



Thriving as an Empath

365 Days of Self-Care
for Sensitive People

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JANUARY 1

Treasure Your Sensitivity

The first day of the year is a magical twenty-four hours. It's a wide-open portal into new beginnings and new possibilities about how you view yourself as a highly empathic person. Take some quiet moments to reflect on your empathic gifts: your intuition, depth, creativity, compassion, and desire to better the world. Let yourself experience their worth.

The new year is a perfect time to recommit to your self-care. Ask yourself, "What lifestyle changes can I make to better support my sensitivities? How can I be a caring person, but not burn out? What practices can I use to replenish myself?" Clarifying your goals sets a positive tone for change.

I love the Zen concept of "beginner's mind." It allows you to see yourself with new eyes — not through the lens of old ideas or preconceptions. Starting at this moment, make it a priority to treasure your sensitive soul and the power of your loving heart.

SET YOUR INTENTION

Today and throughout the year, I will embrace my
empathic gifts. I am proud of who I am.

I want to grow into my strengths and become
an empowered empath. I will practice self-care
techniques to protect and nurture my sensitivities.



JANUARY 2

The Gift of Being Different

Like many empaths, you may feel as if you don't belong in this world. You experience life so intensely, and love so deeply, it's sometimes hard to find kindred souls to whom you can relate.

As a child, I always felt "different" from my peers. Other kids loved going to crowded parties and shopping malls, whereas I preferred climbing trees with my best friend or writing poetry. As an only child, I was alone a lot and found companions in the moon and the stars. Often, I felt like an alien on Earth, waiting for a spaceship to take me to my true home.

Similarly, Albert Einstein said, "I am truly a 'lone traveler' and have never belonged . . . I have never lost . . . a need for solitude."

As I've grown as an empath, I can appreciate the gift of being different. I am moved by this anonymous quote: "If you feel you don't fit into this world, it's because you're here to create a better one."

Sensitive people are meant to bring light into the world. Empathy is a strength, not a weakness. I applaud everyone who looks different, feels different, or thinks different. The world needs the difference you will make.

SET YOUR INTENTION

I will honor the gift of being "different." I will fully be my unique self and not let anyone take my power away. I will shine my light brightly.



JANUARY 3

I Am Not “Too Sensitive”

Many of us have received messages from parents, teachers, friends, or the media that being sensitive is a fault or weakness. It's important to gently reevaluate old ideas about yourself such as “I'm too sensitive,” “There's something wrong with me,” or “I must develop a thicker skin.” *These shaming messages are not true.* You are a strong, compassionate person, a blessing to others.

Empaths often have low self-esteem because they believe society's putdowns. *Whenever someone criticizes your sensitivity, don't believe them.* You might even respond with kindness: “I value my sensitive side. Please respect this.” Or, if these critical voices arise in your own head, take a breath and regroup. Simply say to them, “Stop bothering me. Go away!” Then immediately tell yourself, “My empathy is a strength.” Saying no to these inner and outer negative voices will build your self-esteem.

SET YOUR INTENTION

I will not buy into any belief that doesn't affirm the worth of my sensitivity, compassion, and love. I will be empathic in my own life and advocate these values in the world.



JANUARY 4

Intuition Is an Empath's Best Friend

Intuition is the still small voice inside you that tells you the truth about life. It manifests as gut feelings, hunches, ah-ha moments, knowings, dreams, and sensing energy. Also listen to the messages that your body sends. Ask yourself, "How does my body feel around someone? Am I energized or tired? Does a decision feel good or tense in my gut?" Empaths can have strong intuition so it's vital that you follow it.

You may find that you second-guess your intuition or that your logical mind tries to talk you out of it. For instance, you're offered a high paying job but your body feels exhausted around your new boss. Or you are attracted to this "amazing person" but your gut says "beware." If you are unsure about how to proceed, at least go slowly and observe what unfolds. To make the best decisions, always factor in your intuition. It wants you to survive and thrive. Learning to trust it is crucial to your self-care.

SET YOUR INTENTION

Today I will pay special attention to what my inner voice is communicating. I will be aware of the messages my body sends. I will follow my intuition's advice and notice the results.



JANUARY 5

Carve Out Alone Time

A secret to an empath's happiness is creating adequate alone time. This soothes your neurological system and reduces sensory overload so you can feel more inner peace. Taking a break from the busyness of life is good medicine. After you decompress, the world won't seem as overwhelming and you can have more fun when you're with people.

Reflect on what kind of alone time appeals to you. Do you want to relax in a comfortable chair, in silence? Would you like to close the door to your bedroom and journal about your day or meditate? Would you prefer taking a slow walk in nature? During cold weather, do you like curling up by the fire with a cup of hot tea? Reflect on how much alone time you need to feel replenished.

If you have a hectic schedule, be creative. Sometimes I meditate in public bathrooms if that is the only retreat space in my day! Even a few minutes of alone time can quickly restore your energy.

SET YOUR INTENTION

Today I will plan some alone time to wind down.
I will take a break from daily demands and be quiet
and still. I will commune with myself and the universe.



JANUARY 6

Be in the Now

Being fully in the present is a way of slowing down time so you can savor it. The moment, the eternal now, is the miracle we've been given. You can find safety and comfort there.

Still, we may get trapped in obsessing about the past or the future, which causes us to suffer. Why did I stay in that job for so long? Will I be healthy? Will I find a soul mate or have enough income to feel secure? Also, you might conjure worst case scenarios about some area of difficulty in your life—a psychological process called catastrophizing. Recognizing this pattern and gently redirecting your thoughts to more positive ones will lessen your tension.

Mindfulness, which is the practice of consciously being in the moment without judgment, is about focusing on what's happening in the here and now. If your attention drifts, mindfully bring yourself back by refocusing on the rhythm of your breath. Also focus on your senses. Being aware of the sights, sounds, smells, and beauty around you gets you out of your head and into the Now. As D. H. Lawrence wrote, "The living moment is everything."

SET YOUR INTENTION

I will breathe slowly and deeply to calm stress.
I will not focus on the future. I will tell myself,
"I can handle anything one moment at a time."
Staying in the Now is my path to freedom.



JANUARY 7

Divine Timing

There is a flow to life that you can intuitively tune in to. When you surrender to this, you will be carried toward the people, places, and situations that you were meant to experience and learn from. Divine timing happens when you stay in touch with this flow.

Sometimes, though, divine timing may differ from your ego's timing. If, according to your ego, a goal isn't materializing quickly enough, be patient and trust the rhythms of your life. Trying to force matters or pressure people will usually backfire.

Empaths sabotage their goals with anxiety. When you are anxious or overwhelmed, it's not the best time to make decisions. Once you've done everything to further a goal, for instance, in your career or a relationship, let go and be open to divine guidance. Take a sacred pause. You simply wait and watch for signs on how to proceed. With an open heart, you are inviting the universe to work its magic.

SET YOUR INTENTION

I will identify a situation in which I may be pushing too hard. For the next week, I will just let things be. I will become a loving witness to my life rather than pressing forward. I will see what the flow brings.



JANUARY 8

The Beauty of Sensing Energy

Empaths speak in the language of energy and can sense its subtle force around people. It's exciting to frame your interactions and the world in this way.

We are all composed of vibrantly colored energy fields that penetrate our bodies and extend inches to feet beyond them. Though they are invisible to most people, you can feel them with intuition. To Hindu mystics, this is called Shakti. Chinese medical practitioners call it “chi.” In Western health care, the subspecialty of energy medicine recognizes our bodies and spirits as manifestations of this energy, which transmits information about our thoughts and emotions.

It's fun to practice sensing energy around various people. Throughout the day, pay attention to what positive energy feels like. Does your vitality increase around certain people? Do you feel relaxed or uplifted? Then notice what negative energy feels like. Ask yourself, “Do I feel tired, anxious, sick, or overwhelmed?” Get in the habit of noticing the energy people emit. Factor this into your choices about work, relationships, and all areas of your life.

SET YOUR INTENTION

I will be aware of how subtle energy affects my mood, body, and well-being. This is a way of respecting my intuition and how I empathically perceive the world.



JANUARY 9

Is This Emotion Mine?

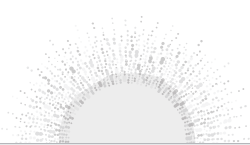
Emotional empaths are able to sense other people's feelings and become a sponge for both their happiness and their stress. It may be hard for you to distinguish someone else's emotions from your own. They are a form of subtle energy that we all give off, and they are contagious. You may unknowingly take on a loved one's moods. Or in crowds, you can suddenly feel anxious, depressed, or happy without knowing why.

A wonderful way to clarify this is to get into the habit of asking, "Is this emotion mine or someone else's?" Many empaths get confused and overwhelmed because they're not used to framing their exchanges in this way. That's why practice is important.

Start by asking yourself this question about three people today. Prior to interacting, notice your own mood to get a baseline of your emotional state. Are you peaceful? Anxious? Excited? Then observe how your mood changes after the encounter. If you feel different, either subtly or dramatically, most likely you are picking up their emotions.

SET YOUR INTENTION

I will empower myself by becoming aware of my emotions. Being mindful of the feelings I absorb from others enhances my self-knowledge as an empath.



JANUARY 10

Dealing with Overwhelm

The secret to reducing overwhelm is to notice it quickly. Many empathic patients have come to me saying, “I’ve felt overwhelmed for years.” They live in the persistent, uncomfortable state of sensory overload or else have become exhausted, burned out, or sick. Happily, you don’t have to let this experience get the best of you.

Each day, treat yourself with kindness. If too much is coming at you too fast, make time to decrease stimulation. Notice when you first start feeling overwhelmed. Did a colleague or family member ask too much of you? Did you overcommit yourself? Most importantly, catch the feeling as fast as you can before it gathers momentum. Then take at least a few minutes to unplug from stimulation. I often retreat to a room without sound or bright light. I rest or meditate to recalibrate myself to a more balanced state. You can use these strategies too.

SET YOUR INTENTION

To prevent or reduce overwhelm, I will plan short or longer periods to reduce external stimulation.

Learning to deal with feeling overwhelmed is an essential part of my empath’s tool kit.