Highly Sensitive Person Scale

The Highly Sensitive Person Scale (HSPS) consists of 27 items that respondents rate on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Extremely). This scale assesses emotional and behavioral reactions to various stimuli. Use this scale:

| Not at all | | I | Moderatel | Extremely | | | | |
|------------|---|---|-----------|-----------|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

| Items | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Are you easily overwhelmed by strong sensory input? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| Do you seem to be aware of subtleties in your environment? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 |
| 3. Do other people's moods affect you? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 4. Do you tend to be more sensitive to pain? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 5. Do you find yourself needing to withdraw during busy days, into bed or into a darkened room or any place where you can have some privacy and relief from stimulation? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 6. Are you particularly sensitive to the effects of caffeine? | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Are you easily overwhelmed by things like bright lights, strong smells, coarse fabrics, or sirens close by? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 |
| 8. Do you have a rich, complex inner life? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 9. Are you made uncomfortable by loud noises? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 10. Are you deeply moved by the arts or music? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 11. Does your nervous system sometimes feel so frazzled that you just have to go off by yourself? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 12. Are you conscientious? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 13. Do you startle easily? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 | 0 |
| 14. Do you get rattled when you have a lot to do in a short amount of time? | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. When people are uncomfortable in a physical environment, do you tend to know what needs to be done to make it more comfortable (like changing the lighting or the seating)? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 16. Are you annoyed when people try to get you to do too many things at once? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 |

| Items | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--|-----|------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. Do you try hard to avoid making mistakes or forgetting things? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 | 0 |
| 18. Do you make a point to avoid violent movies and TV shows? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 19. Do you become unpleasantly aroused when a lot is going on around you? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 20. Does being very hungry create a strong reaction in you, disrupting your concentration or mood? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • | 0 |
| 21. Do changes in your life shake you up? | 0 | \bigcirc | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 22. Do you notice and enjoy delicate or fine scents, tastes, sounds, works of art? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 23. Do you find it unpleasant to have a lot going on at once? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 24. Do you make it a high priority to arrange your life to avoid upsetting or overwhelming situations? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 25. Are you bothered by intense stimuli, like loud noises or chaotic scenes? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 26. When you must compete or be observed while performing a task, do you become so nervous or shaky that you do much worse than you would otherwise? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| 27. When you were a child, did parents or teachers seem to see you as sensitive or shy? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | • |
| Total score: | 168 | | | | | | |

Scoring and interpretation

Scores will range from 27 to 189. A higher total score on the HSPS indicates a higher level of sensitivity. Scores can be used to assess a patient's sensitivity across different situations and stimuli, with higher scores suggesting greater emotional and sensory reactivity.

Additional notes

There is no cutoff score for this scale, but since 168 is very close to the maximum score of 189, we can surmise that Eleanor is very sensitive. She reported that she often feels overwhelmed in crowded or noisy environments and prefers to spend time in quieter settings. She also experiences significant emotional responses to art and music, which she finds both enriching and exhausting.