

CONSCIOUS DATING

FOR HIGHLY SENSITIVE INTROVERTS



Benita A. Esposito, MA, LPC, LCMHC

Bestselling Author of
*The Gifted Highly Sensitive Introvert:
Wisdom for Emotional Healing and
Expressing Your Radiant Authentic Self*
Available on Amazon

Copyright 2021. The Esposito Institute, Inc.

Table of Contents



Welcome	01
Your Relationship Vision	02
Why Healthy Relationships are So Important	04
The Inner Critic's Nasty Messages	06
Tips to Create Your Ideal Relationship	07
The Pitfalls of Dating - Spot the Red Flags	09
Are You Too Loyal?	10
The Shadow	11
The Power of Presence	12
Marketing Your Authentic Self	13
The Inner Circle Invitation	14
About Your Facilitator	16
A Love Poem: Feeling Safe	17

Welcome to Conscious Dating For Highly Sensitive Introverts

First you start
with a Vision
anchored in
your Heart.

You're about to read an educational article designed to increase your ability to create your ideal romantic relationship. You'll receive an invitation to join my **Inner Circle for Highly Sensitive Introverts** if you would like more expert guidance to remove roadblocks, overcome your fears and streamline your journey. I'm thrilled to help you move this puzzle piece into place to create a high-quality life.

Let's get started.



Your Relationship Vision

There's nothing much better than being in an intimate relationship where your needs are met. Would you agree?

Let me paint you a picture.

Highly Sensitive Introverts

love romance ...

especially in the beauty of Nature.

What are YOUR favorite things to do with your ideal mate? Here are some ideas.



1. Stroll by the sea under the full moon
2. Dine by candlelight followed by slow dancing to your favorite music
3. Hike through a forest by a stream
4. Raft down a river
5. Soak up the beauty of a beach in Hawaii or travel to your favorite country
6. Swim in a pool below a waterfall in the middle of a forest
7. Snuggle in bed while watching your favorite movie
8. Read or write each other love poems

9. Celebrate each other's creative projects and learn together
10. Cuddle or walk hand-in-hand
11. Meditate together and explore your spiritual journey
12. Make love underneath the shade of a grand old tree with no one around for miles

Now it's your turn. Start a journal and write down your favorite things to do with your ideal mate.

If your ideal vision were possible, would you take it?

Dwell on your dreams.

Reach for the stars.

You might just be able to touch them!

Testimonial: "I still remember the day I heard you say, "Do you want to be like an oak tree? When everything tries to shake you, your strong roots are anchored in the ground." I really wanted that but did not think I could be it. I have reaped the rewards of those days many times over. All the tears, fear, pain, money, hassles, and being humbled was worth it. I cry as I think of the tenderness and love with which you helped to birth my Authentic Self. Where would I be today without that work? Not where I am. If only you could meet the man I have drawn to me. My husband takes my breath away with his exquisiteness. Never could I have been with such a man in such a way without all of my past and all of the work we did, you and I." – P.B., RN

(For the sake of this writing, I'll use pronouns as if I am writing to a heterosexual female. Males are most welcome in the virtual CONSCIOUS DATING INNER CIRCLE.)

Since you're a Highly Sensitive Introvert, I know that you want much more than just shared interests. You want a mate with admirable character traits and behaviors. Do you want to adopt any of these?

1. He looks into your eyes as he listens and summarizes what you say with empathy.
2. He shares from his heart. He's dedicated to personal and spiritual growth.
3. He's conscientious. He does what he says when he says he will.
4. He's there for you when you need him most.
5. He knows that being truly PRESENT with you is more important than all the material gifts in the world.
6. He's excited about your brilliant mind and loves supporting your creative projects.
7. He wants to know what's upsetting you, and he helps you in ways that empower you.
8. He engages in healthy conflict management skills to co-create win-win solutions.
9. He makes sincere apologies and repairs your relationship when he falls short.
10. He's playful with childlike innocence all the while anchored in wisdom and maturity.
11. He's smart and accomplished. He loves making the world a better place.
12. His eyes sparkle as his clever mind explores the edges of what others say is impossible.

Now it's your turn. Create YOUR list and rank-order all the qualities: A, B, C.

Insist that all your "A list" criteria be met. What are your top ten A-traits? Focus on those.

Now think about it.

If your ideal vision were possible, would you take it?

What are YOUR hopes and dreams?

Why Healthy Relationships are So Important.



Testimonial: “The goal of having a happy, healthy relationship was the most elusive one of all. Benita helped me prepare for a relationship. Then I met my girlfriend. As the relationship deepened, we occasionally had conflicts that could have destroyed our relationship, or at least inflicted wounds that could have permanently injured it. We met with Benita to discuss these conflicts and learned new ways to work through them. I’m very happy to report that the techniques she taught us helped us to handle the occasional conflicts much more effectively. When we discipline ourselves to use the techniques, we get through conflicts much quicker so they don’t damage our relationship. As a result, we are more comfortable and confident in our relationship, and our future looks brighter than ever. Thank you, Benita!” – J.C., Writer/Editor/Trainer

Do you know?

People in unhealthy marriages shorten their life span by 4 years. Serious illnesses increase by 35%. Why? It may be due to chronic physiological arousal associated with physical and emotional stress that puts wear and tear on the body. Unhappy couples wait an average to six years to seek counseling. Half of all divorces occur in the first 7 years. Half of all marriages end in divorce.

~ Dr. John Gottman, 40 years of research on what makes
masters and disasters of marriage.

Success Tip

First, you form an ideal vision anchored in your heart. However, it’s not as likely to come true if you harbor unhealed unconscious wounds that perpetuate your current coping patterns. Left to your own, it may take years to create your ideal relationship ... or you may give up and never experience the love of your life. That would be sad.

I can help.

I can't give you any guarantees ... but if you are ready to explore your psyche and ferret out the beliefs and behaviors that prevent you from attracting your ideal mate, I can help.

I don't promise this will be an easy process. This will require rigorous work ... and the work will be worth the prize: a fulfilling healthy enduring romance.



**Courage is not the absence of fear. I'm sure you've heard that.
Courage is facing your fears and following your North star and taking
action based on your core values nestled deep within your heart.**

~ Benita A. Esposito, MA

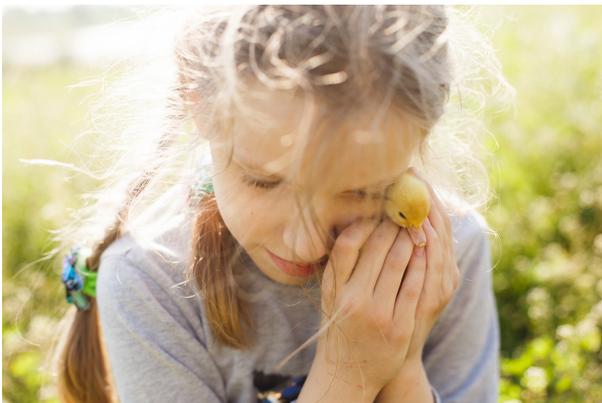
**You may breeze through creating an ideal vision of your IDEAL MATE,
but it could be more difficult than you think. Here's why.**

When you start to dream big, your INNER CRITIC

may taunt you with fears and false beliefs.

The Inner Critic's Nasty Messages

- A man like that doesn't exist. Who am I kidding?
- It's not possible to have my ideal vision. I'm just a dreamer.
- I don't deserve it.
- Past relationships have failed. What makes me think that won't happen again?
- He won't want me after he gets to know my flaws.
- What if he doesn't accept me for who I truly am?
- What if he wants too much from me ... too much time and attention?
- What if he doesn't like my body?
- What if we fall in love and he turns out to be like my "ex"?
- What if we have conflicts? I hate conflicts.
- I'm scared to speak up and say what I want and need.
- I don't know how to set boundaries for self-care and keep my heart open.
- I'm afraid I will lose myself in a relationship again.
- I tend to give and give and give, but many times I don't get my needs met in return.
- I'm reluctant to put myself out there in the dating process. I don't want to get hurt again.
- What if I miss the red flags and I'm duped again?



Therapists who work with Attachment Theory and Inner Family Systems like I do ...

realize that our Inner Critics are unconsciously trying to protect a vulnerable part inside of ourselves. I call that part the Inner Child. Our inner children often carry wounds.

The Critic doesn't want us to get hurt. Its voice dominates our inner dialogue so the wounded inner child stays hidden. It tells us all the things that we should and shouldn't do. While it may have good intentions, many times our Inner Critic runs amuck and shames us. The Critic keeps us stuck in a narrow comfort zone that doesn't allow us to grow.

Tips to Create Your Ideal Relationship



Testimonial: As my negative emotions calmed down, my heart opened up more. I began to feel more loving toward others. All of these changes were unexpected, very soothing, and delightful. Benita is warm and caring, yet also firm and direct, and she knows many techniques and tools that help with personal healing and empowerment. – P.L., Writer, Seattle, WA

We'll discuss the following ideas more in depth in the **CONSCIOUS DATING INNER CIRCLE for Highly Sensitive Introverts**. We'll do exercises to increase your personal mastery. Let's get you started now.

Become your own best friend. Finding the right partner is NOT the end-all and be-all. You must upgrade your inner world ... your relationship with your Authentic Self and your spiritual connection.

As Gandhi said, "You must become the change you wish to see."

Give yourself permission to create YOUR ideal vision

and know that you are WORTH IT ... deep down inside your bones.

You've got to integrate this deep into your psyche or you will keep selling yourself short.

A ship in harbor is safe, but that's not what ships are built for. - John A Shedd



You'll go through a metamorphosis as you learn.

Examine your relationship history ... what worked and what didn't. We'll explore the obstacles and the remedies to ensure your sure-footed path.

Transform your mindset that results in less-than-fulfilling relationships: the set of beliefs that shapes how you make sense of the world and yourself. It influences how you think, feel, and behave in any given situation.

Heal the unconscious childhood wounds that created your adult coping strategies that no longer serve you.

Understand your attachment style that was created to survive in your family of origin. You'll take a quiz to discover your attachment style and learn how it helps or hinders your relationships.

Resolve your internal conflicts. While one part of you is excited about the prospect of your ideal relationship, another part is scared. This is a typical dilemma most of us face. I'll help you make peace with the competing forces so all your energy flows in the direction of your dreams.

The problem is that most Highly Sensitive Introverts dislike conflict. We like harmony. Conflicts are normal in healthy relationships according to Dr. John Gottman's 40 years of research on what creates masters and disasters of marriage. Sensitive Introverts must learn skills to maintain EMOTIONAL BONDING while expressing ourselves assertively. Most people I know think they are being aggressive when I think they are assertive. Assertive means "I count and you count." We need to stop going quiet for fear of ruffling feathers. We may bottle things up for so long that we erupt like little volcanoes and spurt ashes everywhere. Our body takes the toll from internalized stress.

It doesn't have to be that way.

The Pitfalls of Dating



I'll help you learn how to **spot the red flags** and understand WHY you may have ignored them before. I don't want you to repeat past mistakes.

You'll develop the courage to exit an unhealthy relationship ... or a relationship that doesn't light you up.

Narcissistic manipulation and abuse kills a relationship, but so does boredom according to research by Arthur and Elaine Aron. If your needs for emotional intimacy don't get met, you will be bored.

Don't make a premature exclusive commitment to a man before you have a solid sense of who he is. Date several people until you find someone who meets your "A list" criteria.

I'll show you how to stop losing yourself in the relationship.

First, you must become your own ideal mate ... or at least be consciously engaged in the process. Then you will be likely to attract someone else who is walking the same path. Learn how to develop self-compassion, warts and all.

You are worth having a fulfilling relationship.

You are valuable.

**You are like an exquisite work of art
that should be highly prized.**

Are You Too Loyal?

If you are not treated like you are cherished, you should leave the relationship with no guilt.

Stop trying to get a tiger to change his stripes. Stop being loyal when it is to your disadvantage. Learn to accept other people the way they are.

Learn to honor yourself for who you are.

Moss doesn't grow in a desert.

Cacti don't grow in a rain forest.

Highly Sensitive Introverts are idealistic visionaries. We see the potential of who people can become. Sometimes we fall in love with the "potential" rather than the person. Take a good hard look at who you are dating. Take off your rose-colored glasses. Teach yourself to look accurately at the truth. That's rigorous work, and you'll probably need help doing it. I'll help you save years of suffering.



If you follow my guidance, you'll minimize your chances of being taken by surprise by unethical behavior such as lies, cheating, addictions or affairs.

You are a beautiful intelligent kind-hearted Highly Sensitive Introvert and I don't want that to happen to you.

Your ideal relationship must be a win-win for both parties.

If he doesn't want to do deep exploration of himself and your relationship, he's not the right candidate for a Conscious Relationship with you.

Has this ever happened to you?

A man was charming in the beginning of the relationship. You fell in love and made an exclusive commitment. Then he switched and treated you poorly. You were devastated.

How can you tell if your partner is projecting a false image?

Give the relationship plenty of time before you make a permanent commitment. I suggest at least two years. Three years is better. Watch how he acts during intense stress and when he's angry. Don't make the mistake of thinking you will be exempt from his anger.

The Shadow



In a conscious relationship, you BOTH FEEL SAFE enough to reveal your vulnerabilities and unconditionally accept yourselves. You'll find ways to heal and neutralize the Shadow material. This is an essential element of a CONSCIOUS RELATIONSHIP.

The "Shadow Self" was coined by Dr. Carl Jung. Your Shadow is the side of yourself that you judge as bad ... the part that you don't want to identify with ... the part that brings you shame ... the part that you would rather hide for fear that others won't love you.

What hides in the shadow? Fear of abandonment. Fear of engulfment.

When people don't deal with their Shadow, they can be manipulative, manipulated, abusive, victimized, clingy, avoidant, contemptuous, defensive, depressed and anxious. Addictions can increase as well as health issues.

The more you excavate and make peace with your Shadow Self, the more you will be able to see a prospective mate's Shadow Self that he would prefer to hide from you.

It's wise to shine the light on your Shadow and look at it with kind eyes. But, if you are in an abusive relationship, get the help you need to leave.

You may want to get professional help to heal the wounds hidden within your Shadow.

Quick marriages are a bad decision. Most result in divorce. Quick commitments are made when happy hormones run rampant and you feel like you are high on drugs. That euphoric "in love" feeling is absolutely magical. Savor it. But also realize that it may cloud your ability to perceive the relationship accurately. The hormonal high doesn't allow you to explore your shadow or your potential mate's shadow.

Exploring your shadow is hard work, but don't skip this step or you may be sorry.

If your mate doesn't want to explore his shadow, it's a red flag. That would be the same as saying that he does not want to be fully conscious and, therefore, he is not a good candidate for a Conscious Relationship with you. Suggestion: walk away.

You've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, and know when to run."

– Kenny Rogers

The Power of Presence

When you are AUTHENTIC, people feel YOUR PRESENCE. Your very presence is healing. It's life-giving. You're not overpowering. You're not dominating. You're just being real. When you are authentic, people get to know who YOU are ... not the superficial image that you may have projected in the past. You know the one I'm talking about ... where you please people but you don't fully show up as yourself. I'll help you find the courage to stop hiding and fully express your Authentic Self tactfully. You don't have to settle for less, and you shouldn't have to. Ever. Know your CORE VALUES and what is most important to you. Become the person you want to be and radiate your lovely Authentic Self into the world.



Stop focusing on, "Will he like me?" and stay committed to your ideal vision and your values.

Do your values match your partner's values, and if so, how much?

If your ideal relationship were possible, would you take it?

Are you worth it?

I say you ARE worth it!

I say you are special, and rare, and beautiful.

The more you FEEL you are worth it, the more you will act congruently with that mindset ... which will lead you in the direction of your ideal mate ... because you will BE your ideal mate to yourself.

Marketing Your Authentic Self



Do you know how to market yourself so you are more likely to find your ideal mate? I'll help you learn how to write a profile that unabashedly expresses YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF. Even if you don't do online dating, this profile will guide your dating process so you don't waste precious time.

We'll brainstorm ideas about how to meet potential candidates. We'll discuss how to be safe while dating during a pandemic and when to get intimate and when not to.

You WILL find more like-hearted souls while you travel on your Journey to your Authentic Self.

Even if the man you date doesn't become your forever mate, you will learn about yourself in the process. You will upgrade your consciousness with every new interchange. You'll groom yourself to know more about how you fully show up or when you shrink back.

And then you'll take the next step to fully commit to being your Authentic Self. That is your responsibility in the co-creation of a healthy romance.

With a little help, you'll be able to fully show up when you're serious, when you are playful, when you are creative, when you are sad, and when you are angry. Yes, healthy people get angry when their toes get stepped on. They also know how to express their anger in caring ways.

The goal is for you to learn how to show up in all the ways you are and be honest, transparent and vulnerable and love yourself and your mate in the process.

That's a CONSCIOUS RELATIONSHIP. That's mastery-level functioning,

That's EXACTLY what I am committed to helping you learn.

If you could have it, would you take it?

The Inner Circle Invitation

Reflect on the vision of your ideal relationship.

How important is it to you?

Rate your answer on a scale of 0 to 10.

If you score 8 or above, you are ready to join our

CONSCIOUS DATING INNER CIRCLE for

Highly Sensitive Introverts. You must have a

high-level commitment to be your Authentic Self and to create a healthy romance.



We'll discuss all the things in this eBook and more. Every week you'll have an assignment that will help you apply the teachings in your everyday life. You'll meet other beautiful like-hearted Sensitive Introverts and get to feel a fulfilling sense of belonging.

Who knows ... maybe you'll meet your ideal mate here ... or at least develop good friends.

PRE-REQUISITES

This is an intermediate level group. New clients need an intake with Benita A. Esposito. Most participants will have had counseling with Benita or another therapist or spiritual director, or participation in intensive personal growth retreats or training programs.

Testimonial: "I am married to a physician, and I am his surgical assistant. I finally feel like we are a team, working together to heal. God bless you for helping the healers to heal. I had no idea that I could reach the deep level of healing that we did in such a short amount of time. For me to move out of my head and into my body was what I truly needed in order to feel, really feel, what was inside." – D.C., RN

To see when the next Conscious Dating Inner Circle begins:

Click [here](https://sensitiveintrovert.com/2021/09/conscious-dating-inner-circle-for-highly-sensitive-introverts/) to be taken to the webpage for details on dates, tuition and registration process.

Or copy and paste this URL:

<https://sensitiveintrovert.com/2021/09/conscious-dating-inner-circle-for-highly-sensitive-introverts/>

Your Facilitator

Benita A. Esposito, MA, LPC, LCMHC



My career spans four decades as a life coach, counselor, author, and ordained minister with the Association for the Integration of the Whole Person.

I earned a master's degree in clinical psychology, and my bachelor's of arts degree is in psychology/sociology.

I love coaching gifted highly sensitive introverts because the HSP material developed by Dr. Elaine Aron has been so incredibly helpful in my own life.

I'm a member of the Episcopal church, although I grew up in the Methodist church. As a grace-filled Christian, I accept all faiths who believe in unconditional love. I've studied with the Order of St. Luke with my dear friends Father John Rice and Father Nigel Mumford where I learned how to combine Christian spiritual healing and psychological principles.

I counsel adults (individuals and couples) in private sessions, groups and in intensive retreats. Being a results-oriented person, I love retreats the best because so much transformation occurs in such a short time.

Fascinated with human potential and the healing miracles of Jesus and meditation, my master's thesis researched meditation methods that result in pain elimination without drugs. Little did I know when I was 21 years old that I would remain passionate about mind-body-spirit healing for the rest of my life.

As a highly sensitive introvert with a Myers Briggs personality type INFJ, I share my gifts of visionary insight, compassion and empathy to help my clients feel understood at depth. I love helping people discover their Authentic Self and blossom according to their God-given divine blueprint.

If you would like to know about me, Benita A. Esposito, [click here](https://sensitiveintrovert.com/benitas-story/).
<https://sensitiveintrovert.com/benitas-story/>

Read or listen to my bestselling book, which is a memoir and teaching stories in which I share my Hero's Journey to the Authentic Self. I hope it's inspiring.

The Gifted Highly Sensitive Introvert: Wisdom for Emotional Healing and Expressing Your Radiant Authentic Self. Buy a Kindle eBook, paperback or audiobook at Amazon.

Testimonial: Like many Highly Sensitive individuals, my inner life is very powerful for me, both as an integral part of my daily processing, and also as part of my spirituality and meditations. I found Benita's help not only gentle (which was important to me) and thoughtful but downright amazing! She has a gift for guiding me that I find to be very exciting. Repeatedly, within days after a session, I had transformational experiences that moved me, always, gently, yet quite clearly, to the next level without stress or shock to my system. She sees in a visionary's way the magic that is within and helps to bring it out into active use in the world. Benita is helping me fulfill dreams I thought were lost. She is showing me how to stay on track and in a healthy relationship with heart, soul, and Divine plan. I am grateful for the chance to work with such a talented soul.

– Barry S. Jaeger, Ph.D. Author of Making Work Work for the Highly Sensitive Person, Paradise, CA

Enjoy the Love Poem on the next page.

I hope to see you in the Conscious Dating Inner Circle.

Benita A. Esposito, MA, LPC, LCMHC

Your Authentic Life. Anything Else is a Comprise.

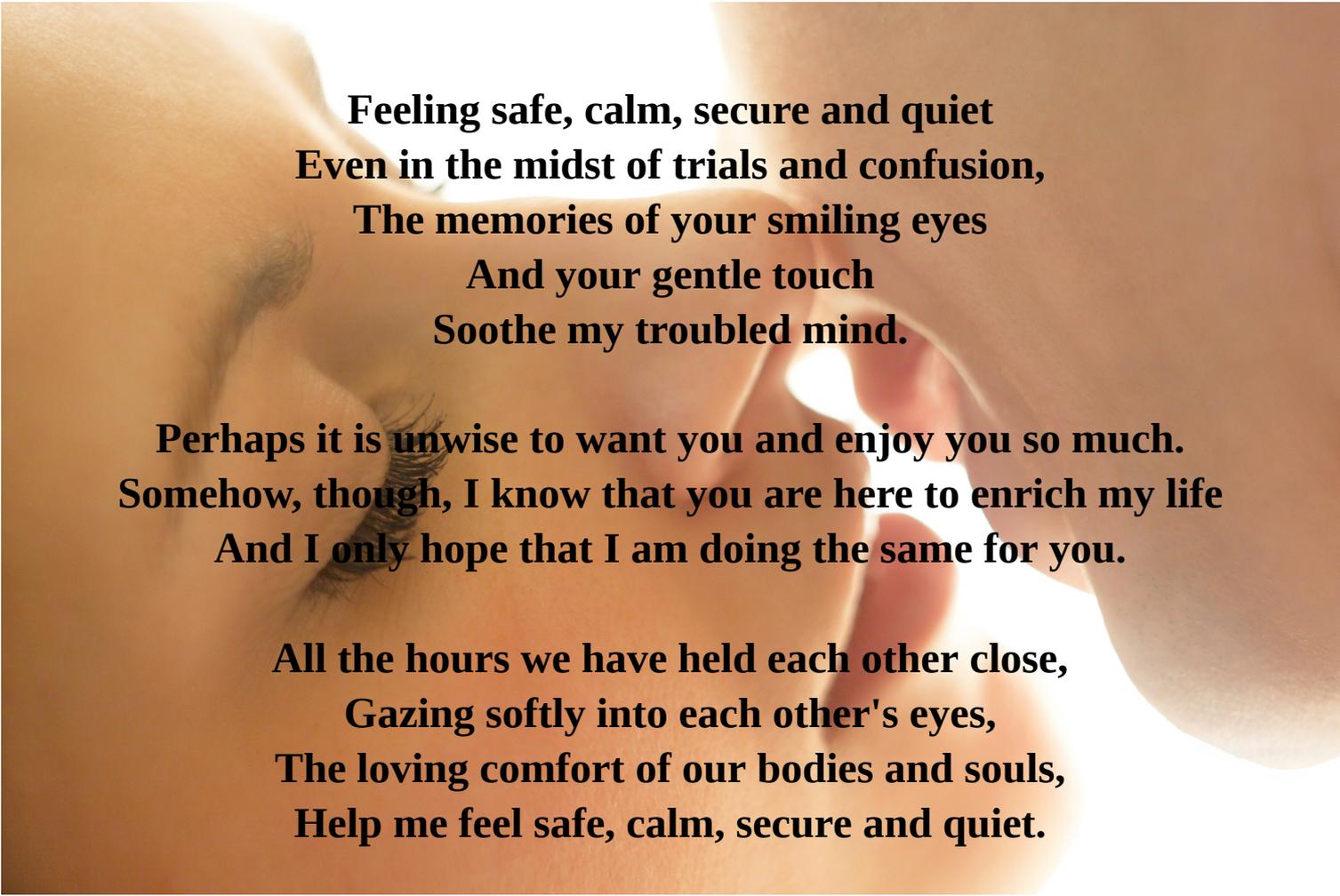
Visit www.SensitiveIntrovert.com for more information.

Testimonial Disclaimer

My intention is to help you create the most flourishing life possible. As stipulated by law, I cannot and do not make any guarantees about your ability to get results with my ideas, information, tools, or strategies. Your level of awareness, commitment, and the action you take will influence your results. Any testimonials should not be considered a promise of results for you. That being said, I believe in you and I am here to support you in making the changes you want for your life. I provide tools and ideas that will help you move in the direction of your dreams and goals.

Photos belong to Benita Esposito or they were sourced from Unsplash.

A Love Poem: Feeling Safe



**Feeling safe, calm, secure and quiet
Even in the midst of trials and confusion,
The memories of your smiling eyes
And your gentle touch
Soothe my troubled mind.**

**Perhaps it is unwise to want you and enjoy you so much.
Somehow, though, I know that you are here to enrich my life
And I only hope that I am doing the same for you.**

**All the hours we have held each other close,
Gazing softly into each other's eyes,
The loving comfort of our bodies and souls,
Help me feel safe, calm, secure and quiet.**

Benita A. Esposito
Poem copyright 1976



**THANK
YOU**