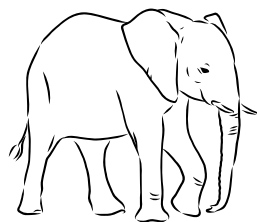


*The*  
RESILIENT  
EMPATH

*Journal*



Jennifer Lauren Parker

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Hey Friend,

Thanks for downloading The Resilient Empath Journal. And might I say good move! Because even though we benefit from just reading, the biggest gains come when we take action on the information.

Make no mistake, being highly sensitive does not equal being weak-willed. We can grab the bull by the horns and take action, although we'll probably do so in a wiser and gentler manner!

Don't worry though, although taking action involves effort, working through this journal isn't going to be hard. I was actually going to call it a workbook until I realized that made it sound like work!

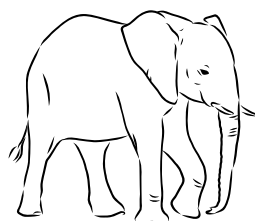
Well, who needs one more pain in the butt thing to do? Not me and probably not you either. Instead of being a chore, using this journal is going to be a fun and relaxing process.

As you do the exercises and journaling prompts, my hope is that you uncover the recipe for your own secret sauce. You'll get a better view of what special gifts you bring to the table, as well as understanding what may have held you back until this point. And we'll also work on tools to get you over the unique hurdles highly sensitive and empathic people face.

So let's get started! You may want to print these pages to write on, or just use the e-version along with a notebook, whichever works best for you. FYI, I've put the journaling questions in **bold** to make it a little easier to spot them. This is a mini-coaching experience, my little gift to you, so take advantage! I appreciate you reading and I'm so glad you're here.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer*





## Exercises for Chapter 1

### Not Weak, Not Alone

Congratulations on beginning!

In chapter one, we talked about what an empath is: a person who understands the thoughts and feelings of others more than is usual, often absorbing the energy of those around them. All empaths are highly sensitive. Not all highly sensitive people are empaths.

I also expressed that a lot of us are not big fans of these labels. Some don't like the word sensitive because it makes us sound weak, which we're definitely not. Others don't love the term empath because it hits us as weird. And some of us (like me!) are weird enough without any help.

So what about you?

**Your only exercise today is to journal whatever comes up for you when you hear the terms “sensitive” and “empath”.**

Do you relate to these labels or do they carry a negative charge for you? Remember, it's totally okay to have the descriptions fit but still dislike the words. And it's also great if you love the words and totally vibe with them!

Wherever your mind is with it, get your thoughts out on paper. Of course, if you had anything else come up for you, (flashbacks to middle school PE class, perhaps?) feel free to journal that out too.

Yes, this is easy, but there's value in taking time to reflect.

## **Exercises for Chapter 2**

### **Being A Highly Sensitive Human**

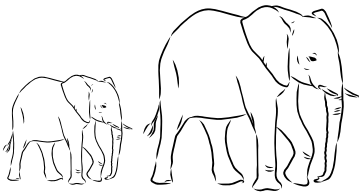
In chapter two, we went over Dr. Elaine Aron's acronym: DOES. Remember, D is for depth of processing. O is for being easily overstimulated. E is for strong emotions and empathy. S is for being sensitive to subtleties around us.

Once again, I'm keeping it simple and just inviting you to journal out your thoughts, particularly if this way of breaking down the trait of high sensitivity is new to you.

**Is there a part of DOES that resonates most with you?**

**What part of being an HSP has been hardest on you?**

**Is there a part of being an HSP you really enjoy?**



## Exercises for Chapter 3

### Elephants

In this chapter, we talked about how a Type A, ultra-productive, warrior lion personality is often idealized in modern culture. Whereas more gentle and laid-back ways of being might be looked at as lazy or undesirable.

Because of our depth of processing, we may seem to take a long time to do certain things, or even to respond when asked a question. Plus, the tendency to get overwhelmed quickly (because we are taking more in), can make it difficult to perform under pressure. Seeing all of this from the outside, others may underestimate what we are capable of.

Have you found this to be true?

Maybe you related to my perspective on this, or maybe not. Either way, I bet it brought up some feelings, so let's get them out on paper.

**How did being an HSP affect your childhood?**

**How has being an HSP impacted your experience as an adult?**

**Have you had a hard time keeping up with expectations? Or, are there things you have given up in order to meet outside expectations? (We might call this dropping little pieces of ourselves.) Write down whatever comes up for you.**

## Exercises for Chapter 4

### The Gifts of Sensitivity

So, a little inside scoop for you: This was where the whole book started in my little brain. I wanted to highlight the gifts HSPs often possess, and the idea of using archetypes really appealed to me. I hope it came together in a way that helped you see that your gifts are special and needed.

Which type of highly sensitive person are you?

- The Healer: Knows what makes people tick and loves to help them feel better, physically or mentally or both.
- The Creator: Brilliantly imaginative, having the ability to make unique works of art, music, or literature.
- The Inventor: Also highly creative, but with a knack for the scientific arts and/or understanding how things work.
- The Visionary: Having powerful intuition, a thirst for knowledge, and a strong sense of justice, this type has episodes of clearly knowing things before they know how they know it.
- The Sage: Similar to the visionary but with a penchant for logic. Their ability to see the big picture gives them wisdom beyond their years.

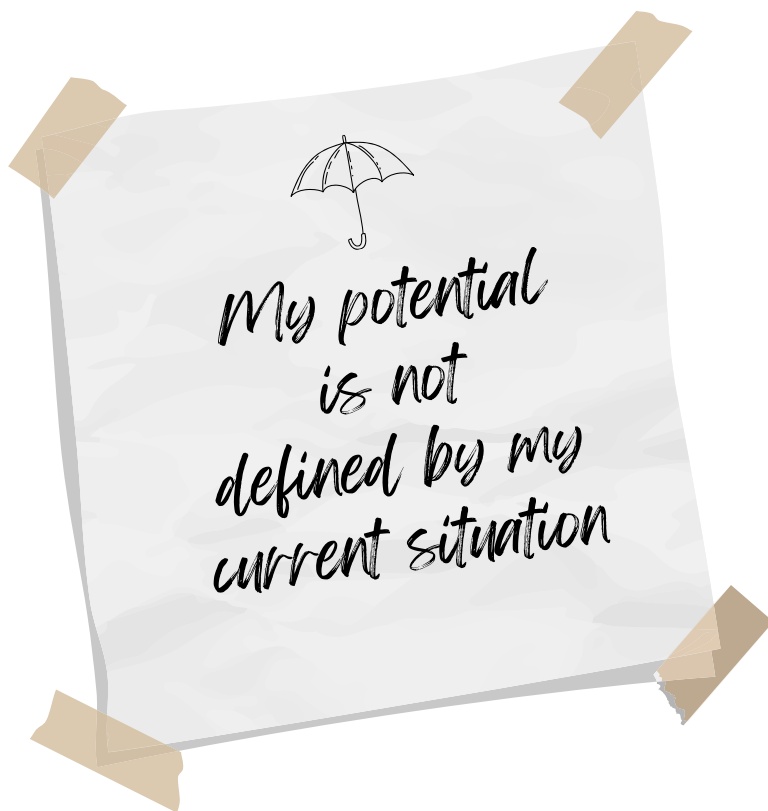
**Write down which type or types resonate with you.** Keep in mind that if you haven't been using your gifts very much, they are going to be rusty. For example, you don't have to be Michelangelo to possess the gifts of the creator. If you're currently a writer who doesn't write, a musician who doesn't play, or a healer who hides from people; it's okay. Don't be hard on yourself!

Now, it's your turn to expound on the types! Is there something you felt I missed? **What are your personal strong suits? What do you most appreciate about yourself?**

**How would you like to use your gifts to help others?**

**What can you start doing right now to step a little further into who you really are?**

If you're struggling with this chapter, keep this in mind: We all have potential we haven't come close to touching yet. If you're saying, "Not me. Look at me, I'm a mess!" I want you to write this sentence down and tape it to your bathroom mirror:





## Exercises for Chapter 5

### The Science of Being an Empath

In this chapter, we learned more about being an empath, in other words, a highly sensitive person who is very tuned in to the emotions of others. We talked about nifty things like mirror neurons and electromagnetic energy. And we delved into some challenges empaths have when dealing with others: mirroring and sponging.

So, do you relate to the term “empath”? Probably yes, or at least a little, or you wouldn’t have picked up this book!

#### What kind of empath are you?

- Emotional empath: Picks up on others’ emotions (this is the most common type).
- Physical empath: Picks up on others’ physical pain, sometimes even feeling it in your own body.
- Animal empath: Very tuned in to animals, having an ability to communicate with them.
- Plant empath: Having the ability to sense what plants need to thrive.
- Intuitive empath: Sensitive to patterns in electromagnetic energy, leading to having strong inner knowings and killer instincts.

Every empath has their own secret sauce! Think about your own unique empathic gifts and get your thoughts out on paper.

#### When did you realize you were an empath, or that you were more tuned in to people and/or the environment than most?

#### What have been your biggest challenges as an empath?

#### What do you enjoy or value most about being an empath?

Now, was there a tip from this chapter you’d like to try? Perhaps the alter ego, picturing an energy ball, or the zipping up visualization? Pick just one and set yourself a reminder to try it each day (or as appropriate to your situation).

## Exercises for Chapter 6

### Inside the Sensitive Mind

In chapter six, we delved into the rich and complex inner life of the highly sensitive person. Our imaginations are quite fantastic! But, they can also get us into a world of hurt when we fail to mind our minds. Here we learned about the molecules of emotion and how our thoughts can affect our entire bodies.

Sit for a minute and process your thoughts and emotions on, well— thoughts and emotions!

**Do you ever let your thoughts beat you up?** This could be ruminating on things outside of our control, repeating negative self-talk about how we've fallen short in some way, etc.

**How do you feel about the idea of controlling your thoughts?** Possibly: Yay! I love control. Give me all the control! Or: No way, that seems icky and un-authentic. Write down whatever comes up for you.

**How do you usually deal with the molecules of emotion when they come up?** Sitting and feeling them in the body is healthy, but many of us have patterns of suppressing emotions, distracting ourselves, numbing out, etc. It's okay. The point isn't to judge, but simply to become aware of what our personal patterns are.

**Is there any place where you tend to feel the molecules of emotion in your body?** Again, the idea is simply to be aware of where we are holding things. The digestive system, throat, upper back, shoulders, psoas (lower back wrapping around the hips), and head are all common spots. Just start tuning in to what's happening physically.

## Exercises for Chapter 7

### Resilience & Reframing

In this chapter we talked about the importance of how we tell our stories, and how making little shifts in our perception can change our response, and therefore give us a better result in the end.

I also outlined a simple five step process for making friends with our thoughts and emotions. It's simple but it does take practice and doesn't seem that simple at first! So I'm putting it all right here for you to easily refer to and work with in your journal.

#### 5 Steps for Making Friends With Your Thoughts & Emotions

##### 1. **Notice:**

Our first step in making friends with our thoughts is simply to notice them. Often we're in survival mode, with our thoughts and emotions swirling as we push through each day. We hardly stop to take a breath, let alone be introspective about our reactions.

So, I invite you to practice noticing your thoughts and emotions.

#### **What are you thinking about throughout your day?**

#### **What feelings are connected with those thoughts? (Fear, anger, sadness?)**

#### **Is there a predominant theme threading throughout your experience?**

#### **Are you feeling the molecules of emotion in your body? If so, where?**

Think about these questions and write your answers down on paper. No judgment or push to change, just observe, notice, and tune into the reactions in your body. And sometimes when we stop to notice and feel, the emotions feel more intense for a time. It's more than okay to cry and let those molecules release. You may want to work on this step for a couple of days before moving on.

## 2. Reflect:

Look back at the predominant emotions (or feelings) you've been experiencing. List them out if you haven't yet.

Now ask yourself with each one: **What is this emotion here to tell me?**

Guys, there is always an answer to this. Remember, emotions are messengers of change. True, sometimes you can't change things, but you can always accept the message.

Let those little molecules of emotion be heard and felt in the body. Whatever you think they are trying to tell you, journal it out.

## 3. Shift:

Now that you have the message, ask yourself: **What do I need to do next?**

If we don't learn the lessons our emotions are trying to teach us, we end up stuck. **Does something need to shift in your life?**

Sometimes the message of change is going to feel overwhelming. If so, don't overthink it. I know, we love to overthink, don't we? But if we get stuck in our heads, nothing changes and the emotions keep jabbing at us into eternity. If you're struggling, it may help to distill it down. **What is the smallest, most doable action step that can move me in the right direction?**

**Make a plan to do that one tiny thing consistently.** When will you do it? How will you ensure it gets done? Do you need any support in your life to make it happen?

#### 4. **Release:**

Sometimes things are not changeable, or not within our power to do so at the moment. When we can't change something, often there is a tendency to ruminate on it. As if by playing it over and over ad nauseam in our heads it might change?

Well, believe me, I've tried chewing on negative thoughts day in and day out, and it doesn't change a thing, except possibly for deepening the lines in my forehead and making my tummy hurt. This is where journaling can help us release and reframe the things we can't control.

If you're prone to ruminate, get in the habit of asking: Is this thought serving me?

If the answer is "No", please don't try to justify it. Like, "No, but he did this to me and so I have no choice..." Stop there, friend. With thoughts, you always have a choice. They are your thoughts!

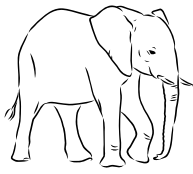
Still, we need to process whatever is going on. Put your pen to paper and ask yourself these questions:

**What is true about this situation?** (Referring to whatever situation is bothering you right now.)

And then: **What else might be true?**

For example, perhaps you're upset with someone and it's true they acted rude and inconsiderate. Maybe it's true you have every right to be upset. But it could also be true that the other person's reaction had more to do with them than you. It could be true that they were under stress and having a bad day. It could be true that their opinion doesn't change who you are.

Asking "What is true?" helps us process feelings and release their emotional charge. Asking "What else might be true?" reframes the situation and helps us come to peace with situations outside of our control.



## 5. **Affirm:**

It's time to release some happy, healing molecules of emotion with thoughts about what we want to experience. And side note, I realize when really crappy stuff is happening we don't want to do this part (or any of it). Things can and do occur that are hurtful, aren't fair, and aren't our fault. But perhaps this is when we need a little thought-medicine more than ever. So why not give it a try?

And yes, we are only doing this after we've processed through the other steps. To jump straight to affirmations would only create those nasty zombie emotions, and that's the last thing we want.

### **To create your affirmation, try asking:**

- 1. How do I want to feel?**
- 2. What do I want the outcome of this situation to be?**
- 3. What do I do to get there?**

For example, say you've been experiencing a lot of frustration about your body and know you've been neglecting self-care. How do you want to feel? You might answer: happy and strong. What outcome do you want? To become healthier and more confident. What do you need to do? Eat well and move your body.

So the resulting affirmation is "I am so happy to feel healthy, strong, and confident. Each day I feed and move my body with care."

Write down your own affirmation using feel-good phrasing and the present tense so your body/mind feels good about going for it.

## Exercises for Chapter 8



### Anxiety and Overwhelm

In this chapter, we talked about a super HSP's kryptonite: situations that overstimulate and overwhelm the sensitive nervous system. We hashed out the top eight HSP stress triggers (in no particular order):

1. Getting Hangry (hungry/angry of course)
2. Being in a Rush
3. Crowds of People
4. Conflicts, Arguing, and Yelling
5. Boom, Crash, Bang (loud noises)
6. Synthetic Scents and Toxic Yuck
7. Dealing with Clutter
8. Too Much Peopling (aka, not enough time to one's self)

**Do you have anything to add to the list? Write down your thoughts.**

**How has being highly sensitive affected your own mind/body?**

**Which stress triggers overstimulate you the most?**

**Which ones would you like to try managing differently?**

## Exercises for Chapter 9

### Life, Breath, and the PNS

In this chapter, we learned about the branches of the autonomic nervous system. It may seem a bit complex, but it's important to have a basic understanding of this since the nervous system is kind of a big deal for HSPs. We also talked about several ways to let our parasympathetic know it's safe to rest and digest, including breathing exercises.

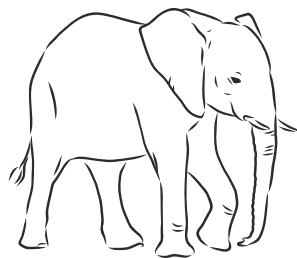
**If you're ready to give it a whirl, go ahead and set yourself a reminder to do some calming breaths before you eat your meals.** Again, this will help your digestion which supports your overall health.

We also went over the benefits of gentle movement, connection with nature, caffeine consciousness, and somatic experiencing (a therapy that works on the nervous system through being present in the body).

**For this exercise, you'll make your own "What Do I Really Need?" menu.** This is on the next page so you can print it out separately. Keep it handy to refer to it anytime you feel the need to rev up or numb out your nervous system with something less than healthy. Putting it on the fridge is a good idea for those of us who tend to calm our nervous systems with food or drink. (Like me!) Instead of cookies or a third cup of joe, you'll find a menu of feel-good activities to choose from.

One of the things on the menu is "orienting". This is a basic somatic experiencing practice. **To learn how to orient, go to YouTube and look up "Irene Lyon orienting"**. She'll teach you everything you need to know.

So, I'll start the menu off with some basics, but I want you to add on whatever is most refreshing and beneficial for you. Maybe it's drawing, dancing, hiking in the woods, playing the ukulele, or chatting with a friend. You already know the answers, because after all, you're the world's only expert on what you really need!





## What Do I Really Need?

### A Menu of Nervous System Refreshing Activities

#### Energy Snacks (5-15 minutes)

Grounding/ Earthing  
5-5-7 Breath  
Orienting  
Listening to Music

#### System Sustenance (20-60 minutes)

Cat Nap  
Walking  
Journaling  
Salt Bath



## Exercises for Chapter 10

### No & Yes

In this chapter, we talked about setting boundaries as a self-care practice. Here is the list of things to say “No” to and things to say “Yes” to. **I suggest circling one of each to start out with (or add your own).** Remember, you are the expert on your own experience and you already know where you need to set boundaries! Therefore don’t be afraid to use the list as a springboard and dive in with your own ideas.

Things to Say NO To:

Overthinking

Bottling Up Emotions

Taking in Negativity and Violence

Unnecessary Activities

Excess Stuff

Ignoring Our Inner Voice to Avoid Conflict

Things to Say YES to:

Our Own Needs

Trusting Ourselves

An Abundance Mindset

Honoring the Nervous System

Growing Ourselves

Loving Our True Selves

If you aren’t doing this right after reading the chapter you may want to go back and review, as some of the list item may seem obscure without the explanations! Once you’ve picked one thing to say “No” to and one to say “Yes” to, it’s time to make a plan.



**What are you saying NO to and why is this important to you?**

**How are you going to set boundaries around your new NO?**

**How can you remind yourself to stick to your NO? (phone alarms, sticky notes, etc.)**

**Is there anyone you need to tell about this or ask for support from?**

Same for your new YES:

**What are you saying YES to and why is it important to you?**

**How are you going to create space or make time for your YES?**

**How can you remind yourself to stick to your new YES?**

**Is there anyone you need support from in order to honor your YES?**

## Exercises for Chapters 11 & 12

### People Problems & the Narcissist Factor

In these chapters, we talked about how much people suck and cause us so much grief. Not really! I hope you already read it so you know I'm joking. We did talk about people related traps HSPs and empaths tend to get caught in: People pleasing, attracting the wrong people, as well as trying to fix and rescue others. And we gave this doozy its very own chapter: attracting narcissists.

**What people problem do you relate to the most?**

**Are there any ways people problems have kept you from using your gifts of sensitivity?** (Such as being too involved in fixing or rescuing to do your own work, or getting stuck worrying about what people will think of our gifts?)

**Journal out any other thoughts or stories that come up for you in relation to people problems and/or narcissists.**

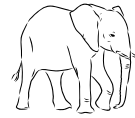


**How would you like to interact with people differently from here on out?** (Some examples are purposefully detaching, letting them own their feelings, accepting you can't control others' thoughts and reactions, backing off from giving advice, etc.)

**If you have a specific people problem going on right now, brainstorm an action plan for dealing with it.** It may just involve reminding yourself to keep healthy boundaries, or you may need to enlist help from a therapist or a trusted person who can help reinforce your boundaries. (Or even support you in escaping a toxic situation.)

## Exercises for Chapter 13

### Trusting Yourself



In this chapter, we learned about what intuition is and why we should trust it, even when doing so makes us look crazy. So, for this exercise, we're just going to journal a bit. While you're at it, get excited about all the "I told you so" moments you have to look forward to. (Wink, wink.)

**When has following your intuition served you well and/or kept you safe?**

**When did not following your intuition bite you in the butt?**

**Do you have an easy time listening to your intuition or do you tend to suppress it?** Write down anything that comes up.

**Is there anything your intuition is nudging you towards or away from right now? How would you like to respond to those inner nudges?**

**Take a moment to thank your intuition for being there for you!**

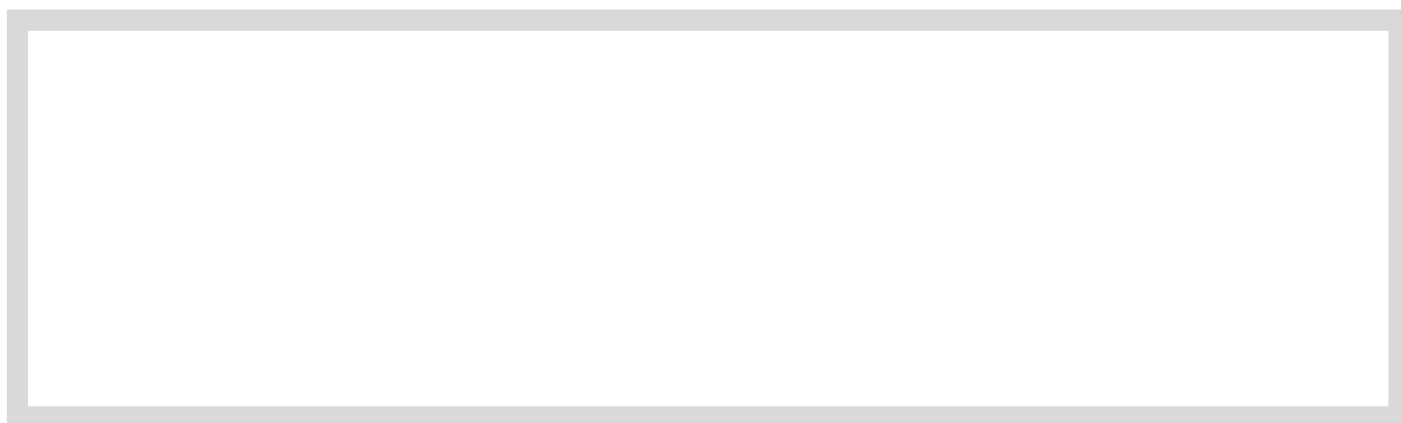
## Exercises for Chapters 14 & 15

### Socks & Swampmonsters and Four Tricks

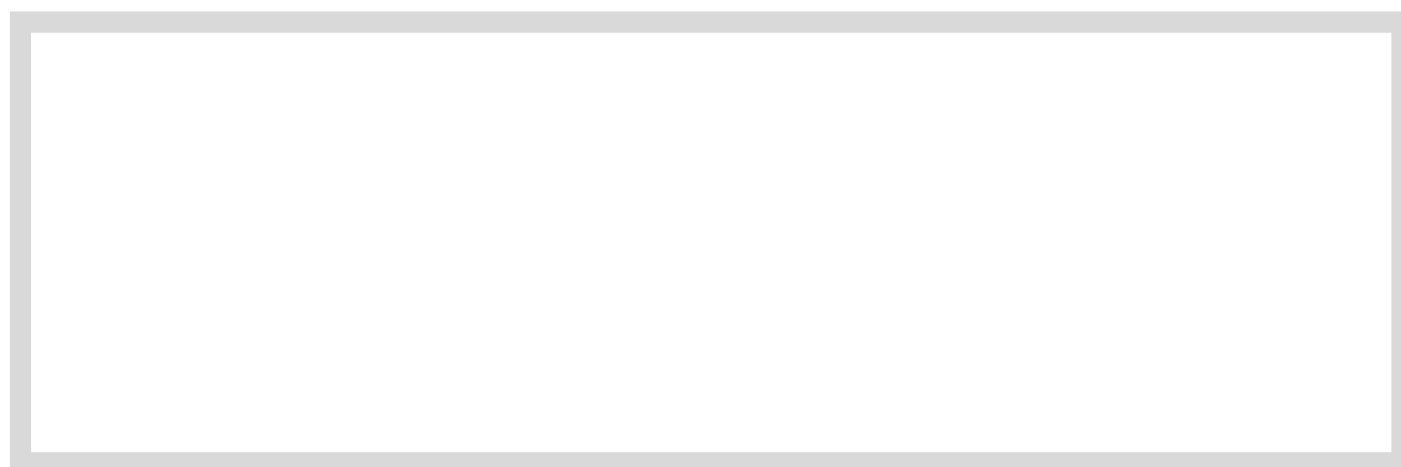
In these chapters, we talked about why highly sensitive people may struggle to keep up with the business of life, as well as ways to work around these challenges. Sometimes it feels like no matter how much we do, or how hard we try, it's just never enough. If we're spending time on things that are important to us and being true to ourselves, the so-called good people of the world seem to be shaking their heads in disapproval.

We need to release any shame we're carrying about our seeming lack of organization or productivity. And we also need to learn to work with our unique biology and still get done what we have to do.

**Do you have internalized shame in regards to organization or productivity?** Write out what comes up for you.



**What do you think is behind your struggles?** Examples from the chapter: the creative's blind spot, depth of processing leads to overwhelm, trying to copy systems designed for someone else's brain, it's hard to replicate what we haven't seen done, stories we tell ourselves about what we're capable of, and/or having a dysregulated nervous system.



**Take a moment to thank your brain for working so hard and trying to keep you safe.** Really, all the reasons why we struggle make sense. Our body/minds and nervous systems just want what's best for us. They're trying to keep us balanced despite a crazy world that wasn't made for us. Recognizing the wisdom of how our systems work (even when we're struggling a bit) helps release that icky-sticky shame so we can move forward.

**Which of the four tricks for getting things done would you like to try first?** Emphasis on “first”. Remember, we do not want to attempt to change everything at once. That only leads to overwhelm, crash, and burn. Once you have one trick down, come back and try another.

- Reframe Abundance: Notice where you may be taking on too much, either in possessions or things to do. What would you like to edit out of your life for now? Where would you like to let go and say “What I have is enough”? Work towards a mentality of less is more, but you can keep all your tank tops if you wish!
- Embrace Cycles & Rituals: Notice your own natural cycles of energy and inspiration, journaling to keep track. Next, ask yourself about those nagging projects you want to get done. Considering your cycles of mental and physical energy, when is the best time to create a ritual around your desired activity?
- Act on Inspiration: Try John Maxwell’s Do It Now trick.
- Connect Value: For this one, ask yourself: What are my core values in life? Mine are freedom and harmony. Some others are family, security, loyalty, integrity, joy, connection, creativity, beauty, honesty, etc. You can search for a core values quiz online if you aren’t sure. Next ask yourself: How would improving on the things I’d like to improve on (being more organized, following through on ideas, or something else) bring more of my core values into my life? Your answers should stir up some fresh motivation to tackle Paperwork Mountain or whatever hill you need to climb. Lastly: Plan a specific action step to take this week to move you towards your goal. Example: I am scheduling time for myself, 3-4 pm on Wednesday, to go through my desk drawer and either file or shred the papers in it.

**Write your plan in the box below. And don’t forget to set a reminder on your phone so you can try another trick next week** (provided you’ve worked through your first one until you feel comfortable with where you’re at with it). It’s totally fine to take as many weeks as you need!





## Exercises for Chapter 16

### Resilience 2.0

In this chapter, we talked about how intense world or life events can knock us off track and leave us feeling lost. We all have a unique capacity for handling stress, shaped by our biology, history, and the state of our nervous systems. And of course, as highly sensitive people, we're absorbing more than most, therefore stressful times can be extra hard on us. We went over five challenges HSPs face during tumultuous times, and how we can continue to upgrade our resilience despite them.

**Which challenge resonated with you the most?** (Loss of routine, emotional conflict, absorbing outside pain, obsessing over things outside of your control, or getting stuck in nervous system dysregulation)

**Take a moment to appreciate how well you've handled the tough things!** (Fill in the sentence)

Even though I'm dealing with  
I appreciate myself for

Next, let's make a little plan to start upgrading your resilience. **What would you like to do, starting now, to take care of your sensitive nervous system?** Examples: A daily self care ritual, paying attention to your body, setting boundaries with stressful interactions, setting aside time for a passion project, finding a somatic practitioner, etc. Or write down your own ideas. Your intuition will tell you what you need.

Remember: make it specific, schedule it, write it down, and ask for support as needed.

## Exercises for Chapter 17

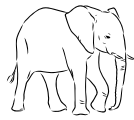
### Three Secret Keys

Wow, congratulations! If you've made it here you are part of an elite group of highly sensitive, empathic special operatives with amazing tenacity and resilience. You have officially accessed the amazing gift programmed into each of us: the ability to heal and grow. Of course, there's always more work to do. Hopefully, Secrets of the Resilient Empath along with this journal have helped you gain a new appreciation for your gifts, as well as insight into how to care for your highly sensitive nervous system.

To wrap up our journey, for now, let's dig into some journaling prompts on our secret sauce seeking steps. But first, try saying "secret sauce seeking steps" three times as fast as you can. OK, you're officially ready to move on.

**How would you like to accept yourself more?** (Examples: Stop explaining yourself to those who are committed to misunderstanding. Refrain from shrinking/ hiding your gifts or censoring yourself to fit in. Embrace feeling safe, lovable, and enough even when people don't get you.)

**What steps would you like to take to protect your energy?** (Examples: Noticing and curbing sensory and/or emotional addictions. Being present in the body. Saying "no" to one thing that drains you and "yes" to one thing that gives you energy.)



**What is the “work” you need to do right now?** (No examples, you already know!)

**What resistance do you have to doing your work?** (Could be procrastination and patterns of avoidance, feeling like you aren’t going to be good enough at it, worrying what others think, or something else. Write down whatever comes up.)

**Make a plan for doing your work.** Even if it’s just the teensiest, tiniest step in the direction you want to go, it counts. As they say, Rome wasn’t built in a day. If you even spent 15 minutes a day doing your work, in a year you’d have spent over ninety hours on it! As always, be specific in your plan, clearing time in your schedule, writing it down, and setting reminders. Ask for support and/or accountability from people in your life.

**Celebrate how far you’ve come!** Think about the progress you’ve made since you started working through this journal. I’m so proud of you and I hope you are proud of yourself too!

Again, thank you so much for taking this journey with me. And as I said in the book, all you have to do is take hold of what you’ve had all along, and you are doing it! I can’t wait to see what you do with your special gifts. Sincerely,

*Jennifer*