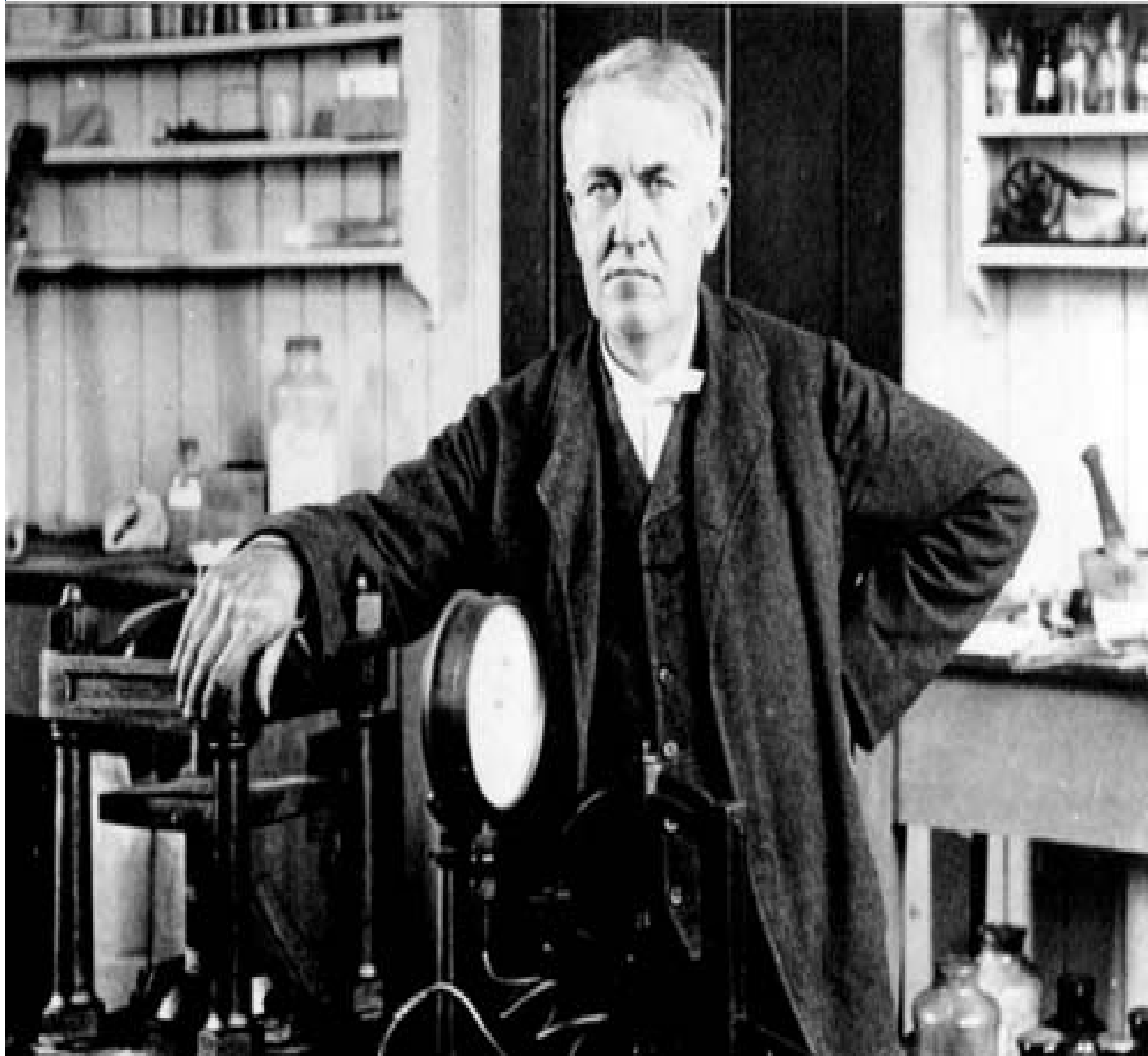
Politician
Writer
Inventor
Printer
Scientist
Diplomat
Activist

Thomas Edison

1847 - 1931

*“Genius is 90%
perspiration
and 10%
inspiration”*

*Inventor
Businessman
1000 patents*



J.M.W Turner



*“...the only
secret to my
success is
damned hard
work”*

RA at 14 yrs

William Shockley



1910-1989

High School drop-out

Nobel Prize
Physics
1956

Psychology of Genius

- G.A.M. Theory (Therivel, 1998)
- Creativity and cognitive styles
- Stage theory of Creativity (Wallas 1926)
- Creativity and mental illness....

The GAM Theory of Creativity

Therivel 1998

- Are people born or made creative?
- **G** - Genes
- **A** - Assistance in youth
- **M** - Misfortune

Cognitive styles

- Convergent
- Divergent
- Processing of information
- Psychometric testing:
 - Openness to Experience
 - Sensing-iNtuitive
 - Intellectance
 - Curiosity, playfulness

Stage Theory

Wallas 1926

- Preparation
- Incubation
- Illumination
- Verification

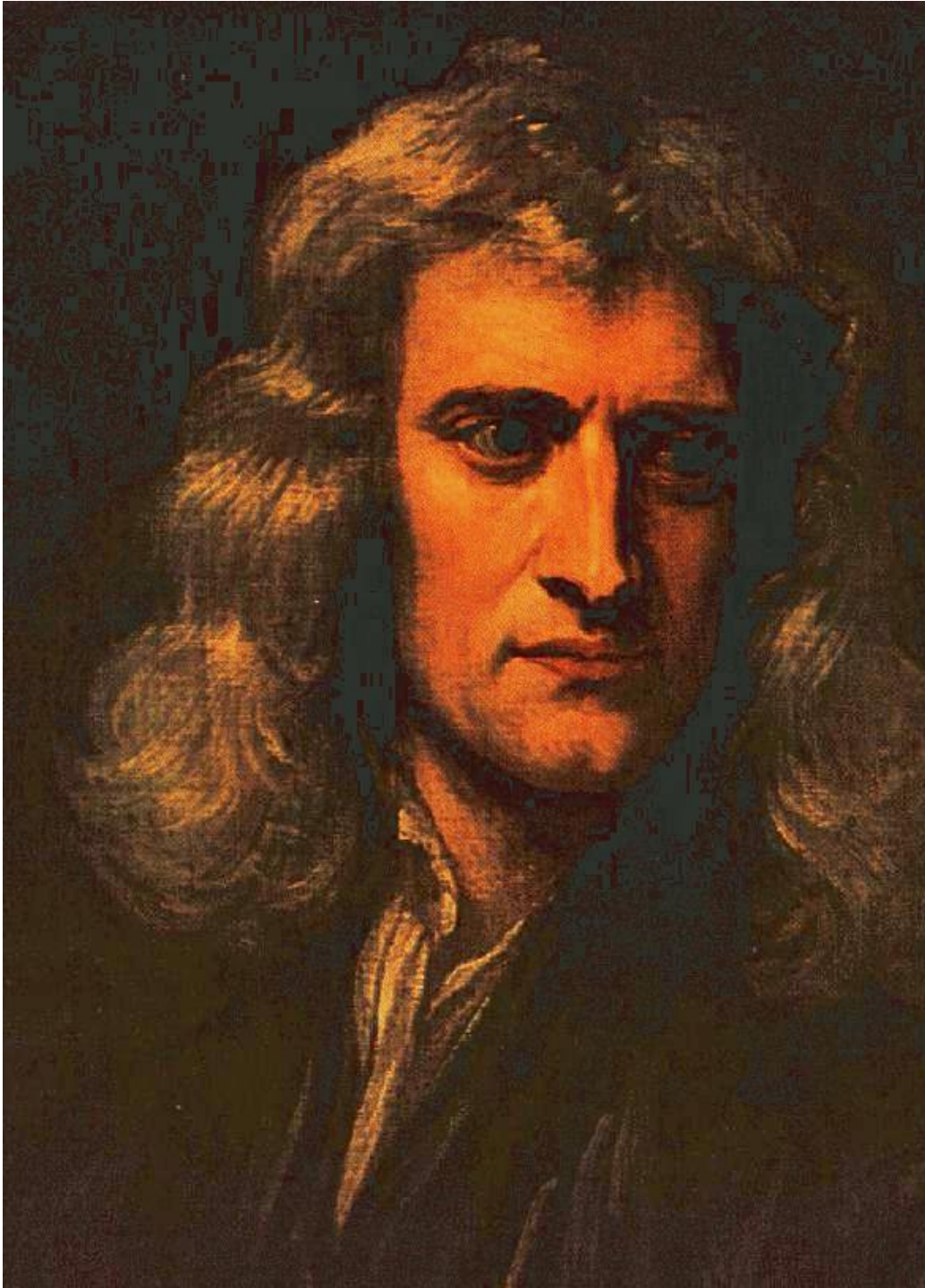
Creativity and mental illness

- Creative = genius?
- Creative = neurotic?
- Dark side of genius
- Depression, paranoia and other qualities

“Great actions never spring from healthy, satisfied states, but only from inner turmoil and restlessness”

Anthony Storr,
(Psychoanalyst) 1988

Isaac Newton



1643 - 1727

Genius, but...

Paranoid

Anti-social

Suspicious

Solitary

Irritable

Depressed

(see GAM
theory)

Managing genius

So what...?

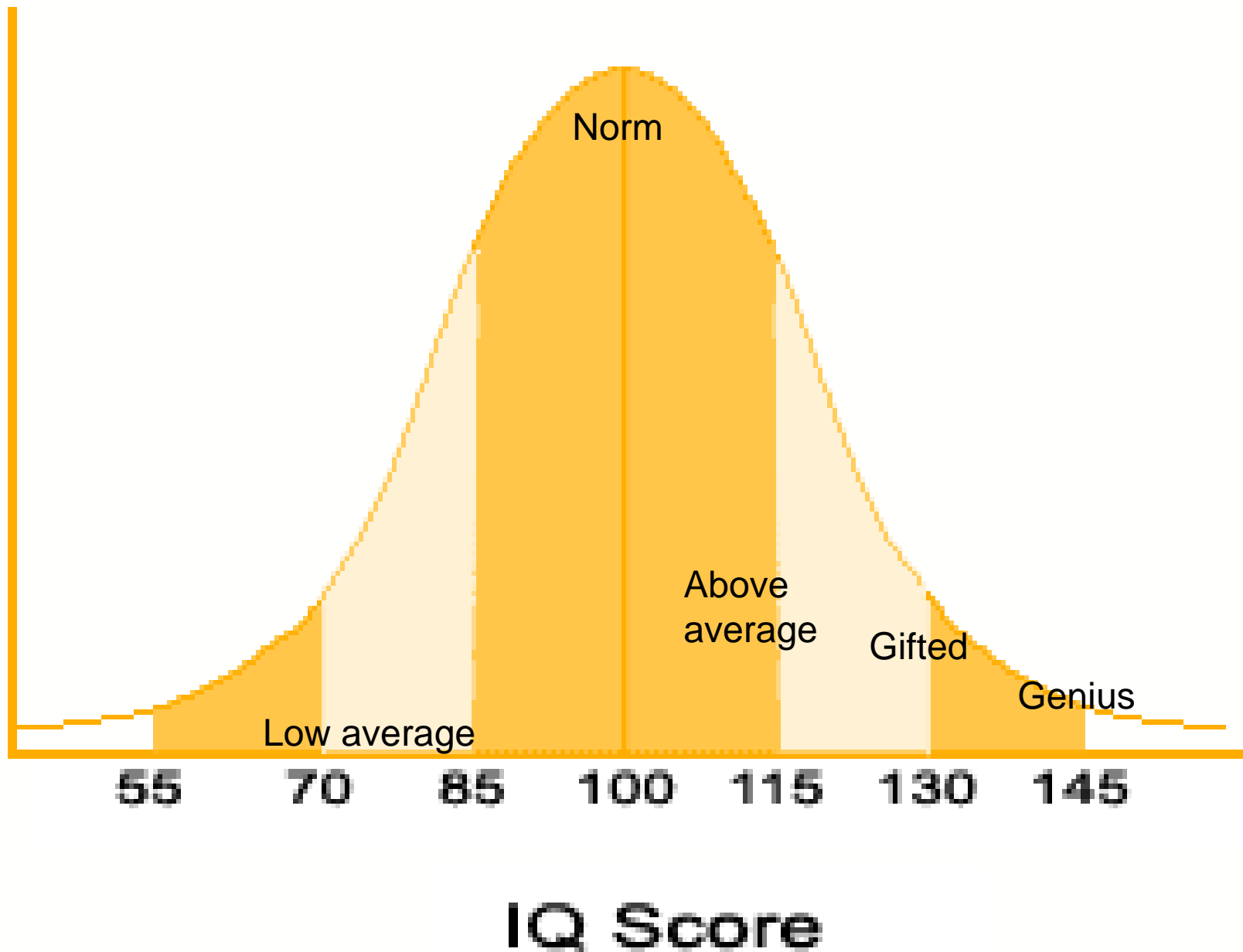
- Why useful to know?
- Relevance to organisations?
- Managing creative types...
- Fostering genius

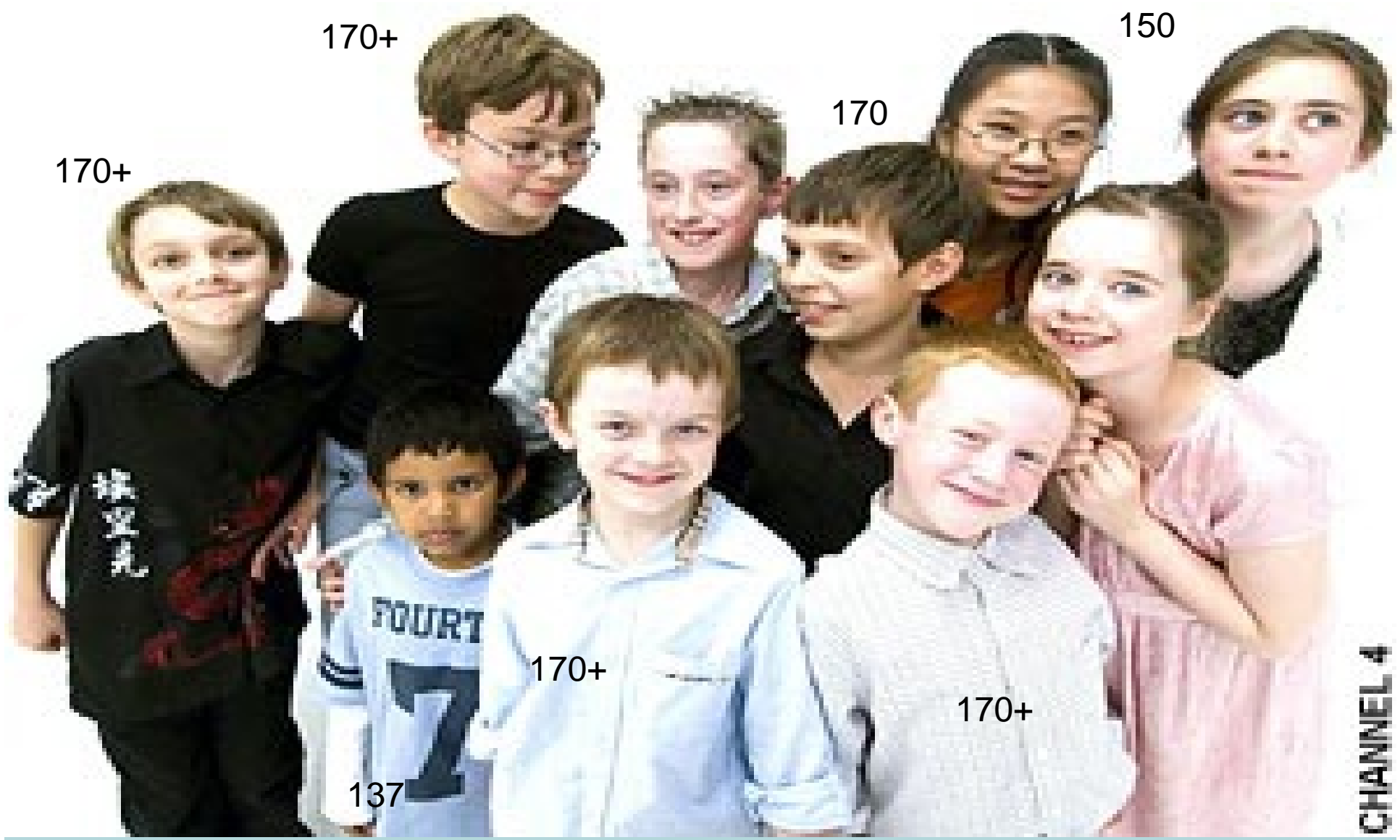
Profile of the Creative Personality

- Intense curiosity - high on O (Tolstoy's bicycle)
- High need for autonomy, control
- Confident
- Non-conformist, rebels, rule-breakers
- Multi-talented, single minded
- High discipline but low Conscientiousness - ?
- Mentally focussed



Distribution of IQ scores





CHANNEL 4

Selection

Assessment

- Neo - 5 test
- MBTI
- HPI and HDS
- 16PF
- N?

Development

- Professional Development
- Dark Side of Genius
 - Selection
 - Nurturing
 - Coaching
- Time

Fostering Genius

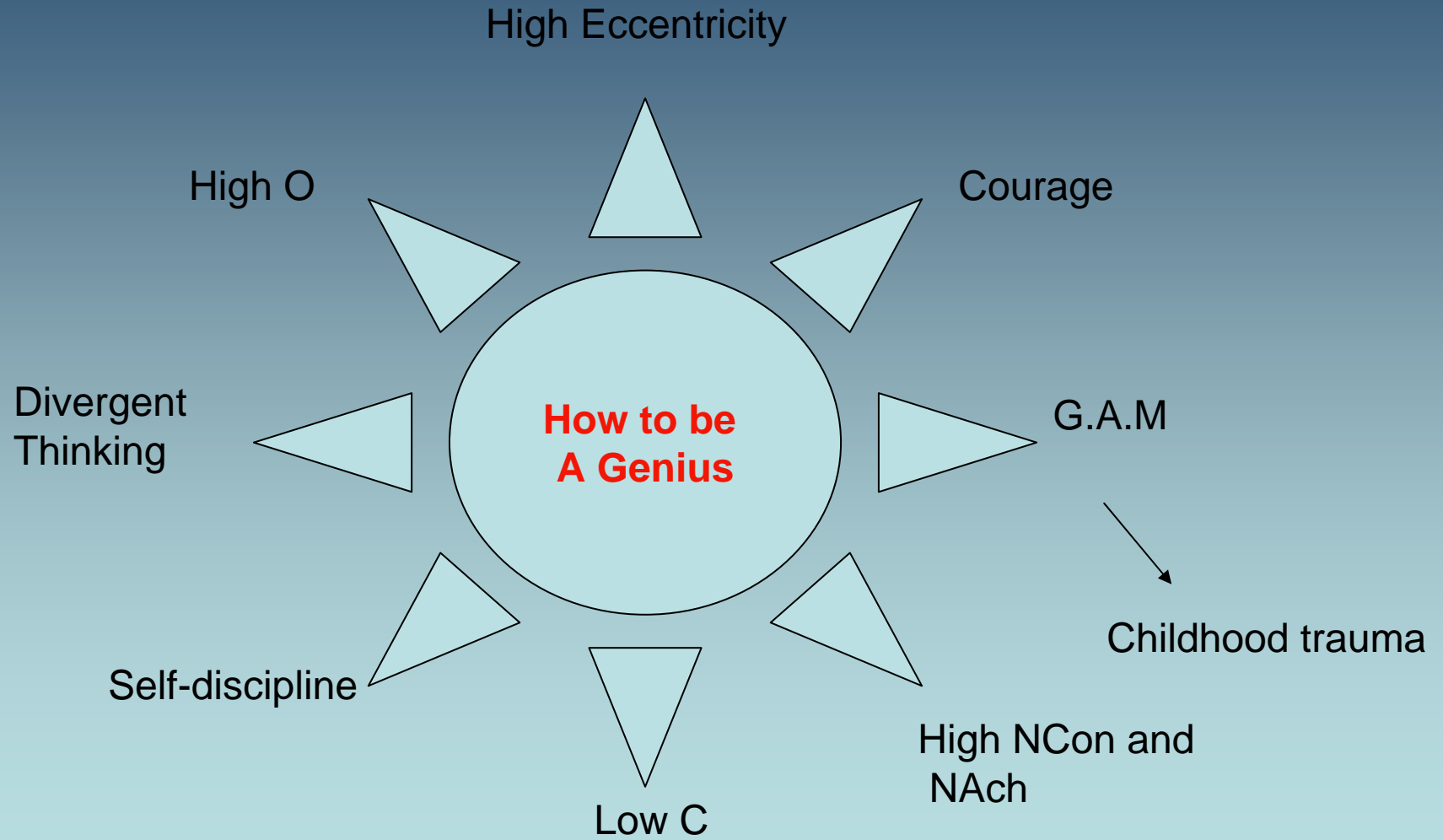
- Leadership of organisation
- Job characteristics
- Structure
- Climate
- Culture

(King & Anderson, 1995)

*“Self confidence is the first great
requisite to great undertakings”*

Alexander Pope

Are you a genius?



The crazy ones...

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