

Can You Profit From Your Intuition?

by VALERIE POULIN

Have you ever turned down a job because it did not feel right? Perceived the sex of an unborn child? Or correctly guessed a telephone caller? Chances are you made the decision, prediction or perception based on your intuition.

interchangeably with psychic ability.

In an aged of spiritual enlightenment (the popularity of Deepak Chopra and of the *Chicken Soup* series of books is evidence of this), we are becoming more in tune with our minds and souls. This includes



What is often described as “a gut feeling,” “an instinct,” or “a sixth sense,” is also called intuition, and this inherent knowledge is used in our daily lives.

In Greek philosophy, intuition is the understanding by the intellect, rather than impressions or perceptions. The French philosopher Henri Bergson also believed that intuition was in contrast with intellect, and saw it as a form of instinct. Philosopher Baruch Spinoza declared intuition to be a union of knowledge based on experience derived from sense, and reasoning, also based on experience. Philosopher Immanuel Kant considered intuition as perception supplied by the mind divided into two parts: perception of the sensation, and the mind's understanding of that perception. (Of course, these are oversimplified statements of complex theories.)

So then, what exactly is intuition?

Intuition is generally understood to be this: knowledge instantly obtained through the sense, based on neither logic nor reason, and without thinking about it, such as impressions or perceptions. Intuitive ability has been used

the growing of our intuitive senses. Rather than dismissing a growing kernel of doubt, we are learning to carefully listen to our inner voices and to play out our hunches.

For example, while travelling through Union Station on my way home from work, I stood in line to purchase a lottery ticket. Although I was running late, I felt compelled to purchase a ticket and ended up winning just over \$29,000. It seemed too flakey to describe this compulsion as intuition, and since I didn't “know” that I was going to win (I just felt compelled to purchase a ticket), I dismissed it as luck. Besides, imagine explaining to friends that my decision-making process was based on feeling rather than rational thought. I would be certain to get some strange looks. It was only recently that I made a decision to deliberately increase my intuitive ability.

The decision that I should be developing, rather than suppressing, my intuitive ability stemmed from a job termination about which I had had an “unreasonable” promotion; I cleaned out my desk, deleted personal email and computer files, and said a casual goodbye to a

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few co-workers. Since I'd ignored a strong desire to forgo public transportation and drive my car to work, I was thankful to be supplied with a taxi cab chit to transport me, and a couple of boxes of personal items, home.

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I kept remembering a woman who appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* with actress Demi Moore, and who had written a book about intuitive ability; captivated by the author's ability, and the ability to teach about its use, Moore wrote the introduction to the book. It was not Demi or Oprah or even the author herself, that piqued my interest; it was my own experiences that heightened my curiosity. What was this phenomenon? If I could intuit my own job termination, would it be possible to enhance and benefit from my own intuitive ability?

I tried desperately to recall the title. When I could not, I searched the public library database and was surprised to find so many books written on intuition. From diagnosing illnesses (Caroline Myss, who has written several books on the subject), to applying intuition

in business (Roy Rowans *The Intuitive Manager*), to the book I was seeking, *Practical Intuition* by Laura Day.

Practical Intuition provides exercises to *teach* readers how to "harness the power of (their) instinct" to increase their intuitive power. To practise applying intuition to everyday life, Day takes the reader through many exercises, such as writing down thoughts or impressions of an occurrence *before* the incident takes place. One of the exercises even includes picking winners in a horse race. These exercises are interspersed with sample responses and explanations, and even those who are doubtful at first, will find the procedure insightful.

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Increasing awareness is simply a matter of recognizing and embracing, then listening to and employing, one's own intuitive ability. It takes effort to master this innate faculty, to stop second-guessing our first impressions in favour of logical ones, or those based on common sense. In order to increase our intuitive power, it is important to stop interfering with it. By doing this, we can enrich our personal and professional lives.

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