

## Communicating with Non-HSPs: share your trait, decrease frustration, and increase relationship harmony.

Hi Sensitive Souls. I'm Tammy and I want to share with you some tips on making your relationships flow more smoothly while getting what you need as an HSP. Like you, I'm Highly Sensitive and have been challenged in relationships...romantic, business, with family and friends. Learning how to share my trait, identify my needs, and listen and share with compassion has made such a difference, and I'd like to share that with you.

Highly Sensitive are wired differently. It's important to acknowledge this, and help others realize that we're not choosing to be different or challenging. It's also very important for us to recognize that non-HSPs are not necessarily choosing to be different or challenging either! How many times have you thought, "How can you do such a thing?" or, "How can you not know that would be hurtful to me?" Likely that other person has no idea it would be a problem, because it wouldn't be for them!

What is so obvious to us may not even have been noticed by others, and their motivation may be completely different. When a non-HSP says or does something that feels disrespectful or even hurtful, unreasonable or down-right unacceptable to you, it could be that it is just fine in their book, and if you'd done the same they wouldn't have batted an eye. Seeing things differently doesn't mean being uncaring. It's likely that they just have no idea what it's like to be you, what the potential is for your reaction to their words or actions.

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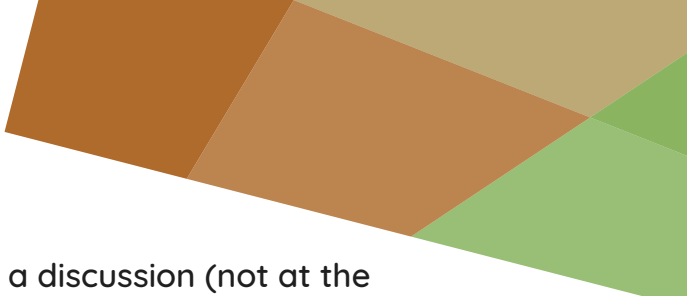
**It's all about awareness, and communication.**

Now that you're aware that you and your non-HSP folks see things differently, how do you help them understand you and therefore get your needs met, in a compassionate way? First, you want to make sure you understand your trait well enough to explain it. Key points to know and share might be:

- ~High sensitivity is inherent...it's a genetic trait, not chosen
- ~15-20% of the population is HSP! That's not the majority, but it's not rare.
- ~HSPs process information more deeply, so we may need more time to make decisions or be able to answer questions or resolve situations.
- ~We can be very emotional, as our emotions are felt deeply.
- ~We notice the little things, and can be challenged by our surroundings, so we can get distracted
- ~Our nervous systems are generally more vulnerable and we can become overwhelmed more easily



It's important for us to be aware of our own specific tendencies, such as: having a hard time letting things go, including past interactions; not being able to focus fully in a conversation due to extraneous noises or activity; feeling hurt/disrespected by words and shutting down to avoid the pain; needing to schedule a conversation, to be prepared, rather than immediately discussing an issue as it happens; etc.



If you're in a close relationship, it's helpful to have a discussion (not at the same time you're trying to resolve something) to just share your sensitivities, what it's like to be Highly Sensitive. You can explain what the trait is about, then what life is like for you. Giving examples is helpful, since non-HSPs can't 'go there'...they don't process the same way. Giving them an HSP inventory ([like mine](#) or [Elain Aron's](#)) can be very helpful. Have them read through it, then note how many you checked off. This is often very revealing and validating and opens the door for more discussion.

It's also very important for you to know what you need in a discussion or situation in order to be calm and focused, to be a good communicator and your best self. Generally highly sensitives need more down time and good self care and it helps to be in a very calm place before having a discussion with someone. A quiet environment is helpful, without distractions. Perhaps you do better with a full stomach, so you can concentrate. If you're frustrated or overwhelmed, didn't sleep well last night, distracted by your surroundings...it's not a good time to start a discussion.

And what do you need from the non-HSP? Time to hear what they have to say then digest it a while before responding? Hearing them repeat back what you've said in their words so you know you're understood? A clear explanation of how they read the situation? A follow up later to see how you're doing? Just a comment like, "I see that you're bothered by this; what's it like for you?" may be all you need.

## Interactions/discussions

So the non-HSP knows about your trait and you know how to prepare and what you need, and you're ready to talk. As you're interacting with others it can be helpful to remind them that your experience is different, explain it, and let them know what will help. You might say:

~"I process things really deeply, and sometimes that takes a while; I need time to digest this and think about it to have a thoughtful response."

~"I take in everything, and everything is bigger for me, and this is how (X) felt to me..."

~"When (X) happened, this is what it meant to me."

~"When you were doing (X) this is what I experienced and was thinking. What was going through your mind?"

~"I know we don't experience things the same way. Can you help me understand what this means to you?" (then share your experience).



Just being open to the idea that you and the non-highly sensitive person see things differently, that's it's ok, and you can talk about it is huge. Assuming is risky...assuming the person doesn't or won't care or respect you, that their view is wrong, etc. Awareness is so helpful...share your trait with others so they can realize not only what your reality is like, but how to validate and support you.





## Sensitivities to Strengths

It's also great to realize that these sensitivities can actually be strengths...even your super power. You can read about that and many other things HSP on my [blog](#), and join my [MeetUp Group](#).

If you'd like to develop a stronger self care plan and tools for minimizing overwhelm, and develop self-acceptance, self-compassion and self-love as a Highly Sensitive, you can schedule a free [discovery session](#); we'll talk about your challenges and goals and see if I would be the right coach for you on your journey to self-love and realizing your Super Power.

Here's to great communication!