

Help! I've been cursed! I'm too sensitive . . .

So, what is the deal with this high sensitivity thing? It sounds like someone who is broken and something needs to be fixed. Why? Because other people often tell sensitive folks that you "need to toughen up," "grow a thicker skin" and "stop being so emotional." Back in Freud's day, people even referred to sensitivity as being "hysterical" or "neurotic." Ewwwww. All of these labels are awful!

Well, I'm here to tell you something different.

I'm highly sensitive, and I'm a licensed therapist, and the idea that sensitivity is a flaw is a bunch of bull!

Let's do an exercise to test this out. First, think about any personality trait you can come up with. Then, list the strengths and weaknesses associated with that trait.

Let's give it a go . . .

1. Calm:
 - strength--focused, patient, peaceful, grounded
 - weakness--on the boring side, lack of animation or enthusiasm, could be slow to respond, may not show passion

Ok, let's go again:

2. Outgoing:
 - strength--makes friends easily, enjoys parties and social gatherings, life of the party, viewed positively in our culture
 - weakness--may not really listen to others, too focused on what they have to say, may jump to conclusions or decisions without considering all the facts, could ignore or dismiss feedback from someone with a quieter style

Still not sure about this yet? Let's do one more.

3. Confident:
 - strength--assertive, self-assured, persuasive, able to accomplish goals
 - weakness--could be presumed as full-of-yourself, cocky, aggressive, could be convinced their way is always the right way, not a team player

I think you know where I'm going with this. Sensitivity is defined as a personality trait. As such, it has strengths and weaknesses, just like everything else. Being highly sensitive gets an unfair, bad rap. I bet it's pretty easy to come up with the negatives of being sensitive--too emotional, feelings easily hurt, gets overwhelmed too often, makes 'mountains out of molehills,' yada, yada, yada.

Now, time for a change. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath, feel the air come in through your nose, fill your belly and release out of your mouth. Really.

Stop reading this now and take that breath. . . Then, take 2 more breaths just like it. Ok, now answer this: What special traits do you bring to the world? What do you do better than other people?

kind
compassionate
intuitive
can quickly detect the mood in a room
may be artistic
may be easily moved by music, movies, art
notice details that others ignore
know what someone else needs to hear
interpret non-verbal cues and body language really well
may love nature
or animals
animals may be drawn to you
good listener
empathic
insightful
and on
and on
with the many qualities associated with being a HSP.

... So, once and for all, can we agree that sensitivity is not a disorder or something to be fixed? **It is simply a trait**, neither all good nor all bad. Period. End of story.

Ready to go deeper? Check out my [HSP groups](#) or let's [connect](#) to talk further.

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