

AM I AN EMPATH?

A Beginner's Guide to Understanding What You Feel

For anyone who has ever wondered, “Why do I feel everything so deeply?”

Healing Hearts Medium

You may have heard the word empath and wondered whether it describes you. This guide is a gentle place to begin. You do not need to have special abilities, know spiritual terminology, or have everything figured out. Start by becoming curious about your own patterns, feelings, and boundaries.

A Note From Theresa

For many years, I didn't understand why I could walk into a room feeling perfectly fine and leave feeling completely different. I didn't always realize that I was reacting to the emotions and energy around me.

Learning about being an empath changed the way I understood myself. More importantly, it taught me that feeling deeply doesn't mean I have to absorb or carry everything I feel.

Through my own spiritual work, what Spirit has shown me is that being an empath is something we may have chosen before coming into this life. I believe many empaths are old souls who came here with the ability to feel deeply and help filter some of the heavier energy in this world - especially for people who may not yet know how to process or manage those emotions themselves.

But being a filter does not mean becoming a sponge.

I don't believe we are meant to absorb everyone's pain and carry it around as our own. Part of the empath's journey is learning how to allow energy to move through us without taking it home with us.

For me, understanding this changed the way I looked at my sensitivity. Instead of wondering, Why do I have to feel everything so deeply? I began to see it as something with purpose.

Your sensitivity can be a gift - but learning how to protect and care for that gift is just as important as having it.

As you read this guide, I don't want you to worry about whether you fit perfectly into the label "empath." I want you to start noticing your patterns. What changes when you're around certain people? What environments drain you? When do you feel most like yourself?

Understanding your sensitivity isn't about becoming more sensitive. It's about learning how to work with it so you can feel grounded, protected, and comfortable in your own energy.

With love,

Theresa

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1. What Does It Mean to Be an Empath?

The word *empath* is commonly used to describe someone who feels deeply affected by the emotions, moods, or atmosphere around them. Some people experience this through strong empathy and sensitivity; others understand it as part of their intuitive or spiritual awareness.

There is no test you have to pass and no label you have to claim. The useful question is whether understanding your sensitivity helps you care for yourself more effectively.

- You notice emotional shifts quickly.
- Other people's moods can affect your own mood.
- Crowds or intense environments can feel overwhelming.
- You may need more quiet or alone time than other people seem to need.
- You often sense tension before anyone says what is wrong.

Sensitivity can be a strength when it is paired with self-awareness and boundaries.

From My Experience

In the beginning of my spiritual awakening, I worked in the medical field in a skilled nursing facility. I would arrive in a good mood - I'm naturally a pretty happy person - but within an hour I often felt moody, drained, and exhausted, even after a good night's sleep.

When I began my mediumship training, I learned about being an empath. I realized how strongly I was reacting to the environment around me. Grounding and creating an energetic boundary became very helpful practices for me.

Being sensitive to your environment doesn't mean you have to carry everything you feel.

2. Common Signs You May Be Highly Sensitive to Others

Not every sensitive person experiences the same things. Look for patterns rather than trying to check every box.

- You can walk into a room and immediately notice the mood.
- People often tell you their problems or personal stories.
- You feel deeply moved by other people's joy, sadness, or pain.
- Conflict can linger with you long after it ends.
- Busy stores, parties, or noisy environments can leave you exhausted.
- You sometimes feel responsible for making everyone around you feel better.
- You need time alone to reset after being around a lot of people.

3. Empathy, Intuition, or Stress?

Sometimes a strong feeling may seem intuitive. Other times it may be ordinary empathy, stress, worry, or your body's response to an overwhelming environment. You do not have to force an answer.

A calm check-in can help you notice the difference over time. Intuition is often described as quiet and simple, while anxious thoughts may feel repetitive, urgent, or filled with 'what ifs.' Your experience may be different, so learning your own patterns matters most.

- What was I feeling before this moment?
- Did something in my environment just change?
- Am I tired, hungry, stressed, or overstimulated?
- Is this feeling giving me simple information, or is my mind creating a long fearful story?
- What happens if I take three slow breaths before deciding what this means?

You do not have to interpret every feeling immediately.

4. The 'Is This Mine?' Practice

When your mood changes suddenly, try this short check-in before taking the feeling on as your own.

- Pause and take one slow breath.
- Name what you are feeling without judging it.
- Think back: was I feeling this way ten minutes ago?
- Notice what is happening around you.
- Ask yourself: 'Is this mine to carry?'
- Imagine releasing anything that does not belong to you and bringing your attention back to yourself.

Awareness creates space between what you notice and what you choose to carry.

From My Experience: Is This Feeling Mine?

I was having a perfectly normal day at work. Then one of my coworkers arrived. Soon after, **I suddenly couldn't focus. I became impatient, overwhelmed, and scattered.**

Later, she told us she had gotten into a huge fight with her husband before work. She had arrived feeling overwhelmed, distracted, and unable to focus. I had not known any of that when my mood changed.

That experience helped me begin asking: **"Is this feeling actually mine?"** Awareness was the first step.

5. Why Crowds Can Feel Overwhelming

A crowded room gives your brain and body a lot to process at once: voices, movement, facial expressions, noise, personal space, and emotion. If you are highly sensitive, that amount of input can feel exhausting.

You do not need to view overwhelm as proof that something is wrong or supernatural. It may simply be a sign that your system needs less input and more recovery time.

- Take short breaks outside or in a quieter room.
- Give yourself permission to leave before you are completely drained.
- Stand near the edge of a room rather than in the center.
- Focus on one conversation instead of scanning everyone around you.
- Plan quiet time afterward if you know a situation will be intense.

6. Caring Without Carrying

Sensitive people can confuse compassion with responsibility. You can love someone, listen to them, and care deeply without taking responsibility for fixing how they feel.

- I can listen without solving.
- Someone else's disappointment does not automatically mean I did something wrong.
- I can say, 'I don't have the capacity for this conversation right now.'
- I can care about someone and still protect my time and energy.
- I am allowed to have needs even when someone else is struggling.

The Backpack Example

Imagine someone you care about is carrying a **backpack that has become too heavy for them**.

Because you care, you may want to help take that backpack off their shoulders. But you do not have to **put it on your own back** and carry it for them.

Instead, imagine placing the backpack on the ground and allowing that heavy energy to **release down into the earth**.

You can listen, love, and support someone without taking their emotional weight home with you.

You can help someone put down their backpack without picking it up yourself.

You can be compassionate without becoming emotionally responsible for everyone around you.

7. Simple Boundaries for Sensitive People

Boundaries do not have to be dramatic. Often they are small choices that keep you from becoming depleted.

- Wait before saying yes to requests.
- Limit conversations that repeatedly leave you drained.
- Turn off notifications when you need quiet.
- Do not feel obligated to explain every 'no.'
- Give yourself recovery time after emotionally intense situations.
- Notice relationships where you are always giving and rarely receiving support.

8. Grounding & Protecting Your Energy

Grounding brings your attention out of everything happening around you and back to yourself. For me, grounding has become an everyday practice and is especially important before mediumship work.

How I Ground & Protect My Energy

I begin by imagining a **white light above my head**. I ask the Universe to fill my body with white-light energy and clear away anything that does not belong to me.

I picture the light moving down through my body and out through my feet. Then I imagine **tree roots growing from my feet deep into the earth**.

At the center of the earth, I picture beautiful crystals, especially **amethyst**, and imagine my roots securely connecting there.

Then I imagine drawing back up whatever energy I need from the earth, bringing it through my feet and up through my body as my **chakras clear and open**.

Finally, I imagine a **protective bubble of white light around my entire body**. I picture my energy staying safely within that space while energy that does not belong to me stays outside.

This helps me feel grounded, clear, and centered in my own energy.

A Simple Version for Beginners

- Imagine white light above you.
- Let it move through your body and clear what you do not need.
- Imagine roots growing from your feet into the earth.
- Picture yourself securely connected and grounded.
- Bring fresh energy back up through your body.
- Imagine a protective bubble of white light around you.

White light → Clear → Roots → Connect → Receive → Protect

You do not have to visualize this perfectly. Use the parts that feel helpful to you. The goal is simply to slow down, come back to yourself, and feel centered.

9. Your Daily Empath Reset

Try this five-minute routine at the beginning or end of your day.

- Minute 1: Notice how you feel before thinking about anyone else.
- Minute 2: Breathe slowly and ground yourself.
- Minute 3: Ask, 'What do I need today?'
- Minute 4: Choose one boundary that will support you.
- Minute 5: Set an intention to care without carrying.

My sensitivity can guide me, but it does not have to control me.

10. Reflection: Learning Your Own Patterns

Use these prompts over the next week. The goal is not to prove whether you are an empath. It is to understand yourself better.

When do I feel most emotionally overwhelmed?

Which people or places leave me feeling energized? Which leave me depleted?

What does my body feel like when I am calm?

What does my intuition feel like when I am not worried or rushed?

Where am I taking responsibility for feelings that are not mine to fix?

What is one boundary I can practice this week?

You Don't Need a Label

Whether you ultimately call yourself an empath, highly sensitive, intuitive, deeply compassionate, or simply someone who notices a lot, the label is less important than learning what helps you feel balanced.

Pay attention to your patterns. Honor your need for rest. Practice boundaries. Give yourself time to understand how your intuition feels when you are calm. Sensitivity becomes much easier to navigate when you know you have choices.

You can feel deeply without carrying everything.

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Educational and spiritual-development material. This guide is not a medical or mental-health assessment or diagnosis.