

HSP MONEY MINDSET, VOL. 1

The Sensitive Man - You don't need to
sell your soul for money.

A watercolor illustration of a crowd of people's heads and shoulders in profile, facing right. The colors are mostly shades of blue, purple, and dark blue. One person in the center is highlighted with a bright orange and yellow glow, making them stand out from the rest of the crowd.

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The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

Gordon Gekko: *The richest one percent of this country owns half our country's wealth, five trillion dollars. One third of that comes from hard work, two thirds comes from inheritance, interest on interest accumulating to widows and idiot sons and what I do, stock and real estate speculation. It's bullshit. You got ninety percent of the American public out there with little or no net worth. I create nothing. I own. We make the rules, pal. The news, war, peace, famine, upheaval, the price per paper clip. We pick that rabbit out of the hat while everybody sits out there wondering how the hell we did it. Now you're not naive enough to think we're living in a democracy, are you buddy? It's the free market. And you're a part of it. You've got that killer instinct. Stick around pal, I've still got a lot to teach you.*

From *Wall Street - the movie*

A fairly recent article in the Washington Post highlighted a study that suggested that wealthy people tend to be more immoral, unethical and less empathetic than people who don't have great wealth. Recent studies support this hypothesis. Wealthy people are more likely to cheat on taxes, on spouses, shoplift (really?), and cheat at games of chance. They even give less a proportion of income than poorer folks do.

Are rich folks inherently like this and does this make them more likely to become rich because of the entitled attitude? Power effects behavior and money brings power. Studies show that wealthy individuals feel above the law. The power of money strips people of inhibition increases risk taking and risky behavior and feelings of entitlement and invulnerability. People with money are more likely to follow and execute on their desires, because they have the means to do so and that sometimes means acting unethically and immorally.

The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

What types of characteristics do many of the wealthy have that lead them into this deficit of empathy and scruples? Interestingly, evidence of psychopathology is four times greater in the ranks of CEOs than in the general population. Presumably, these CEOs, are representative of wealthy, entitled types. The similar traits they share with psychopaths are quite alarming. There is a definite lack of empathy in their interactions with others.

One could say that this is just dispassionate business they practicing, however, could we assume that at some point simple human kindness would prevail? Apparently not. It seems reasonable that wealthy individuals would have massive egos with all that power and would exhibit behavior such as self-centeredness, self-promotion and a die-hard strategy of vanquishing competition. In order to accomplish this, these individuals often display a superficial charm and élan that is manipulative and endgame oriented. The ends justify the means and with that comes lack of remorse at their mercilessness and machinations over others.

Selfishness, coupled with unethical behavior and a tendency towards easy boredom, lead those at the top to often live on the edge: lying, cheating and stealing their way to success.

With increased power comes increased feelings of entitlement and a separation of sorts of the privileged ego from those in subordinate roles. It's difficult to determine if power and wealth corrupt the ego or if the corrupt rise to powerful and wealthy stations in life. I suspect that both apply.

Rich kids or kids of entitled families tend to be indoctrinated early in life to their entitled thinking. Yet, with the entitlement comes enormous pressure to succeed and excel at all things. Pressure comes from the parents, teachers, coaches, and peers and is relentless. Many parents value success over personal decency and kindness. Relationships suffer as a result, and fewer intimate relationships form increasing a sense of isolation and lack of empathy towards others. This bad start at home leads to instances of crime, drug and alcohol abuse to combat the stress. The privileged status is a protected status and gives the child a feeling of invulnerability to repercussions. Thus, the pattern begins.

The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

I often wonder if the drive to wealth is a predatory instinct, more reptilian and less mammalian in nature. The love of material things and the love of the hunt may be two different things, but they often seemed to be paired together. Acquisition and accumulation have no inherent utility value for the super wealthy, as they generally have more than is necessary to exist and live a comfortable if not opulent life.

You would think at some level, that a feeling of satiety would set in, and that increased wealth would produce a bloating of sorts. Like carrying more weight than is comfortable. But there is a type of narcissistic drive in sequestering all the toys in the room into your own private toy box, that depicts metaphorically a small child mentality that says, "love me now, I have more than you, I'm better than you." These narcissistic wealthy have a self-centered agenda that sucks the life out of the world around them, making them feel omnipotent and imperial. We are seeing a resurgence of this today, as wealth consolidates to those at the top.

I realize that this is not true of all wealthy individuals. And it's easy to generalize evil characteristics to all rich folks. Maybe a little sour grapes here. Perhaps, it's more recognizable in the Nouveau Riche, who tend to be more conspicuous with their money. The established wealthy are less conspicuous and harder to observe. They like the cloak of their wealth, which hides them from public view, but nonetheless, makes them even more prone to their machinations without public scrutiny. The traits that garnered their wealth were no doubt, present in their progenitors. Maintaining and preserving wealth is a much different game than acquisition and accumulation, but the same characteristics would be useful for both.

Contrast that with the natures of highly sensitive people. Are we the naturally the antithesis of those that strive for wealth? Is it harder for HSPs to acquire wealth because we lack the predator qualities needed to advance above and beyond the common? Do our traits of empathy and kindness, which we often wear like weights, prevent us from taking the necessary steps to rise above in matters of money and wealth?

The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

Making money is fundamentally about taking the money out of someone's pocket and putting it in yours. Of course, you could argue for the barter model, but we live in a society where upward mobility requires one to go beyond simple tit for tat trading and focus on exploiting profits. This takes cunning and somewhat of a killer instinct. Cue the language of business. This sordidness is just not what HSPs are largely about.

Most HSPs are less likely to be interested in the troubles of making money and acquiring wealth. High wage work is exhausting and can tax the HSPs' systems. HSPs tend to be focused on nonmaterial matters, spirituality, and quiet, contemplative endeavors. This would suggest that we do not have the fundamental characteristics of our personalities to become the kind of entrepreneurial or capitalist types that are driven by financial success.

Would that explain why HSPs are less likely to be wealthy or powerful people? Do we not have the chops to be financially adept? Is it possible for us, who enjoy creature comforts, and are HSPs, to override or reprogram our HSP nature in a thoughtful way and still acquire wealth or at least succeed financially? Or, maybe, I'm wrong, maybe it's just not that important to most HSPs.

I think it might be of interest to more HSPs if it could be managed within our HSP framework. Part of the aversion for many of us may be fear or dread of some of the draconian measures used by the wealthy to become rich. For the average HSP or for the average person, there are a couple of ways I can think of off the top of my head to approach this. Certainly, this is not exhaustive.

One, you adapt yourself to the system using HSP characteristics instead of predatory ones. This requires some skill acquisition and a willingness to push some boundaries but doesn't require you to sell yourself out. The second is longer term, broader and even more fundamental. That is changing the way you play the system, working a different angle and being creative.

The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

In the first strategy, one must adopt some of the positive characteristics of wealthy individuals. Creating a positive and optimistic outlook means modifying the overthinking quality most HSPs possess. It might mean abandoning the uber-cautious attitude HSPs tend towards and employing calculated, optimistic risks (business development, investments or employment opportunities).

Perpetuating a strong ability for resilience is necessary, not just for wealth but for life. Adaptability and recovery are traits that can be learned and are key to surviving in wealth-building. HSPs could actually be quite good at this, because of our capacity for rumination and review of our experiences. Learn to remove the powerful emotions, and this leaves raw experience, which can be reframed and repurposed with new vigor, and sent back out into the world.

Staying connected and developing the skill of networking helps build social capital. To assuage the urge not to socialize, HSPs can do this like Ninjas. Develop a purpose for networking with a clear objective. Laser in on the target individuals that will provide value, and reach out to them. Of course with our HSP nature, we also should look to reciprocate the value gained. This keeps our empathy quotient high and makes us good people to network with.

Firing up a passion for objectives, without flaming out is important. Passion is fuel, and burns brightly and quickly, use it wisely. Make sure you stock up with fuel before you go out to face the world – exercise, sleep, diet, and meditation, will aid in moderating your passion against your energy stores.

Learning and practicing good financial habits are necessary to maintain what you gain. Let your innate conscientiousness and attention to detail prevail.

Finally, express and show gratitude for success, learning from mentors and showing empathy, compassion, and appreciation for all that aid you.

The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

The second system is more about changing how you play the system than changing you. This system would be to use your HSP characteristics to create a value proposition, and then let the market multiply it for you. You need not start a business per se or become a capitalist to do this. Many artists, authors, and musicians have employed this method.

My best example would be to create an artistic product or creation. For example, write a book. The idea of writing a book is the type of task that an HSP would be likely most comfortable with. Expression of thought, quiet time to write, creating an imaginary world, or expounding an idea, and then letting it go into the world to seek its fortune. This is a solitary task, done once. Your intellectual property then is sold, by various means, then replicated for distribution, whether in print or in electronic format. The scale is up to you – large or small. Paying you over and over for a single effort. Not everyone is going to have the success of J.K. Rowling, a famous HSP, but, yet a decent life could be made with this model.

The economies of doing this allow you to multiply the effect of your work, without draining you. You have played the system to your strength. Yes, I know, granted it must sell, granted that you have to do some promotion work, but the idea is to use the multiplier effect in a single endeavor, a very HSP kind of thing. Maximum efficiency, with minimum effort. My point is that making money is not inherently evil or greedy. If you can produce something of value and sell it, the world can beat a path to your door.

Money is power, but its also energy and energy potential. Energy is a neutral force, neither good or evil. It can be used both ways – the beholder of the energy colors the result of using that energy. Money is like the genie in the bottle; it merely does what you command it to. Money can be used for a lot of positive things in life. And HSPs would be good stewards of large sources of money. Almost all of us frame money with presuppositions – either scarcity or abundance. It may surprise you to learn that all rich people don't think in terms of abundance. It makes a difference.

The Sensitive Man - You Don't Need to Sell Your Soul for Money

Maybe money isn't your thing after all. If so, perhaps, you are the luckiest of us all. Live simply, with what the Universe has given you, work on spiritual matters and rest in your thoughts. As for me, I'm going to work on the money proposition. I think we can turn this thing around. I'll let you know how I do.

Be happy.

Gordon Gekko: The point is ladies and gentlemen that greed, for lack of a better word, is good.

From *Wall Street*

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MEET WILLIAM ALLEN - THE SENSITIVE MAN



William Allen is an author with a writer's heart and researcher's mind. After getting a degree in Psychology with an eye on doing psychology research, he recalibrated for a career in Information Technology. He found himself in a thirty-year career as an Information Technology manager at Wells Fargo who enjoyed managing highly intelligent, often difficult staff, many of whom were highly sensitive. He was awarded a prestigious Corporate Management Excellence award for his empathetic management style.

He retired early from his corporate job to found his Hypno-coaching and neurofeedback brain training business, BrainPilots, in Bend, Oregon. While in Bend, he co-organized the area's first Introvert/Highly Sensitive Person discussion group.

In late 2016, he began his blog, The Sensitive Man, about his experiences, as a highly sensitive man. The blog became the genesis of his book, *Confessions of a Sensitive Man*. He feels that HSP males need to take their keen insights and intuition and make them public. He would like to shed more light on highly sensitive males and the much-needed role they need to take in our society.

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