

**THE HIGHLY SENSITIVE
PERSON'S SELF-CARE
GUIDE
A BEGINNING TOOL**

An Options to Health
Workbook

Ginger Bisplinghoff, RN, BS
Holistic Specialist, Author

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INTRODUCTION

Let me start by saying that I don't have all of the answers. What I do have is over 60 years of being a highly sensitive person and 30+ years of experience working with thousands of clients who are empathic by nature.

Being highly sensitive is a blessing and can often feel like a curse. Chances are, if you are drawn to this workbook, you have known that you are different for some time and are looking for answers.

I have put together this workbook based on personal experience, study and knowledge that will help you identify your sensitive nature, find ways to understand it and use it as a gift to enhance your life.

Ginger

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

Anais Nin



sensitive

sen-si-tive

-adjective

1. endowed with sensation; having perception through the senses.
2. readily or excessively affected by external agencies or influences.
3. having acute mental or emotional sensibility; aware of and responsive to the feelings of others.
4. easily pained, annoyed, etc.
5. pertaining to or connected with the senses or sensation.
6. *Physiology* - having a low threshold of sensation or feeling.
7. responding to stimuli, as leaves that move when touched.
8. highly responsive to certain agents, as photographic plates, films, or paper.
9. affected or likely to be affected by a specific stimulus (used in combination): price-sensitive markets.
10. involving work, duties or information of a highly secret or delicate nature, esp. in government: *a sensitive position in the State Department.*
11. requiring tact or caution; delicate; touchy: *a sensitive topic.*
12. constructed to indicate, measure, or be affected by small amounts or changes, as a balance or thermometer.

-noun

13. a person who is sensitive
14. a person with psychic powers; medium

Highly Sensitive Person or HSP – coined by Dr. Elaine N. Aron in 1996

From: www.dictionary.reference.com

ASSESSMENTS

Are you Highly Sensitive?

Highly Sensitive Person Questionnaire

Check any and all that apply:

1. I am often told to “toughen up.”
2. I have been told that I “take things too personally.”
3. I often have “mood swings.”
4. I have a difficult time being around a lot of people.
5. I value my alone time.
6. I am easily overwhelmed.
7. Too much noise wears me out.
8. Too much light wears me out.
9. Too much sun wears me out.
10. Too much of anything wears me out.
11. I am easily emotional.
12. I am hyper-vigilant.
13. I can’t seem to lose weight.
14. I “feel” things that others don’t.
15. I am very creative.
16. I have a rich inner world.
17. I have vivid dreams.
18. I pick up on other people’s emotions and moods.
19. Malls are too much for me.
20. I know things that can’t be explained logically.
21. I often sense that what I’m feeling isn’t mine.
22. I often feel depressed.
23. I would say that I am intuitive.
24. I feel like I don’t have protection.
25. I often feel anxious.
26. I often feel scattered and have difficulty focusing.
27. Some people think I have ADD.
28. I take things personally.
29. I avoid conflict at all costs.
30. I can’t watch the news because I am too affected.

31. It is hard for me to let go of things.
32. I was considered shy, timid or introverted as a child.
33. I am sensitive to pain.
34. I am affected by caffeine.
35. I often feel nervous.
36. I startle easily.
37. I sometimes get anxious when I have too much to do at once.
38. I would never go to a scary movie or watch a violent TV show.
39. Change is difficult for me.
40. I need to follow an eating schedule or I feel disconnected.
41. I prefer simplicity.
42. Being around water gives me a sense of well-being.
43. I often self medicate to deaden all of the feelings.
44. I have acute hearing.
45. I often know what is going to happen before it does.
46. I am fond of animals and children and prefer them to adults.
47. I often feel better working alone.
48. Temperature changes often affect me.
49. I feel often feel my heart racing.
50. I usually know how to make people feel comfortable.

If you have checked off 5 – 10 or more of the above characteristics, you are on the highly sensitive person scale and are looking for tools that can make life less overwhelming. It will important to find what works for you.

Sensitive

IT IS NEVER YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO:

1. Give what you really don't want to give.
2. Sacrifice your integrity to anyone.
3. Do more than you have time to do.
4. Drain your strength for others.
5. Listen to unwise council.
6. Retain an unfair relationship.
7. Be anyone but exactly who you are.
8. Conform to unreasonable demands.
9. Be 100% perfect.
10. Follow the crowd.
11. Put up with unpleasant situations.
12. Please unpleasant people.
13. Bear the burden of another's misbehavior
14. Do something you cannot really do.
15. Love unlovable people.
16. Endure your own negative thoughts.
17. Feel guilty toward your inner desires.
18. Submit to overbearing conditions.
19. **Apologize for being yourself.**
20. Meekly let life pass you by.

“YOU NEED TO TOUGHEN UP!”
“YOU’RE SO THIN-SKINNED!”



You have probably heard that a million times. And, you may have tried to toughen up, but to no avail. There is a reason for that.

On the next several pages, I will introduce you to some physical traits that help to explain some of the sensitivity that you feel. These are actual structures on your face that represent specific behaviors, define who you are and how you react to people and your environment.

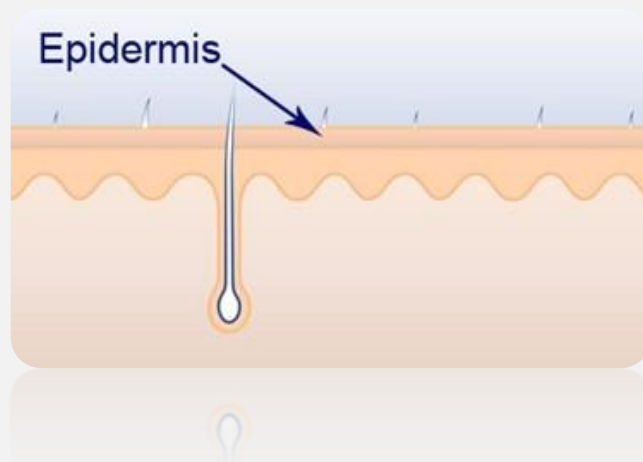
For those of you who have read my book, *It's In Your Face – The True You Revealed*, the information in this section is a review. For others this may be the initial introduction to facial analysis. It may be a relief to finally have an explanation of why you feel the way you do.

*To order my book, go to my website:

www.ItsInYourFace.com

PHYSICAL INSULATION

Let's take a look at your physical insulation or the thickness of your skin (epidermis). Its purpose is to insulate nerve receptors from internal and external environmental input. This relates to the entire body: the epidermis, the linings of the organs and the sheaths of the nervous system and the circulatory system. They all reflect the same degree of insulation – or lack of it.



CHARACTERISTICS OF THIN-SKINNED INDIVIDUALS

- Small Pores;
- Delicate bone structure;
- Fine hair;
- Very thin lines or no lines on the forehead;
- Physically sensitive to the environment input;
- Emotionally sensitive to the environment;
- Quicker to respond to stimuli;
- Delicate;
- Able to see the veins clearly in one's hands.



CONSIDERATIONS

Once you have the awareness that you are thin-skinned, you can begin the process of discovering what to do about it. First and foremost, **you won't grow thick skin!** This is INNATELY who you are. This is part of your gift to the world.

- Choose to be responsible for your own physical comfort and well-being;
- Get to know what situations feel safe for you;
- Know that **less is more** in most situations;
- Take care of yourself – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually;
- Use your sensitivity, refinement and discernment as a positive in your life;
- Utilize the tools in this workbook to keep yourself focused and grounded.

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIVENESS

“The freedom we are looking for is the freedom to be ourselves, to express ourselves.”

Don Miquel Ruiz

Look at the picture of the baby and notice the beautiful, huge irises. This is how you most likely looked at the beginning of your life and still look.



Large irises represent *emotional expressiveness*. You will laugh more, cry more, get angrier, sadder and more joyful than most people. You feel more than most. You need to keep a box of tissues with you at all times.

You ARE what you FEEL and most of your life people have tried to get you to “TONE IT DOWN”!



As a highly sensitive person, you will also feel others' pain, anguish and emotion. You have most certainly absorbed it and felt it as your own. Later on in the book I will offer suggestions for filtering other's emotions and energy.

To stay as healthy as possible with emotional expressive eyes, it is imperative that you have someone or something as a sounding board or a release mechanism. This might include talking to a friend or therapist, having body/energy work, exercising, journaling, meditating, crafting, dancing, yoga, singing, doing whatever works for you.

Because you feel emotions on a large scale, you want to avoid stuffing or repressing your feelings.

BIG ENERGY THAT IS SUPPRESSED CAN CREATE BIG PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS!

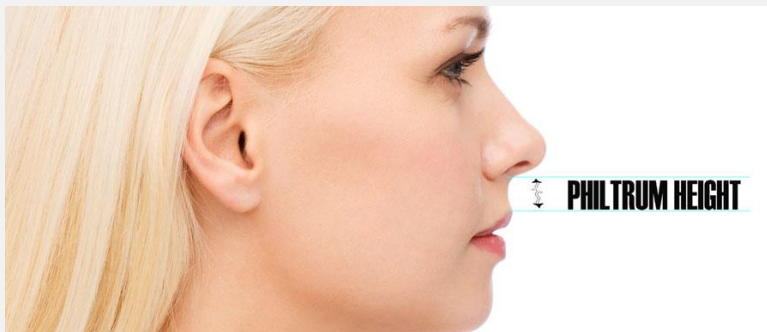


PHILTRUM LENGTH AND SELF-ESTEEM

Your philtrum is the vertical, muscular groove that leads from the base of your nose to the top of your upper lip.

To determine your philtrum length, place your index finger under your nose. If you can barely fit your finger in the space, your philtrum is **SHORT**.

If you can fit 1 ½ the width of your finger, or more, your philtrum is **LONG**



SHORT PHILTRUM

“Why do I take everything so personally?”

If you have a short philtrum, you are naturally inclined to take things personally. You are extremely vulnerable to others' reactions and opinions and can feel angry when you feel that you are being overlooked or disregarded.

This can feel like a curse, but let's look at the blessings of a short philtrum:

- You take pride in your personal appearance;
- You are a superior arbiter of taste and style;
- Fashion, interior design, photography, painting, modeling, costume design, Feng Shui are all professions that are natural for you.

To best use a short philtrum as a positive in your life:

- Turn your focus to your own accomplishments;
- Set clear goals for yourself;
- Stand in your power and know how important you are;
- Manifest your best at whatever you do;
- Please yourself alone.

LONG PHILTRUM

“I can be impartial.”

- If you have a long philtrum, use this trait as an advantage.
- Although you are thin-skinned, you are able to step back and observe a situation from a more detached point of view without falling apart at criticism, unkind words or someone's dislike of your choices.
- Possible career choices might be:
 - Research;
 - Coaching;
 - Judging;
 - Mentoring;
- On a stressful day, though, you will still need to plan for self-care and release of negative energy that you might have absorbed without knowing.

3 STAGES OF STRESS

“I can’t see beyond the nose on my face!”

Highly sensitive people are overwhelmed easily. Therefore, it is important to know the signs and symptoms of the 3 stages of stress.

Eyes play a significant role in identifying the degree of stress. This is mainly because you **FEEL WITH YOUR EYES**.

FIRST STAGE STRESS:

- Eyes become glassy, staring, dull, tired;
- This is an immediate response to shock or overwhelm or;
- Holding on past your limit of endurance.



2ND AND 3RD STAGE STRESS

SECOND STAGE STRESS

White shows under one Iris only.

Unresolved stress has been going on for days, weeks, months. Because one eye is affected, depth perception, balance and focus is off. This person is *an accident waiting to happen*.



THIRD STAGE STRESS

White shows under both Irises

Stress has been unresolved for a long time – perhaps even years. It is hard to stay present. This person needs immediate assistance resolving the physical, mental, emotional or spiritual stress because they feel that they have no choices.



FULL LOWER LIP TRAIT



“Do I have it to give – my time, energy and money?”

This is the most important question to ask yourself if you are gifted with a full lower lip.

- You are spontaneously generous with your time, energy and money. If someone needs your help, you will drop what you are doing in order to help them.
- You may be the one who always volunteers.
- You may wonder why you are so tired.
- Your nature is to help! You do it without a second thought.
- Make sure you are replenishing your energy that is going out to others. Think of it as you would a checking account. If you keep writing checks without depositing money, eventually the money runs out. The same is true for time and energy.

**ENERGY EXERCISES
FOR THE HIGHLY SENSITIVE
PERSON**

STAYING GROUNDED IN YOUR BODY

Highly sensitive people are overwhelmed more easily. It is more difficult to stay grounded, and electrical.

You are an electrical being. From an Eastern medicine perspective, your energy flows through your feet, up your legs, crosses in the solar plexus area and travels to the opposite brain hemisphere. This is called a **cross-patterning energy flow** and looks like an X.



Your spirit/essence lives along the midline of your body.

When your energy is integrated and flowing in a cross-patterning fashion, you are focused, protected, energized, calm and balanced.

Conversely, when your energy becomes split down the middle due to overwhelm, you feel unfocused, vulnerable, tired, spacey, wired, uneasy, frustrated and disconnected.

D i s c o n n e c t e d

GROUNDING EXERCISE

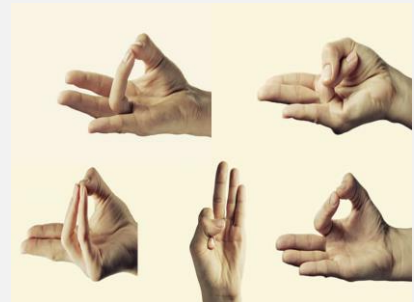
1. Start with your feet together;
2. Bring the thumb of each hand to the little fingernail of each hand;
3. Place the other 3 fingers of each hand on your forehead;
4. Bring your feet wide apart;
5. Keeping your feet apart, bring your hands below your clavicle bone (collar bone) and massage on both sides of the sternum;
6. When you are done, bring your feet back together.

Do this exercise at least daily. You will feel energized, focused, refreshed and integrated. With your spirit connected to the midline of your body, you will also feel more grounded, connected and protected.

GROUNDING – FINDING WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

More grounding ideas. Start a **Grounding Journal** to identify what works for you.

- Eating root vegetables;
- Mudras;
- Scrapbooking;
- Bathing;
- Gardening;
- Working with your hands;
- Cooking;
- Washing dishes;
- Walking outdoors;
- Spending time with animals;
- Repeating affirmations.



BRAIN HEMISPHERE INTEGRATION

Elaine Aron, in her book, *The Highly Sensitive Person: How to Thrive when the World Overwhelms You*, says. “the brains of highly sensitive people have more activity in the right hemisphere, indicating an internal rather than an external focus.”

Although the above statement is true, to be the most clear, focused and *intuitive*, it is important to have the right and left brain hemispheres integrated and working as a team, regardless of brain hemisphere dominance.

The simplest and yet most powerful energy exercise for the brain is tracing, doodling or visualizing an INFINITY SYMBOL.



TRACING AN INFINITY SYMBOL

1. Get a large piece of paper.
2. With the pen in your **RIGHT** hand, trace an infinity symbol several times. Follow with your eyes.
3. Repeat this with your **LEFT** hand.
4. Repeat with **BOTH** hands on the pen.

You can also trace the infinity symbol in the air using your whole body. Make the tracing as big as possible. Stretch your eye muscles during the tracing.



FIGURE 8 ENERGY FLOW

The *Figure 8 Energy Flow* exercise increases energy circulation throughout your body as well as increasing your protective *force field* around your body.

This is so important for the HSP. You need a protective bubble and support so that energy can bounce off of you or go around you, instead of through you!

Exercise:

1. Place 2 fingers of one hand on your navel and the palm of the other hand on your forehead. Hold this connection for about a minute or until you feel pulsing under your fingertips and your hand.
2. Focus on taking deep breaths.
3. Once you feel pulsing or take a deep, cleansing breath, reverse hands and repeat the exercise.

Perform this exercise before a meeting, a family get together or any time you need extra energy and support.

RELEASE ENERGY AND STRESS

Below is a self-care technique to release pent up anger, frustration and stress often caused by absorbing energy from people, places and things. You don't want to feel like a volcano ready to erupt!



1. Stand, rub your hands together and shake them off.
2. Take a deep breath and circle your arms above your head.
3. Turn your hands towards you and make a fist.
4. As you blow the air out, “pound” your fists and arms downward. When your arms reach the bottom of the motion, open your hands.
5. Repeat this 2 more times.
6. Finish with a “Zip Up” (see next page).

ZIP UPS ENERGIZING CENTRAL MERIDIAN

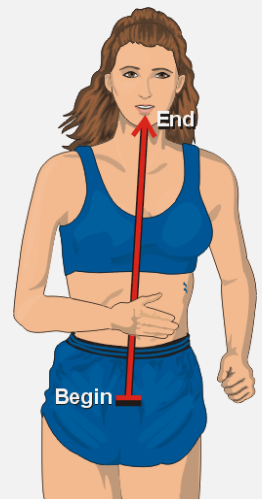
Central Meridian is an energy pathway that runs from the pubic bone, up through the middle of your body and ends at the lower lip.

This energy pathway energizes your brain and your eyes.

As the *Zip Ups* exercise strengthens Central Meridian, you will feel more of a sense of purpose and direction.

Zipping Up

- Place one hand on the pubic bone (see the Begin Point)
- Take a deep breath and simultaneously move your hand up the center of your body, ending at the lower lip.
- Repeat at least 3 times.



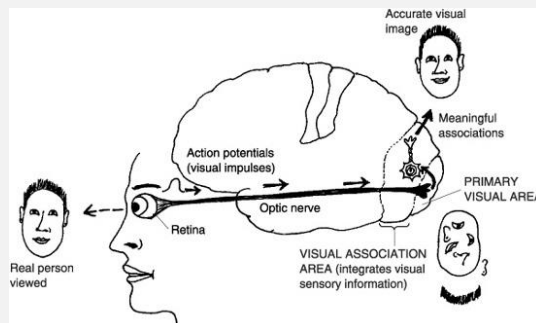
SWITCH ON YOUR EYES

Because you **FEEL WITH YOUR EYES**, it is important to not only acknowledge the emotions being felt, but also to physically strengthen your ability to see what is right in front of you.

If you were to shine a light through the pupils of your eyes, the light would come out the back of your head. This is called your **PRIMARY VISUAL AREA** and it is where you see images.

Feel in the back of your head and find the bone that sticks out called the **Mastoid Process**. Above the bone is a dip or groove – the Primary Visual Area (PVA)

Massage the PVA while you gently and slowly rotate your eyes around the clock in one direction and then the other. Stretch your eye muscles but not to a point of feeling pain. Take deep breaths as you go.



FLOWER ESSENCES FOR THE HSP

- The healing power of flowers and plants have been known for thousands of years, from ancient rock paintings in Europe and Australia, to hieroglyphics in the pyramids of ancient Egypt, to the texts of Hippocrates of Alexandria, to Shamans, medicine men and women.
- Throughout the ages, flowers have been regarded as containing healing vibrations for the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual body levels.
- In modern time, flower essences were rediscovered by **Dr. Edward Bach**, a British doctor in the 1930s. In the 1980s, fifth generation Australian herbalist **Ian White** launched the Australian Bush Flower Essences.
- In 2020, there is an abundant supply of flower essences to choose from:
 - Australian Bush Flower Essences;
 - Bach;
 - Green Hope Farm Essences;
 - Delta Garden;
 - Tree Frog Farm;
 - Wild Earth Animal Essences;
 - Flower Essence Services (FES);
 - And more – see the resource page at the end.



FLOWER ESSENCES – HOW THEY WORK

- The flower essence is ingested (drops on or under the tongue or in water) or absorbed through the skin (placing drops on the body) and goes into the **BLOODSTREAM**;
- The vibration settles midway between the **CIRCULATORY** and **NERVOUS SYSTEM**;
- The flower essence then moves directly into the 14 major **MERIDIANS** or energy pathways;
- Through the pores of the meridians, the energy is amplified into the **CHAKRAS** and various subtle bodies and then back to the physical body.
- For more information on meridians and chakras, see Donna Eden's, *Energy Medicine* book in the Suggested Reading.



AUSTRALIAN BUSH FLOWERS FOR THE HSP

The two most popular Australian Bush flower essences for the HSP are Fringed Violet and Angelsword:

Fringed Violet:

The fringe on the petals of this flower represent your aura and, when taken, seals up tears in your aura from outside energy and gives you a protective force field of energy.



Angelsword:

This flower essence releases energy that interferes with your connection to your Higher Self and inner guidance.



BACH FLOWER ESSENCES FOR THE HSP

The most well known and popular Bach flower essence is **Rescue Remedy**, an essence for stressful or traumatic situations.



I also recommend **Aspen**. This flower essence is for people who are thin-skinned and need extra protection to maintain strength and grounding.

If one aspen tree is planted, a grove will appear in record time. The bark of the tree is paper thin and speaks to its Doctrine of Signature or healing property.



GREEN HOPE FARM ESSENCES FOR THE HSP

Green Hope Farm is in Meriden, NH and Molly Sheehan is the wonderful owner of this farm.



Green Hope Farm offers **Lamb's Ear**, a flower essence to support the HSP ***to feel what they feel but stay strong.***

I use the flower essence, **The Wingspan of the Senses** daily.

This essence is from the *Healer's Tool Box*, which includes 15 flower essences that were created in 2009 when Molly Sheehan walked the Camino de Santiago for the second time.

This essence allows you to be supportive with someone going through a challenge, to stay grounded while doing so and avoid absorbing their energy.

FES FLOWERS FOR THE HSP

All of the Yarrow flowers, Golden Yarrow, White Yarrow, Pink Yarrow offer protection.:

GOLDEN YARROW is for outgoing people who are overly influenced by their environment and by other people and tend to withdraw and isolate.

WHITE YARROW is for extreme vulnerability to others and the environment and can be easily depleted and feel a sense of psychic toxicity.

PINK YARROW helps with boundaries and prevents an unhealthy merging or absorbing of other people's energy, thus leading to emotional confusion.



SUGGESTED READING

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- Beck, Martha. ***Steering by Starlight***. Rodale, Inc., 2008.
- Bisplinghoff, Ginger. ***It's In Your Face***. O2H Pub., 2011.
- Booth, Mike. ***The Aura-Soma Sourcebook***. Healing Arts Press, 2006.
- Brown, Brene', Ph.D. ***I Thought It Was Just Me***. Gotham Books.,2007. (Any and all of Brene' Brown books!)
- Eden, Donna. ***Energy Medicine***.Tarcher/Putnam, 1998
- Linn, Denise. ***Sacred Space***. Ballantine Books, 1995.
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- Northup, Christiane, M.D. ***Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom***. Bantam Books, 1998.

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- Richardson, Cheryl. **Take Time for Your Life**. Broadway Book, 1998.
- Richardson, Cheryl. **The Art of Extreme Self-Care**. Hay House, Inc., 2009.
- Schultz, Mona Lisa. **Awakening Intuition**. Harmony Books. 2010.
- Segal, Inna. **The Secret Language of Your Body**. Atria Paperback, 2010.
- Zee, Ted, PhD. **The Highly Sensitive Person's Companion**. Raincoast Books, 2007.

FLOWER ESSENCE RESOURCES

Bach Flower Essence Books:

- Bach, Edward, MD. ***The Bach Flower Remedies***. Keats Publishing,
- Mazzarella, Barbara. **Bach Flower Remedies for Children**. Healing Arts Press, 1994.
- Scheffer, Mechthild. **Bach Flower Therapy**. Healing Arts Press. 1988.
- Scheffer, Mechthild. ***The Encyclopedia of Bach Flower Therapy***. Healing Arts Press., 2001.
- ***Floral Acupuncture*** by Deborah Craydon, C.F.E.P. & Warren Bellows, Lic.AC. The Crossing Press.
- Kaminski, Patricia and Richard Katz. **Flower Essence Repertory**. Published by The Flower Essence Society, 1994.

MORE RESOURCES

Australian Bush Flower Essence Books:

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- White, Ian. Bush **Flower Healing**. Bantam Books, 1999.

Websites:

- www.animalessence.com
- www.ausflowers.com.au
- www.deltagardens.com
- www.flowersociety.org
- www.foxmountain.com
- www.greenhopeessences.com
- www.perelandra-ltd.com
- www.southernherb.com
- www.treefrogfarm.com

GINGER BISPLINGHOFF

I have over 40 years experience in the health care field and I continue to study in order to support my clients and students.

My specialties:

- Muscle Testing/Kinesiology
- Flower Essences
- Face Reading
- Mentoring/Teaching



- And, most of all, I am your cheerleader. I will always help you find a way to succeed in whatever you choose.

To reach me: Ginger@optionstohealth.com