



# 3 SOURCES OF SENSITIVITY

A SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR THE HIGHLY SENSITIVE TRAIT (SPS)



# INTRODUCTION

This self-assessment is organized in 3 main categories of stimulation that are commonly associated with the highly sensitive trait. These are: environment, people and internal (or self).

It also includes an additional category, spirituality. While this category is not to be counted in the self- assessment, it is not uncommon for highly sensitive people to feel a deep spiritual connection. If you identify with the spiritual qualities listed, it might help you in voicing your feelings with friends, family or a therapist, etc.

# INSTRUCTIONS

Mark the items that you feel you generally experience (ie. all the time, most of the time, sometimes). If it is not something you generally experience (occasionally, infrequently, no at all), leave it blank.

# SCORING

If you identified with 17 of the 33 items in the 3 main categories, you probably have the highly sensitive trait. Notice if you are more sensitive in one category. This can help you avoid triggers or plan for time to rest and recharge after being overwhelmed.

# DISCLAIMER

This self-assessment is not intended to diagnose or exclude the diagnosis of any disorder, condition or illness. If you identify as highly sensitive and need mental health support, please visit our online directory.

# ENVIRONMENTAL



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Noisy places often bother me.  
Even a siren passing by can make me tense up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I don't like being where there are a lot of bright, flashing lights.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I prefer scent-free environments; there are many smells that are offensive to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have a hard time watching violence in movies or TV.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am easily startled.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I don't like being in a cluttered space. I think better and feel better in a clear, open environment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I don't like going to places with a lot of old things like antiques or flea markets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I crave being around animals and nature.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have a hard time wearing certain fabrics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Certain rooms and/or places give me the creeps.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I cannot sit in a chair that is not comfortable for very long.

# PEOPLE



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. If I hang around someone for awhile, I will pick up their mannerisms, accents or expressions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I don't perform as well if someone is watching me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My feelings get hurt easily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. It's difficult for me to be around highly egotistical people or those who don't care how they treat others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I feel what other people around me are feeling.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. If someone is sad, I become sad. If I'm around happy people, I feel happy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I catch other people's "bugs" (colds, flus) and have a lot of 'sympathy pains'.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I can tell when someone isn't being honest (about their feelings or something factual).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I worry about hurting other people's feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I often stick up for "the underdog" and feel strongly about social injustices.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I tend to size people up rather quickly.

# INTERNAL / SELF



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I like to daydream and often escape into my imagination.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I need my own space and alone time. It's essential for me to unplug from the world sometimes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I get overwhelmed if there's too much going on in my life (too many activities, obligations or deadlines).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Music, movies, books or the arts moves me very deeply.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am sensitive to caffeine, stimulants or other substances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I tend to be sensitive to hunger, pain and changes in my body.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I would probably describe myself as having some addictive behavior.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I don't like being told what to do or doing things I don't enjoy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I think people sometimes think of me as being insensitive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I consider myself to be a very creative person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I am often fatigued and/or have suffered with some type of auto immune issue.

# SPIRITUAL



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I think a lot about spiritual matters (heaven, angels, etc).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I feel a strong need to understand the meaning of life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I feel deeply connected to the universe, nature and spirit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I often wonder what my purpose is on earth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am attracted to holistic healing and the metaphysical.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I frequently contemplate love, fear, and truth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I believe humans are not alone in the universe.

*Remember that this category is not to be counted in the self-assessment.*

If you are a mental health professional and would like to become certified in the specialty of Highly Sensitive People, please visit Nickerson Institute's accredited online course.



Website