

# Orchids: How to Care for the Orchids In Your Life



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**Summary:** The orchid is not an easy flower to grow, as it has very special needs. But when you can meet those needs, it blooms spectacularly. Orchid children (youth and adults) are similar -- they have very special needs. And when we can meet their needs, they are capable of blooming spectacularly.

## Know Any Orchids?

Know anyone who is:

- On one hand, extremely sensitive to stress (such as sensory stresses such as noise) or emotional stresses such as other people?
- On the other, has unique strengths such as kindness, compassion, and/or creativity?

If you answered YES to these question, then read on to learn about orchids and how to care for them...

## The Orchid Flower

Orchids are a very particular flower. They are not easy to grow -- they require special soil, and just the right amount of water and sunlight. When their needs are not met, they do not do well. But why are orchids so loved? Because when their needs are met, they are capable of blooming spectacularly.

## "Orchid" People

Human beings are similar. Studies show that people can be grouped into three main groups, depending on how sensitive their nervous systems are wired:

### 1. Dandelions (29%) are not very sensitive.

Dandelion people are pretty hardy and do reasonably well, without special care.

### 2. Tulips (40%) are medium sensitive

### 3. Orchids (31%) are highly sensitive

Under stress, orchids are more sensitive. They may be more sensitive to physical stress such as noise, light and other sensory input. They may also be more sensitive to emotional stresses. As a result, it can be challenging to live with an orchid, because of their particular needs.

On the other hand, when conditions are right, orchids will bloom with their unique strengths. Their strengths might be kindness, caring and compassion. Or perhaps athletics, or the creative arts.

Society needs all sorts of people -- tulips, dandelions and orchids, as each has their strengths that they contribute to society.

Other terms used to describe people who are sensitive include 'sensitive temperament', the 'highly sensitive person', and 'superfeelers'.

## How to Look After Your Orchid Child

- Accept that you have an orchid child.
- Accept that the same strategies which may appear to work on non-orchids (e.g. positive and negative reinforcement approaches) may work less well on orchids.
- Provide the extra care emotional care that your orchid needs:
  - Be patient, and give them more of your time.
  - Be empathetic and validating on how they feel, which may be more than with others.
  - Do stay calm with them as best as you can, as they can easily sense your upset. If you get upset, it will be more likely they will get upset.
  - Provide a calm, low-arousal environment for your child. "Highly sensitive people" are often 'introverted', and have less need for social activities. They may need more quiet, and after activities, may need more rest.
  - Provide consistent, regular routines. Inconsistency and unexpected changes without warning are difficult for orchids. If there are changes, give them advance notice.

## Orchids Can Bloom Spectacularly

It is not easy to raise an orchid child (or live with an orchid person). But when we can figure out what they need, they are capable of blooming spectacularly. Those who are kind and caring will do well in caring professions, and show you kindness and caring when you become old in your age. Those who are creative can make the world a more beautiful place through their creativity, whether it be music, art, writing or other means.

## References

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## For More Information

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Understanding the Orchid Child, by Berkley Wellness  
<https://www.berkeleywellness.com/healthy-mind/stress/article/understanding-orchid-child>

## About this Document

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Written by members of the eMentalHealth Team.

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