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 The Power of High Sensitivity
 Take Advantage of Your Strengths
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Test: How sensitive am I? © Kathrin Sohst

The following test will help you locate where you are on the sensitivity spectrum and determine whether or not you are a highly sensitive person. Tick the statements that are true for you.

- 1) I hear, see, smell, taste and/or feel intensely and am often overwhelmed by my sensory impressions.
- 2) I prefer to work autonomously and in a quiet environment.
- 3) It's important to me to find and pursue my calling.
- 4) My thinking is interconnected, solution-oriented and holistic.
- 5) Even when I am in the mood to attend a big event or a party, the many stimuli and people quickly tire me out.
- 6) I had "flourishing imagination" as a child and even today have access to a world that seems to be closed off to others.
- 7) Just as I am able to gain intense enjoyment from the beautiful, fine and delicate things in life, I feel very overwhelmed by loud noises, bright lights, strong smells, tight clothing and large groups of people.
- 8) When I feel overwrought or worked up, I prefer to retreat to a quiet place where I can be alone.
- 9) Feeling valued is very important to me, as is having a work environment that is compatible with my values.
- 10) I have rather few, but very good and close friends and I enjoy meaningful conversations.
- 11) I often begin to feel exhausted at exactly the point when others are coming into their own.

- 12) I react strongly to medication, caffeine, theine and / or alcohol.
- 13) I am predisposed to allergic reactions.
- 14) I pick up on other people's moods and it often occurs that the boundary between my own and others' feelings gets blurred.
- 15) I need time to process intense experiences. I am sometimes struck by the memory of a past situation, which I then spend time "reworking".
- 16) Working in an open plan office is something I find terrifying or even impossible.
- 17) I avoid negative news and movies in which violence, death and aggression are shown.
- 18) I can only feel fully happy in a job if I perceive my work as meaningful and am able to apply my strengths.
- 19) Fairness, faith, a sense of meaning, values and ethics and / or spirituality play a major role in my life.
- 20) My soul and my body react more quickly to stress, a poor diet, lack of exercise and a stressful environment than I perceive to be the case with other people.
- 21) The constant stimulation provided by the media and the flood of information and emails to which we are subjected has a negative impact on my wellbeing.
- 22) Others appreciate my refined view of the world and/or my keen sense of perception.
- 23) A balance between nearness and distance is important to me, even in my closest relationships.
- 24) My strengths include empathy, intuition and creativity
- 25) I often sense that a person is saying something other than what he/she really thinks and feels, which is usually confirmed at a later point during the relationship/situation.

- 26) I am quick to take responsibility and I have to be careful only to accept tasks or requests when I have the capacity for them.
- 27) If people do not act in accordance with my values or expectations, I have to remind myself not to pass judgment.
- 28) Since my childhood, I have tended to perceive many of the people I meet as insensitive and / or indiscriminate.
- 29) In unexpected crisis situations, I remain able to act and am quick to take the lead.
- 30) Sometimes I sense tell in advance and / or from far away when unpleasant things happen to the people who are closest to me.

What's your result?

Analysis

The statements all describe characteristics of highly sensitive people. The more statements ticked, the stronger the indication that you belong to the 15-20 per cent of highly sensitive people who perceive more stimuli and information - and perceive and process stimuli more intensively - than people with normal levels of sensitivity.

Each statement touches on a sensitivity-related aspect of your life. Even if you have answered only one statement with "does apply", it may mean that you are highly sensitive in this regard. Give this point some attention. Look closer. What does this high sensitivity indicate? What can you do to ensure that your "sensitive" point is catered for? Reflect on the extent to which your increased perception challenges or rewards you.

The important thing: No matter how sensitive you are - and in which regards - it makes no sense to pretend that you are not. In doing so, you reject a part of yourself, the stimulus intensity increases, and your stress level rises.

In contrast, by acknowledging your sensitivities, you can stay healthy, stay productive and feel at ease with yourself.