

A LETTER *to*
our READERS

sensitive

Jenn Granneman & Andre S3lo

Dear readers,

Both of us—Jenn and Andre—grew up as sensitive kids, and neither of us knew what that meant. We only knew that we saw the world a little differently than other people and didn't always fit in. In fact, the message we got was to "fix" our sensitivity (or at least hide it). "Stop being so sensitive!" and "it's not a big deal" were phrases we heard time and time again. We wondered why we couldn't handle common things that other people seemed to handle easily, like a busy day at school or a loud party with friends. We found ourselves needing to slow down, to pause, to build downtime into our lives—all while the others around us seemed ready to go, go, go. Because of our sensitivity, we thought something was wrong with us.

Like us, if you're also a sensitive person, you may have been shamed for your sensitivity or made to feel like you had to toughen up and power through. Or maybe you are turning to our book not because you consider yourself to be a sensitive person but because you have a sensitive person in your life: a spouse, child, or coworker. If so, there is one message that we hope you take away from our book, for yourself and for others: being sensitive is a strength, not a drawback. It comes with many gifts, such as increased creativity, empathy, and attention to detail. Sensitivity is more than just a "normal" and healthy trait—when harnessed correctly, it's an advantage in an often loud, rushed, and insensitive world.

Perhaps you see the gifts of sensitivity in your own life. You see how your need to slow down and reflect leads to deeper insights and unique solutions. Or how your "people radar" and heightened attention to detail make you the ultimate human lie detector and body language decoder. Perhaps you are the friend or colleague who everyone seeks out for your advice and wisdom. Or, like other famous sensitive people—Nicole Kidman, Dolly Parton, Yo-Yo Ma, and others—your sensitivity fuels your creativity. Could you really do these things without your sensitivity? Probably not.

As you read *Sensitive*, you may discover that you are—or are not—a highly sensitive person. The questions that follow are designed with both kinds of reader in mind. Sure, you can answer them in a journal, but we gently encourage you to discuss them with others (and not to be afraid to go deep—something sensitive people do best!). By talking about your own experiences of sensitivity, you help normalize the trait for others. And when you do that, you help to end the stigma that being sensitive is a flaw or a weakness.

Ultimately, this is the mission of *Sensitive*: to show the world that sensitive is strong. We wish our younger selves could have lived in a world where sensitivity was celebrated, not ridiculed or punished. We can't go back in time and change the past, but we can work to change the future for sensitive people today.

By picking up this book, you have become a part of that shift: you are helping to change what it means to be sensitive.

Welcome to the sensitive revolution.

Peacefully yours,

Jenn and Andre

SET *the* SENSITIVE VIBE:

Both of us have cozy reading nooks of our own, and we use our environment to avoid overstimulation. Here's our dream environment for reading *Sensitive*—which in many ways matches the environment where it was written!

Sip:

Rooibos or chamomile tea to soothe the mind without caffeine.

A rich, velvety Zinfandel for wine-lovers.

Listen:

Anything gentle and dreamy—try Chopin's nocturnes.

A white noise app to let the world fall away.

Breathe:

A cedar-scented or amber candle.

A slightly open window on a breezy night.

Soothe:

A soft lamp, no overhead light.

Fuzzy things. Always fuzzy things.

Ask:

Family or roommates to give you an hour of quiet.

To be patient with yourself when you pause and think, write, hum, daydream.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did you define “sensitive” before reading this book? How do you define it now?
2. Do you identify as a sensitive or highly sensitive person? Does the book help you understand anyone else you know?
3. Why do you think society at large looks down on sensitivity and rewards “toughness”? What might we look like if we listened to the Sensitive Way instead of buying into the Toughness Myth?
4. Either through examples in the book or your own experience, why is sensitivity a “gift”? Or what are the gifts that come with being sensitive?
5. What are some of the costs of being a sensitive person?
6. What makes you feel overstimulated? The book offers several tools to deal with overstimulation. What have you tried? What would you like to try?
7. Talk about empathy—both the positives and drawbacks. How do the emotions of others affect you? Why do negative emotions spread more quickly than positive ones?
8. What are some strengths of being sensitive when it comes to relationships? What are some of the challenges?
9. Talk about the importance of boundaries for sensitive people. What purpose do they serve? Are they difficult or easy for you to establish?
10. What are some healthy, mindful ways to parent a sensitive child?
11. What might be some benefits of hiring sensitive employees? What can companies do to accommodate them so that they can offer their best?
12. Do you think sensitive people make good leaders? Why or why not?
13. Are there people in your life with whom you’d share this book? Why do you think they would enjoy or relate?

RESOURCES & INFORMATION:

RESOURCES, ADVICE, *and* INSPIRATION *for* SENSITIVE PEOPLE:

SensitiveRefuge.com
IntrovertDear.com

JOIN *the* SENSITIVE REFUGE FACEBOOK GROUP *to* CONNECT *with* OTHER SENSITIVE PEOPLE:

facebook.com/groups/sensitiverefuge

GET *to know* US:

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HARMONY