



Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight: What to Do If You Are Sensory Defensive in an Overstimulating World

By Sharon Heller



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In the publishing tradition of *Driven to Distraction* or *The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing*, this prescriptive book by a developmental psychologist and sufferer of Sensory Defensive Disorder (SD) sheds light on a little known but common affliction in which sufferers react to harmless stimuli as irritating, distracting or dangerous.

We all know what it feels like to be irritated by loud music, accosted by lights that are too bright, or overwhelmed by a world that moves too quickly. But millions of people suffer from Sensory Defensive Disorder (SD), a common affliction in which people react to harmless stimuli not just as a distracting hindrance, but a potentially dangerous threat. Sharon Heller, Ph.D. is not only a trained psychologist, she is sensory defensive herself. Bringing both personal and professional perspectives, Dr. Heller is the ideal person to tell the world about this problem that will only increase as technology and processed environments take over our lives. In addition to heightening public awareness of this prevalent issue, Dr. Heller provides tools and therapies for alleviating and, in some cases, even eliminating defensiveness altogether.

Until now, the treatment for sensory defensiveness has been successfully implemented in Learning Disabled children in whom defensiveness tends to be extreme. However, the disorder has generally been unidentified in adults who think they are either overstimulated, stressed, weird, or crazy. These sensory defensive sufferers live out their lives stressed and unhappy, never knowing why or what they can do about it. Now, with *Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight*, they have a compassionate spokesperson and a solution-oriented book of advice.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Heller, a developmental psychologist, knows firsthand how difficult life can be for people suffering from sensory defensiveness (SD). Symptoms include flinching from touch; overly acute senses of smell; fear of escalators; irritation at certain lights; and eating disorders. While these symptoms are often present from birth, for many other people they can be triggered by some traumatic event. Adding to the pain is the difficulty in diagnosing this ailment—some sufferers are told they have ADD or autism. Heller briefly discusses her own successful therapy and how it transformed her life. The book includes four sections—the first two focus on an overview of the condition, and the second two examine treatment, including diet, medication and relaxation techniques. Useful appendices list alternative treatments and resources. The writing is clear and relatively jargon-free, and sprinkled throughout the book are anecdotes from patients who have successfully battled SD. Patients who have this condition will find this book reassuring, especially since Heller discusses a treatment and usually follows up with a real-life scenario. For example, the section on light therapy ends with a success story of a woman who had learned to cope with her light sensitivity: “[Anna] realized that her eyes were wide open, no longer slits. She had spent years walking around in a haze, blinded by glare, with her brain taking in only a sliver of light.” For people with SD, this title will wonderfully supplement their medical treatment.

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Review

“A fascinating account of how sensation can run amok and cause problems.” (New York Newsday)

About the Author

Sharon Heller, Ph.D., is the author of *The Vital Touch* and teaches courses in psychology. She received her master's degree from the University of Chicago and her doctorate from Loyola University of Chicago. She lives in South Florida.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carmine Adams:

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Within this era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability to do something more are more important than other. Do you want to become one of it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you should do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to possess a look at some books. One of several books in the top list in your reading list is actually Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight: What to Do If You Are Sensory Defensive in an Overstimulating World. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Hillside can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking upwards and review this publication you can get many advantages.

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