5 KEYS TO UNLOCK YOUR INTUITION

Marla Bollak
SageOfEnlightenment.com
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1 About Intuition

It's been called second sight, the sixth sense, extrasensory perception, and psychic ability. These are all the same thing. Intuition is an avenue to information that you have no apparent way of knowing. You can't see it, you can't touch it. You just know it. You can get information about yourself or someone else.

1.1 Is Intuition Real and What is its Source?

People question the existence of intuition because they can't see it or touch it, and no one can verify its source.

Do you know from where thoughts originate? Neither do I. Neither does science. Yes, we know that electrical charges ignite, neurons fire, and signals get transmitted. We don't know, in a physical sense, what causes specific thoughts to form. Yet, thoughts are pretty real, don't you think?

I believe that the source of all new ideas, creativity, imagination and intuition come from the same source and are accessed in the same way. If you believe that new ideas and creativity exist, then why not intuition? I think that there are many people who make outrageous claims about their powers of intuition and about how accurate they are. This doesn't mean that intuition isn't real. It just means that some people are either deluded or liars. Intuition is real and it's important.

So, what is the source of intuitive information? There are many sources given. They go by different names and assume different guises. Some of them are:

1. Your self (unconscious, Higher Self)
2. Someone else's self (unconscious, Higher Self)
3. Cosmic Consciousness
4. Angels, Spirit Guides
5. Ancestors
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7. Universal Intelligence, Universal Field
8. Satan, Demons (You probably want to avoid these…)

Each person experiences the intuitive source in different ways. I don't think it's important what you call it or how you experience it, as long as you can discern what is true for you. Whatever or whomever the sources, discernment is a critical key to intuitive processing, and is in covered later sections.

1.2 Why Develop Intuition?

*The only real valuable thing is intuition.* - Albert Einstein

*It is through science that we prove, but through intuition that we discover.* - Henri Poincare

Intuition is as useful as any of your five senses. You use your intuition all the time, you just don't know it.

How do you communicate with yourself? I'm not talking about thinking or intellectualizing. I'm talking about how you feel, what you want, what you aspire to be. You're the only one who knows, and you can't know it intellectually. Not really, anyway. You've heard about the child who grows up and goes to school and embarks on a life path because 'it made sense,' and one day realizes that it's not what he or she ever
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really wanted? That person was not operating from his or her true self. That person was cut off from him or herself. Or maybe the individual who reaches mid life, having attained 'success,' only to feel a vague sense of dissatisfaction, or even a profound feeling of emptiness.

Why do you take an assessment to find out who you are; what 'archetype' describes you? Assessments put people into categorical boxes, sometimes as few as four, which are supposed to describe who you are. I do think that assessments can be fun and informative; however, why not ask yourself who you are, as a unique individual?

If you don't know who you are, how you feel, or what you want, there is only one way to find out. That is to ask yourself, and listen to the answer. This is intuition.

Intuition is your key to yourself; to your heart.

The key to getting below the surface, to the core of you, is intuition. It's your conduit to your own inspiration. It's the key to all breakthroughs. None of this stuff works in your head.

The benefits of intuition are many and all lead to a more fulfilled life. Some of them are:

1. Better Decisions and Inspired Choices
2. Increased Confidence and Peace of Mind
3. Greater Self-Awareness and Healing
4. Improved Relationships
5. Enhanced Creativity

1.2.1 Better Decisions; Inspired Choices
Your decisions are better because you're using all of your facilities to see all of the choices before you and to make choices that are in alignment with who you are and what you want to express. Your intuition puts you in touch with your inspiration.
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You have better discernment and ask better questions because the practice of accessing your intuition exercises these muscles. This affects all areas of your life.

**1.2.2 Increased Confidence and Peace of Mind**
Once you connect to your intuition and are making decisions that are informed by your intuition, you'll feel more confident about your decisions. With this peace of mind, you'll automatically encounter less mind chatter and anxiety because you're not inclined to second guess *decisions that feel right*. You don't second guess yourself and spin in circles when you feel good about your choices and they are working out for you. Your confidence in yourself increases with each good decision.

**1.2.3 Greater Self-Awareness and Healing**
There really is no other way to know yourself than by accessing your intuition. You are not your thoughts. You are not even your feelings.

Self-awareness is a catalyst for healing. This doesn't mean you need to remember every time Mommy looked at you cross-eyed. It's self-awareness on an intuitive level; one that sometimes goes beyond words. Developing intuition leads to breakthroughs and healing.

**1.2.4 Improved Relationships**
Once you're more in tune with yourself and your environment, your relationships will improve - starting with your relationship with yourself. Either your current relationships will improve or you will form different relationships - or both. You're going to gain a better sense of what others are feeling and how they're relating to you. Then you can decide if this is who you want to be around, and if so, how to relate. You may find your circle of friends changing - for the better.

**1.2.5 Enhanced Creativity**
Creativity is intimately linked to intuition. When you develop your intuition, you're also developing your creativity. More ideas will come to you and you will be able to follow up on them.
1.3  But I'm Not Intuitive

You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you'll discover will be wonderful. What you'll discover is yourself. - Alan Alda

You are intuitive. Maybe you just don't realize it.

Just like most people have the power of sight, I think that most people have the power of second sight, or intuition. Some people have better vision than others, and some people are blind. Whatever your sense of intuition may be, you can develop it, just like a blind person develops a keener sense of hearing and touch.

If you have ever had an idea, then you have intuition.
2 Five Keys to Unlock Your Intuition

There are five keys to unlocking your intuition:

1. **Ask a Question.**
2. **Notice** what information you receive.
   (You may notice something without asking a question; simply by paying attention.)
3. **Discern** the source/validity of the information.
4. **Interpret** the meaning of the information.
   (Discern/Interpret may lead to more questions; i.e., asking for more clarity on the information received.)
5. **Follow the Guidance.**

Intuition processing is nonlinear. There is a basic flow as you move from questioning to noticing to interpreting and back again. At some point, you will be guided to take some action - or relax and wait a while. All of this happens against the backdrop of your discernment. Tuning into your intuition is really a never-ending cycle. Why would you shut you're your internal guidance system?

Let's look at these pieces in more detail.
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2.1 Ask a Question
The goals and intentions you set focus your attention in a desired direction. So do the questions you ask yourself – and your intuition. The more specific your goals and intentions, the better. Not so with intuitive questions. Open-ended questions generally work best. While forming your question is important when you're wrestling with an issue, asking a specific question turns out to be optional. Sometimes you don't have a pressing question, and sometimes you don't even know the question you really need to ask. In these cases, you can ask, "What is it that I most need to know at this time?" and get very valuable information. While questions are an important part of developing your inner guidance system, an openness to information that you receive at all times - is an extremely valuable skill.

Using discernment when forming questions helps to direct you towards the best outcome. Here are some guidelines to follow when forming questions. They are only guidelines. Any question you have is a valid question. Remember that you don't have to get it 'just right' because you can ask as many questions as you want.

2.1.1 It's All About You - Mostly
For the most part, your questions should be about you, not someone else. When faced with a difficult situation, you cannot change someone else. You only have power over yourself. "What can my daughter do to change her wild ways?" would be better replaced with "What can I do to support my daughter in her growth?"

Now, a fair question could be, "What's up with Frank?" You might get that "He's just not that into you."

2.1.2 Predictions
Everyone has free will, including you. I shy away from questions that ask what will happen in the future. No matter what they claim, no one's intuition is 100% accurate, and it's not really useful to have someone's opinion about what will come to pass in the
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future. You might feel better in the short run, and you might ultimately be disappointed. Worse than that, I feel that these types of questions are disempowering. "Will I be in a relationship?" implies that you have no control over the outcome, and you always have some control. A more productive and empowering question would be, "What do I need to do to find a mate?"

2.1.3 Yes/No

While yes or no questions are fine to ask, open ended questions seem to yield the most information, even if you’re asking what looks like a yes/no question. You could ask, "Should I go on this trip?" and be receptive to something like, "Yes, if..." or "Not right now," or get some deeper insight on how you feel about it.

Dowsing tools, such as pendulums, are good for asking yes or no questions.

2.1.4 Why, When, What, How, Should

Questions that begin with "why" or "when" are usually not the strongest questions. Timing questions, in general, tend to be imprecise. Asking how you can act in a certain situation is more empowering and productive than looking for a reason for the situation. "What" or "how" generally lead to better results.

"Should" questions work better if you're asking in an open ended way, rather than looking for a simple yes/no.

Here are a few example questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of this question…</th>
<th>Ask this…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Why is this happening to me?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;What can I learn from this situation?&quot; or &quot;How can I better handle this situation?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;When will I find a job?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;What can I do to find the job for me?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Should I accept this job offer?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Is there anything I’m missing when considering this job offer?&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Having said (written, actually) all that, I want to repeat that any question is a good question. It just may not be the best. If you ask a question and it doesn't seem to get a result, ask it another way.

2.2 Notice
Once you've asked a question, relax and pay attention. Notice what impressions you may 'see,' 'hear,' or otherwise sense. Pay attention to your body and any sensations that occur. Pay attention to any thoughts or images that cross your mind, especially those that surprise you. While you don't need to get into a meditative state, relaxed and focused and listening are important. Intuitive information can be very subtle, and it has to get through all of the other noise in you and your environment. Meditation is a great way to do that, and to quiet your mind, in general.

You may not have asked a question. Maybe, out of the blue, something catches your attention and you realize that it's your intuition focusing your attention. I believe that this is one function of serendipity. As you develop your intuition, you will find coincidences occurring more and more frequently in your life. You will also find yourself noticing incoming messages.

Everyone receives information differently. The different avenues of input correspond roughly to your five physical senses. Your intuitive senses may be as sharp as your physical senses. Usually they are far more subtle, so you need to pay close attention to perceive them.

The main channels of receiving information are:

1. Seeing
2. Hearing
3. Physical Feeling
4. Emotional Feeling
5. Knowing
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Some people also receive information by sensing smells (clairalience) and tastes (clairgustance). These two are self-explanatory and less prevalent. We’re going to explore he more common senses in greater depth in the following sections.

2.2.1 Clairvoyance - Seeing
You have heard of people having vivid visions, seeing auras or angels. Not everyone has this vivid of an experience. Just because you don't see your images in full 3-D solid form, doesn't mean you're not seeing them. Many people see visions as they do in dreams. When you dream of your house, for example, you may know that you're in your home, but it doesn't look anything like your home. You may not even actually 'see' the home, but you just know you're in it. Intuitive 'sight' is experienced in much the same way. You may get flashes, have a sense of something, or you may get a full blown vision.

2.2.2 Clairaudience - Hearing
Clairaudience is also subtle, and sounds are not perceived by your physical ears. You may actually hear a voice or music playing or some other sound. Very likely, you will simply have the sense of hearing something. You may also have the experience of thoughts in your head that are not your voice.

2.2.3 Clairsentience - Physical or Emotional Feeling
Clairsentience is knowing something by feeling it. This is also known as kinesethic knowing. It can be experienced either as physical or emotional sensations. When you're sensing kinesthetically, you actually feel the feelings, sometimes subtly, sometimes quite intensely.

Physical feelings in your body may include nausea, pain, tingling, vibrating. They are meant to draw your attention to a part of your body that may need attention – in you or others.
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Emotional feelings run the gamut from sad to happy to agitated; any emotion that you can feel. If you are very sensitive to your emotions as well as those of others, you are said to be empathic.

2.2.4 Claircognizance - Knowing
When you just know, you just know. You don't hear it, see it, taste it, feel it. You just know something that you have no way of knowing. Don't worry, you'll know when you experience this one.

2.2.5 The Invisible Hand of Guidance
Intuition sometimes works so subtly that you don't even know it's working, except perhaps after the fact, and then, sometimes only if you get some additional information. I believe that intuition is in force all of the time, and we just don't always notice. You've heard stories of people who went to a place they usually don't frequent. They only go one time, and that's the time they meet the love of their lives. Coincidence? I don't think so.

2.2.6 A Note About Timing
Often, the answers you seek don't come right away. You may get some information right away, or none at all. You will find that information will come to you in unexpected ways and at unexpected times. This is why many people say that their best ideas come to them when they're in the shower.

2.3 Discern
While practicing discernment is integral to all steps of intuitive processing, it impacts how you perceive your incoming impressions and how you interpret them the most. While you are noticing, you want to keep your channel as open as possible. There are certain things that you will notice that will close down this channel. Once you notice those, you can keep your channel more open.
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The thing about intuitive impressions is that you need to determine what is true for you. The first thing to consider, is the source of the impression, which could be coming from a 'higher source' or your unconscious. It could also be coming from a 'lower source' or your unconscious. Discernment is something that you learn through practice. Some of the major blocks to intuition are covered here. The main thing to remember is this: When you encounter any of the 'lower source' or a block from your unconscious, you usually feel fearful or needy. When you hit upon a truth, you feel very calm and supported.

2.3.1 Psychic Noise
Whenever people talk about intuitive messages, they talk about the good information they receive. The truth is, there is also bad information floating around out there for you to pick up. I don't know if there are demonic forces trying to influence you, but you can't assume that you will always attract good information, especially as a beginner.

Ouija Boards are famous for attracting negativity. As soon as my Ouija Board started cursing at me, it went to the garbage. I had the feeling that, by using it, I was attracting deceased convicted felons and didn't want to do that. Once I threw out the board, the cursing stopped. If you ever encounter negative messages, cut off communication immediately.

Another form of psychic noise is information that has nothing to do with you. When you put up your intuitive antenna, you may attract energy and information that relates to someone else. You can ignore this information, or if you know the person for whom it's relevant, you may talk to that person about what you received.

2.3.2 Internal Noise
We are all full of chatter, and much of it is not in alignment with who we are.

1. Fears.
2. Attachment to the Outcome.
3. Mental Imbalance.
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Some of these things may feel like intuitive information, but they are not. A good test is to notice whether you feel neutral when the information received. If it makes you feel either afraid or relieved, it is questionable.

2.3.2.1 Fears
Tuning into your intuition inevitably raises issues of self-doubt and insecurity, or the need to be right (or the fear of being wrong). This blocks the flow of information coming to you. When you're tuning in, don't edit. Let it all free flow. When you hear yourself saying, "this can't be true," notice it, take it as a cue to relax some more and keep noticing.

At times, you will bump into your own internal resistance to change. As much as we think we want change, a part of us never does. Resistance is a form of fear.

Recognizing fears that arise are an important part of getting to know yourself. Rejoice in finding them. Rejoice because you have uncovered something that requires healing, and the next step is to attend to that healing. Some of these are going to propel you to great breakthroughs.

2.3.2.2 Attachment to the Outcome
Wishful thinking, or even desperation for a particular outcome is a big block to receiving good information. This is why many psychics cannot read for themselves. They are too attached to the outcome. Again, noticing these things enhance your self-awareness and ability to heal and grow.

2.3.2.3 Mental Imbalance
David Berkowitz (Son of Sam) heard voices telling him to kill people. If you receive messages like that, you should seek help attention. Do not keep this sort of thing to yourself.
2.3.3 A Note about Discernment and Your Other Senses
Discernment also applies to what you see, hear, and think. There's a reason for the saying, "I couldn't believe my eyes." Your eyes can be fooled. This is one thing magicians count on. Yet, you continue to rely on your sense of sight. Intuition is the same. You can rely on it, realizing that you can be tricked, especially when you're not used to using it.

Optical illusions are another example of how the eyes can be fooled.

This following optical illusion is brought to you by Edward H Adelson, John and Dorothy Wilson Professor of Vision Science, Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Professor Adelson calls this the 'Checker Shadow Illusion.' The squares marked A and B are actually the same shade of gray.

Visit Edward Adelson's website for more about this optical illusion and his work.

Watch this Awareness Test video. It's fun and informative; a great combination.
2.4 Interpret
Translating the message - what does it mean? Now it's time to make some sense of what you've received; bringing your head into the mix, in addition to further feeling your way through.

2.4.1 The Language of Intuition
Once you've received intuitive information, you need to understand what it means to you. You need to learn a new language - the language of your intuition. This is not something you can learn from a book. This is something you develop over time.

Most of the information you receive will not be obvious, or even literal. Many messages are metaphorical. However you receive your input, follow your associations with the impressions to find your meaning. So, if you see a blue truck with a dented fender that you don't recognize, follow your associations with the color blue, the truck, and the dented fender. Interpretations for 'global' symbols abound. You can research these. Usually you'll find many different, even conflicting meanings. Your ultimate meaning will be very personal. I recommend that you ask your intuition what does a blue truck with a dented fender bring up in you, or ask for more clarity.

Don't get too hung up on every little thing that pops up. You're going to get a lot of stuff that has nothing to do with you. If that blue truck shows up once, it could be nothing. Maybe you passed by that truck earlier in the day and didn't even notice. If you keep seeing the same image time and again, you might want to examine it more closely.

When learning the language of intuition, working with others can be extremely valuable; bouncing ideas off of others and getting ideas of possible interpretations of the information you receive.

If you cannot make sense of some guidance you've received, reach back to your intuition and ask for more clarity and notice what you receive.
2.4.2 Common Sense and Logic
Sometimes you'll receive information that doesn't make sense, logically. That doesn't mean it's wrong. Maybe you're told to take a vacation to a tropical resort. It may be that you genuinely need to get some distance and perspective - or it may be your resistance expressing a desire to flee from the situation. This is where discernment is your best friend, either yours or someone close to you.

You have two sides to your brain. Why not use them both?

2.5 Follow the Guidance
You've asked the question, gotten an answer and an interpretation that that feels right. Now it's time to follow the guidance you've received. Take action. This might mean asking more questions. It might mean it's time to wait or take a walk. It might be time to start a project, and now you have the inspiration and vision to move forward.

Sometimes the guidance that you crave is a long time in coming, or the meaning evades you. Keep up the conversation with your intuition. Ultimately you will receive guidance to move your life forward in the direction of your dreams, sometimes in baby steps, sometimes in big leaps.

3 Next Steps
Once you've caught glimpses of your intuition, you can begin to build a relationship with it; begin to learn its language. This is a process that takes practice.

The process is simple, and yet it's not always so simple to pull off. We are constantly bombarded with sights, sounds, smells - all stimulating our senses and competing for our attention. The signal of intuition is very small compared with all that noise. Like learning to drive a car, the mechanics are easy. What is confounding at first (especially with a stick-shift) eventually becomes second-nature. Then it becomes a simple matter
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of turning the car in the direction you want to go and paying attention to the traffic and road conditions.

Don't be discouraged, because you have it within you and the payoff is tremendous.

Once you develop your intuition, and have established a new way of communicating with yourself, you can apply the skill to all areas of your life. Wrestling with a difficult situation? Got a difficult decision to make? Check in with your intuition for inner guidance.

4 About Marla and Sage of Enlightenment

Marla Bollak is founder of Sage of Enlightenment, a company that awakens midlife women to the most powerful tool they have - their intuition, and teaches them how to use it to align with their highest potential for success and meaning in business and in life.

Marla believes that we are all connected pinpoints of consciousness, expressing and reflecting Divinity, but to BE that, we must heal from the inside and be fully aware of ourselves and the reality we create. Awareness starts with our own intuition, and everyone possesses the ability to access their own intuition.

Greater awareness leads to better decisions and success in the business of life. The more you know yourself and what you want; the more you’re able to broaden your perspective to see all of the choices before you; the better your life becomes.

Born in New Jersey, Marla earned a BA in Economics from Pitzer College in Claremont, CA, an MS in Computer Science from Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ, and a two-year certificate in Ceramics from Worcester Craft Center in Worcester, MA.
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She is certified in Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP), TimeLine Therapy®, and Hypnosis. Marla has completed a program in Spiritual Coaching from 'Coaching From Spirit Institute. She started reading Tarot cards in high school. Upon finding an unopened deck of Tarot cards and a book, she started reading with the 'recipe' method: laying out the cards and reading the meanings from the book.

Clients work with Marla in private coaching sessions, Tarot card readings, teleseminars, and group coaching programs.

For more information, visit her website at SageOfEnlightenment.com and her Facebook Page at Facebook.SageOfEnlightenment.com.