

**JASON
CUSICK**

THE

HIGHLY

SENSITIVE

CHRISTIAN

**SPIRITUAL RESILIENCE FOR THE
ANXIOUS AND TENDERHEARTED**



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: I've Always Felt a Little Different	1
1 Being Highly Sensitive Is a Gift	13
2 Care for Your Body	33
3 Tone Your Mind	61
4 Nourish Your Spirit	89
5 Curate Your Relationships	118
CONCLUSION: Resilient Sensitivity	145
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	153
APPENDIX A: Ten Ways to Help the Highly Sensitive Person in Your Life	155
APPENDIX B: Parenting a Highly Sensitive Child	159
APPENDIX C: Thriving as a Highly Sensitive Leader	163
APPENDIX D: Recommended Reading	169
NOTES	173



1

BEING HIGHLY SENSITIVE IS A GIFT

*A tenderhearted person lives a blessed life;
a hardhearted person lives a hard life.*

PROVERBS 28:14 (MSG)

SAM WILL SPEND HOURS WITH YOU if you want to talk. He loves asking questions and listening to the subtleties in your responses. For him, one comment is like a decision tree, leading to a myriad of branches of ideas and new conversations. But Sam is not interested in talking for talking's sake. He believes conversations are doors to the soul that help us discover our real selves. He experiences an invigorating delight when he is thinking and feeling deeply, but it requires focus. So, at large gatherings, Sam is usually over in a quiet place. He quickly identifies anyone who would benefit from one-on-one time, especially someone who appears lonely or disconnected. He has a radar for the overlooked because he often feels that way himself. "People need to know that they are special and loved," Sam says. "And I love when I can help people experience that."

Darrel serves on the worship team at his church. It makes him feel alive and reminds him of the years he spent on the road



traveling with a band he was in. One way he contributes to the team is by serving as a musical director. He prepares music and tracks, helps coordinate singers for the right parts, and coaches the musicians to help them perform at their best. Darrel is naturally gifted in music, but his keen attention to sensory details makes him stand out among others. He hears the small variations in tone and timbre and notices light and temperature changes that can affect the mood during worship. When Darrel is not serving at church, he does small projects at work and home that involve working with his hands. “There is something about life’s *texture* that is very special to me,” he says.

Ally has always been a very spiritual person. From the youngest age, she had vivid dreams about nature, people, and sometimes Jesus. “I wasn’t raised religious,” she says, “but I sensed that I had a mission from God.” Ally spent many years exploring different philosophies and religions. Unfortunately, she also spent time in a highly overprotective religious group, thinking that more extreme beliefs and practices would provide closer contact with God. It didn’t, but she became a follower of Jesus in college, joined a prayer team, and started learning about intercession, spiritual warfare, and discernment, especially valuing the power of touch and the laying on of hands during prayer. While studying psychology and therapy in school, Ally was sought out by classmates, church members, and friends who were looking for wisdom. She is now studying to be a therapist and seems to have found a calling in integrating counseling and touch as well as art and pet therapy.

Maria is always caring for neighbors on her street. She has her eyes and ears open to the needs of the most vulnerable groups, especially older adults and young moms. According to her, she



loves to help people who need “extra grace.” People in crisis tend to find her. Maria also helps behind the scenes at celebrations and events, like weddings and funerals. Even though she deeply appreciates being acknowledged for her hard work, she still works quietly to complete what other people see as menial tasks because she believes that it’s the small touches that make a difference. She values serving others. Her response may come from the cultural values in her upbringing, but if you ask her why she helps people, she seems confused. She says, “It’s just the right thing to do.”

What do Sam, Darrel, Ally, and Maria have in common?

They are gifted by God!

What gifts do they possess? The New Testament gives us many examples of ways God gifts people for the work of ministry, such as serving, teaching, encouraging, and using administrative abilities (Romans 12); being given special knowledge, healing, discernment, and prophesying (1 Corinthians 12); and helping and speaking (1 Peter 4). We even see God gifting people for special callings like artistry, missions, and singleness.¹

I believe Sam, Darrel, Ally, and Maria each have at least one, but probably more of the specific spiritual gifts listed throughout the Bible, but I also believe they possess a special giftedness from God that permeates their natural temperament and has been shaped through their experiences. They are highly sensitive.

Being Highly Sensitive Is a Creation Gift

The ancient Hebrew psalmist praised God with these words: “Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it” (Psalm 139:14). Nowhere is this complexity more evident than in God’s design of the human nervous system.



Our autonomic nervous system is the network of nerves throughout our body that regulates unconscious processes like breathing, heart rate, and digestion. It's a great example of God's intimate craftsmanship and the biological basis for what we now recognize as high sensitivity.

The autonomic nervous system contains three parts: the sympathetic, parasympathetic, and enteric. The sympathetic nervous system activates our body when we sense a threat, conscious or not. If something feels off, our body responds automatically: Our heart rate rises to increase blood flow, our eyes dilate to let in more light, and we may start sweating or get goosebumps. Action chemicals like cortisol and adrenaline flood our system, preparing us for fight, flight, freeze, or fawn (this last one being a people-pleasing response to avoid conflict).

While our sympathetic nervous system prepares us for action, our parasympathetic nervous system helps us to calm down and recover after the threat is gone. This system works largely through the vagus nerve, a complex network that runs from the brain to the gut. It's how God helps us relax by slowing our heart rate, steadying our breath, and triggering crying when needed. This healthy rhythm of arousal and recovery is a God-given gift to help us navigate life with resilience.

The third and most mysterious part of the autonomic nervous system is the enteric nervous system. *Enteric* means "relating to the bowels." This system is often called the second brain because it primarily manages our digestion and waste elimination. It turns out that what's going on in our gut can have a big impact on our brain, mood, and overall wellness.

This gut awareness even shows up in the Bible. I became a Christian in a church that used the King James Version. The old



English language helped me to study more deeply, but it also produced some odd moments of reading, such as “how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:8 KJV).

The *bowels* of Jesus Christ?

Ew . . . gross.

But this verse isn’t talking about the intestines of our Lord. *Bowels* is the literal translation of the Greek word σπλάγχνοις (*splanchnois*), which refers to the body’s inner organs, especially the gut.² In ancient thought, the gut was considered the center of one’s instinctive decision-making.

We still speak like this today: “I feel it in my gut” or “What is your gut telling you?” These phrases reflect conviction, empathy, and spiritual longing deep within us. Especially when we’re grieving or disconnected, we may feel it in our chest, stomach, or lower body.

Interestingly, σπλάγχνοις (*splanchnois*) is commonly translated today as “tenderhearted,” such as in Ephesians 4:32, Philippians 1:8, and 1 Peter 3:8.

Special Care Required

You’ve probably already noticed how all of this connects to being highly sensitive. Simply put, highly sensitive and tenderhearted people have a very responsive nervous system. We operate from our gut. God has given us this very primal gifting so that we can be aware of our bodies, curious, emotionally responsive, spiritually sensitive, and empathetic. And this requires special care.

In her book *The Mystery of Spiritual Sensitivity*, Carol Brown writes about how we are designed to carry people’s burdens because our “neural hardware makes it possible to subconsciously receive spiritual, physical, and emotional information—state-of-being information.”³ For us highly sensitive people, though, it is

much easier for our nervous system to get us ramped up than to calm us down.

Because we're often taking in spiritual, physical, and emotional data without realizing we're doing so, processing it all at once can feel overwhelming. Sarah Thiessen, a marriage and family therapist, puts it this way: "My deep soul has a record of everything I have ever thought or felt. But the truth is that the subconscious is very fear-based and infantile in judgment . . . the subconscious chooses the fear-based response every time."⁴ In other words, we take in data like a child, but our adult self must sort it out—a process that requires awareness, compassion, and reflection.

God invites us into a new kind of stewardship of our sensitivity, a way of caring for this precious gift rather than being overwhelmed by it. The growing field of neuroscience offers helpful insights.⁵ In *The Body Keeps the Score*, Bessel van der Kolk writes about how to handle all the data constantly flowing into us: "The only way we can change the way we feel is by becoming aware of our inner experience and learning to befriend what is going on inside ourselves."⁶

I love the word he uses—*befriend*. As highly sensitive people, we're often quick to befriend everyone but ourselves. Instead, we speak to ourselves with that stern inner voice: *Toughen up. Stop being so sensitive. Quit crying*. But God's voice is different; it is tender and validating of our sensitivity.

Your high sensitivity is a gift. You see the world as a profound, beautiful, and meaningful place. You are the artists, analysts, and academics who help us notice the subtle things others often miss. You are the creatives, caregivers, and compassionate leaders who remind us of what truly matters: love.

As highly sensitive people, you're part of a great legacy of thoughtful individuals who have worked to ensure that kindness



triumphs over selfishness, that nature isn't extinguished by technology, and that every hurting person can find healing.

As tenderhearted people, you truly live a blessed life!

But Are You Sure It's Not . . .

Yet many highly sensitive people quietly ask themselves, "Is there something wrong with me?" If that's you, take heart. High sensitivity isn't a condition that needs treatment but a gift to nurture. It can resemble other challenges though, so recognizing where these overlap with high sensitivity can help you care for yourself and others with greater wisdom.

So, before we get into the strengths and growth areas of the highly sensitive Christian, let me share what can overlap with or be mistaken for high sensitivity.

Introversion or shyness. While many highly sensitive people are introverts or shy, they aren't the same. Introversion is more about what recharges you than it is about avoiding people. Like HSPs, introverts need downtime after social interactions because of how they absorb and give.

Anxiety. High sensitivity shares traits with anxiety, like an overactive nervous system and a brain stuck in threat mode. HSPs may struggle with anxiety because their heightened awareness just picks up more. As someone who has experienced anxiety, I've found that breathing exercises and therapy have not only helped me to manage my anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) but have also strengthened me as an HSP.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). HSPs are highly alert, which can make focus difficult, much like people with ADHD. HSPs may also struggle with criticism and experience



what's called rejection sensitive dysphoria (RDA). ADHD tools and treatments can be helpful for some HSPs.

Depression or trauma. Overstimulation can lead to depression. Those who were raised in unsupportive environments or experienced trauma would benefit from exploring care options, including ones that help them learn to calm their nervous system.

Neurodivergence. Some traits of HSPs overlap with those of autism or other types of neurodivergence, such as heightened sensitivity to sights, sounds, textures, and bodily awareness, as well as social and relational challenges. Understanding these connections can help with self-care and empathy for others.⁷

Codependency. Codependency is being overly attached to others' problems. Highly sensitive people often take on others' burdens and struggle with boundaries, traits that are often rooted in early attachment experiences. Exploring these issues can also be helpful to HSPs.

Hormone imbalances. Shifts in hormones can heighten emotional and physical sensitivity. Imbalances in the thyroid, or in cortisol or reproductive hormones can intensify stress responses, create mood changes, and lead to overstimulation—challenges familiar to many HSPs.

Chronic pain. Ongoing pain keeps the nervous system in a heightened state, much like high sensitivity. This constant alertness can amplify sensitivity fatigue. Tools for chronic pain like mindfulness and nervous system regulation can also help HSPs.

Sensory processing disorder. SPD is a clinical condition in which the brain struggles to process sensory input, causing extreme reactions and difficulty integrating the senses.⁸ While it is different from high sensitivity, some strategies for SPD, like sensory breaks, calming spaces, and grounding techniques, can also help HSPs.



My goal in sharing these isn't to make you anxious or tempt you to self-diagnose but to let you know that sometimes highly sensitive people can relate to or even experience some of the clinical issues I've mentioned. Recognizing these connections can help you approach your sensitivity with more understanding and seek help when needed.

So how do you know if you need more help? As a general rule, if your challenges keep you from enjoying daily life, affect your ability to function, or leave you feeling persistently unhealthy, it may be time to prayerfully seek help. This book is *not* a substitute for professional care. A physician, counselor, or specialized therapist—especially one who understands that “wonderfully complex” relationship between mind, body, and soul—can be an important part of your journey as a highly sensitive person.

Your Four Strengths and Growth Areas

After years as a hospital chaplain, I became the pastor of care ministries at my local church. I led a devoted team of volunteers in prayer, visitation, lay counseling, crisis support, and our diaconate ministry. Our senior pastor affectionately called us the church's “special forces”—a uniquely gifted group of tenderhearted people called to care for others and each other.

Carol Brown also uses this “special forces” language when describing highly sensitive people. She calls us burden bearers, referring to the biblical call to help people in need (Galatians 6:2). It's an honorable role that reflects Jesus' care for us but also comes with challenges. Brown writes, “Blessings come to you when you bear burdens, but there are also inherent vulnerabilities that complicate life for the highly sensitive.”⁹



While high sensitivity is a blessing, faintheartedness often lurks nearby. Research shows that the more sensitive a person is, the more vulnerable they may be to anxiety, depression, and stress.¹⁰ This means we need wisdom in how to steward our sensitivity. With God's help, we can see our vulnerabilities as strengths waiting to be developed.

Here are what I believe are the four greatest strengths of highly sensitive people and their corresponding growth areas, which we'll unpack more thoroughly in the following chapters.¹¹

Strength one: You have strong sensory awareness. You see, hear, taste, smell, and feel with heightened awareness, which allows you to fully take in the beauty and detail of the world around you. You're especially receptive to joy, laughter, connection, and the good gifts of God. Your brain and body respond with a cascade of pleasurable, affirming reactions that help you savor life more fully than most.

You bring this sensory strength into your work and relationships. As an athlete, you have sharp body awareness. As a doctor, you have a tactical sensitivity. As an engineer, you're attentive to form and design. As a teacher, counselor, or parent, you have what some call a sixth sense. You notice what others miss, and that sensitivity helps others thrive.

Growth area one: Learn to better manage overstimulation. Having a highly responsive nervous system is exhausting. You may be more sensitive to physical touch, whether it's the dentist working on your teeth or all the hugs and handshakes at church. You can be easily distracted by the background noise at a party as well as by the tags on your clothing. Small shifts in people's facial expressions may affect you deeply. This constant input can leave you feeling drained.

Many of us have been told to "just ignore it," but we know it's not that simple. Our sensory awareness is not something we can turn



off; it is an important part of who we are and is tied to our emotional well-being. Ignoring it or shutting it down is not the answer. Instead, we need to honor what our body is telling us and learn new skills to manage our overstimulation.

Strength two: You think and feel deeply. You are wired for depth of processing. You love learning through conversations, written information, or both. You often reflect on things you've learned long after others have moved on, because you instinctively connect new insights with past experiences. You are an internal bridge builder, finding connections to help you understand the world more fully.

This depth of processing includes emotions too. You feel your emotions strongly. You're more at ease with emotional experiences than most, in part because the emotional centers of your brain are especially active. As a result, you're often drawn to people in pain, alert to their needs, and willing to be on call in times of crisis. You're fluent in the language of heartbreak, pain, and loss and find an unusual comfort in emotional situations where others might withdraw.

Growth area two: Learn to minimize extreme thinking and negativity. Your high responsiveness to information and feelings can cause your mind to move quickly, sometimes too quickly. In that rush, your brain may take unhealthy shortcuts, such as engaging in black-and-white thinking, catastrophizing, or taking things personally. Left unchecked, your deep processing can turn into overthinking and keep you stuck in your thoughts or feelings.

Your brain is wired to spot threats and prepare for worst-case scenarios. But this natural negativity bias, while protective, can also become a trap. As a tenderhearted person, you may be more sensitive to unpleasant emotions, so wading in those waters can weigh



down your soul. While deep feeling is a superpower, unprocessed emotions (especially unpleasant ones) can become your kryptonite.

Strength three: You are spiritually sensitive. Your connection with God is a central part of your life. Your spirituality goes beyond church attendance and memorized beliefs; it's enmeshed in every area of your life and in everything you experience. You sense God's presence in very personal ways and believe that God speaks into your life in quiet moments and daily rhythms. Whether you're praying, walking through nature, or welcoming someone into your home, you recognize God's hand in it all.

Creativity often fuels your faith. You often feel most connected to God when you are engaging your imagination through music, crafting, journaling, or dreaming up new ideas. Even if you don't consider yourself artistic, your life paints a different picture. Creativity is one way your soul comes alive and feels at home in the good world your God has created.

Growth area three: Learn to embrace God's tender love for you. As a highly sensitive Christian, you often find it easier to love others than to love yourself. You long for affirmation but struggle to receive it. Compliments feel uncomfortable, and self-criticism comes too easily. You may feel as if God's love is good for everyone else, but it is not fully for you. This mindset can lead you to develop a quiet form of religious anxiety, whereby you have silent doubts about your relationship with God.

Many of us also wrestle with a form of spiritualized low self-esteem. We may feel obligated to muse on verses and sermons about sin and overanalyze our hearts in search of flaws. We know we can't earn God's love, but somewhere deep inside we're still trying. The truth is that God's love for us is greater than our performance and stronger than our doubts because it is rooted in his tenderness.



Strength four: You are filled with life-giving empathy. One of your greatest desires is to love and be loved in return. You believe that kindness, honesty, and self-giving love can change the world. You value deep, authentic relationships in which people hold each other up and help each other grow. Surface-level connections don't satisfy you. Rather, you want friendships marked by trust, care, and mutual accountability because that's how you show up for others.

You also carry a deep concern for those who are hurting. When someone suffers, you respond. You step in, advocate, protect, and give generously. Whether it's fostering a child, delivering a meal, or simply sitting with someone in pain, you show up. You know what it's like to be overlooked, and you're determined to not let others go unseen. You rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep, and feel most alive when you're walking with someone in their time of need.

Growth area four: Learn to maintain life-giving relationships for yourself. Building and sustaining meaningful friendships can be hard. Many of your relationships tend to center on meeting others' needs, which makes it easy to slip into a helper role and neglect to express your needs. Sometimes you hope to receive the kind of care you freely give, but without expressing that desire, you're left feeling disappointed or even resentful when it doesn't happen.

You also struggle with people pleasing. You're the "nice guy" or "good girl"—kind and generous but often driven by a need for approval. You hide your flaws and avoid vulnerability, especially in same-gender friendships, which leaves your connections feeling shallow. In romantic relationships, you may settle for one-sided dynamics and become easily attached to people who feel more like projects than partners. But it doesn't have to be this way. God invites you into relationships marked by honesty, grace, and reciprocity!



Does this sound like you or someone you care about? Given this beautiful mix of strengths and vulnerabilities, how can we thrive in our sensitivity while building the resilience needed to handle its challenges?

The good news is there is a way forward.

Embrace the Tenderhearted Way of Jesus

Being highly sensitive can be a double-edged sword, depending on the family, school, or religious environment in which you were raised. Research shows that some cultures highly value the attributes of tenderhearted people, but some cultures diminish their value. Based on her experiences with Western culture, Deborah Ward, author of *Sense and Sensitivity: Why Highly Sensitive People are Wired for Wonder*, writes, “Our society values outward displays of strength and qualities like extraversion, gregariousness, decisiveness and low emotionality, so sensitive people are often misunderstood, bullied, rejected and told they are ‘too sensitive.’”¹²

I experienced this firsthand when I was being considered for the job of lead pastor at my church. I didn’t fit the typical leadership profile. My background is in pastoral care, I’m an Enneagram Five and an INFJ on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and my strengths on the DISC Inventory are steadiness and conscientiousness, not dominance and influence. People questioned whether someone as tenderhearted as I could lead a large, multisite church. I questioned it too!

Through trial and error I found what worked for me. Not by changing who I was, but by understanding the strengths of my sensitivity and surrounding myself with people who loved me and could help me flourish.



Thankfully, there's a growing awareness and appreciation for highly sensitive leaders. Harvard Business School professor Dr. Joseph Badaracco describes us as “quiet leaders,” saying that “these men and women care deeply about the people and problems that cross their paths, and this gives them the courage to take action and persevere. In short, quiet leaders are careful and committed, analytical and emotional, detached and engaged.”¹³

This perspective shaped not only how I lead but also how I view myself as a man. Masculinity is often framed by the strong hero myth that real men are expected to be stoic, rugged, and impervious to criticism. But I'm complicated, gentle, and sensitive to feedback. I'm encouraged by the growing number of voices working to redefine courage and strength through the lens of tenderhearted masculinity.¹⁴

But let's begin our journey together by looking to the greatest example and advocate of tenderheartedness—Jesus. He perfectly embodied and exemplified the four strengths of highly sensitive people.

Jesus had strong sensory awareness. His teachings drew from a close attention to the natural world—flowers, trees, and wind. He healed through gentle touch, listened closely, and honored his own physical needs by eating, resting, and even napping when needed.

Jesus was a deep processor. He challenged his followers and critics to examine their beliefs and cultural assumptions, often leaving them to wrestle with truth on their own. He was also a deep feeler. He openly wept at his friend's grave, turned over tables in righteous anger, and poured out his heart in Gethsemane.

Jesus was the most spiritually attuned person the world has ever known. He maintained constant communion with his Father, discerned what was in people's hearts, and always responded with



grace and truth. He didn't just communicate God's love; rather, God's love was the source of all his empathetic care.

Finally, Jesus cultivated life-giving relationships. He showed compassion to the hurting, advocated for the overlooked, and supported those in need. With strangers and close friends, he practiced encouragement, truth-telling, and forgiveness. And when pressed, he held healthy boundaries while remaining sacrificial and full of hope.

As a friend, servant, leader, and Lord, Jesus modeled a tenderhearted way of life and invited his followers into it with him.

When asked about the greatest commandment in the Bible, Jesus cited two: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength." The second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself." No other commandment is greater than these" (Mark 12:30-31).

These commands invite us to engage our whole selves: body, mind, spirit, and relationships. As highly sensitive Christians, we're already wired for this kind of whole-person life. We resonate strongly with the call to have a "gentle and quiet spirit" (1 Peter 3:4), to carry each other's burdens (Galatians 6:1-4), and to "be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry" (James 1:19). We're innately drawn to the way of "tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience" (Colossians 3:12).

In many ways, we're already on the right path.

Recognizing this advantage, we can give our doubts and insecurities to Jesus, and when life feels overwhelming, we can remember that we don't have to carry it all alone. Jesus offered his followers a beautiful metaphor for this. Imagining a pair of animals sharing their burden side by side, he looked at his anxious and tenderhearted disciples and gently said,



Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Jesus is speaking these words to us.

He's speaking these words to *you*.

Let's respond with a trusting yes.

Conclusion

High sensitivity is a gift. The New Testament connects it to a gut-level sympathy and strength. Those who are sensitive are attuned to the feelings of their body, process information slowly and thoroughly, make spiritual decisions intuitively, and care deeply for people.

This gift is rooted not only in the soul but in the body, specifically the autonomic nervous system. This creation gift enables highly sensitive people to be aware of the subtleties of the natural world, perpetually curious, open to God, and generously empathetic. This body-spirit connection is exactly what we'd expect from a God who has made us "wonderfully complex."

The gift of high sensitivity also allows us to grow by managing sensory overload, reducing our extreme and negative thinking, embracing God's tender love for us, and building healthy relationships. As tenderhearted people, we nurture our spiritual gift with resilience.

When we search for a highly sensitive role model, we need to look no further than Jesus. The humility, gentleness, and emotional depth Jesus displayed reveals the strengths of being tenderhearted and what's possible when we grow in that gift. In a world that



celebrates fast-paced, extroverted, emotionally detached leadership, we follow a Savior and a long legacy of his followers who honor the gentle, the quiet . . . the sensitive.

PRAYER

God, thank you for calling me to be part of your “special forces” as a tenderhearted person for you. I’m grateful that you have made me “wonderfully complex,” especially my nervous system. Through it, you keep me aware, curious, creative, and attuned to the needs around me. I’m in awe of the strengths you’ve given me and invite you into my growth areas. As I continue to embrace the tenderhearted way of Jesus, help me to challenge the stereotypes and cultural assumptions that have tempted me to question myself and doubt your call. With eyes of faith, may I experience your burden-bearing strength beneath the heavy loads I carry, and rest in your tenderhearted love for me. In Jesus’ name, amen.

SCRIPTURE FOR SENSITIVES

“A tenderhearted person lives a blessed life; a hard-hearted person lives a hard life” (Proverbs 28:14, MSG).

“Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it” (Psalm 139:14).

“‘Love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31).

“Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience” (Colossians 3:12).



“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

In what ways do you relate to the stories of Sam, Darrel, Ally, and Maria?

What does it feel like to call your high sensitivity a gift?

How helpful is it to understand the role your nervous system plays in being highly sensitive?

Which of the four strengths and growth areas do you most resonate with?

Why is it important to know how high sensitivity differs from the conditions described in the “But Are You Sure It’s Not . . .” section of this chapter?

How can seeing Jesus as a model of sensitivity encourage you in your spiritual life?

ACTION STEPS

1. Reread the Bible verses in this chapter, especially the verses and stories related to Jesus caring for people’s bodies. Ask God to help you grow in appreciation and awareness of your body as a good gift from God.
2. Identify which of the four strengths most resonates with you. Spend ten minutes writing down your thoughts and feelings about it. Include positive examples of how you have seen it as a strength in your life, as well as some opportunities you might have to grow in this area.



3. Take time each day this week to thank God for your gift of high sensitivity. If you're reading this to better understand a highly sensitive person in your life, use this prayer time to thank God for them and ask God to help you understand and love them for this gifting of theirs.



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