

The Sensitive Person's Survival Guide: An Alternative Health Answer to Emotional Sensitivity and Depression

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“Sensitive people feel intense emotions, are aware of others’ feelings, are deeply impacted by others’ emotions, and can’t shake off painful feelings because all these things are directly due to empathy.” From this standpoint, recurrent depression, as well as other emotional and even physical ailments can be better understood and brought under control, rather than simply medicated. The answer lies in a new way of looking at the problem, and in flower essences or remedies, which have gained popularity for their usefulness in treating a variety of emotional complaints.

The author of this simple-to-read, do-it-yourself guide to re-evaluating some common mental health problems is a doctor of clinical psychology who has long studied and blended practices from various alternative health fields with her own more conventional tradition. Besides being a psychologist, she has authored three other books, including *Hyperactive: Alternative Therapies for Attention-Deficit Children and Their Tired Parents*.

After suffering years of her own depression, seemingly without cause and without relief from counseling, Mesich discovered that she had empathic abilities. On a deeply intuitive level, she was sensitive to the emotional conditions of others, including her own patients, which resulted in her own feelings of suffering. Research lead Mesich to conclude that this ability, which often times manifests as a problem, can be brought under control and even put to positive use with the help of flower remedies and meditation.

Mesich illustrates her treatment method by profiling several “emotionally sensitive people” who were helped by looking at their conditions in a new way. While her approach is uncommon to our culture due to stereotypes and misunderstandings, Mesich makes a convincing case for further inquiry into the relationship between the psychic aspects of empathy and the manifestation of depression among those that are empathic. For those that wish to pursue this, an Appendix, Glossary and References are included.

While the book is short, and at times redundant on certain major points, it offers a new option for handling tough problems, and could be especially helpful to those that have exhausted other therapies and would like to try something different and inexpensive.

HOLLY WREN SPAULDING (November / December 2000)

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