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Further Experiences on Listening to the Inner Voice

Do you know how it is when you think that you know a lot about something, only to have an experience hit you in the face and you realize you don't know as much as you thought you did? Well, it happens to me all of the time. It helps me continue to realize that the part of my psyche that thinks it knows everything is quite mistaken.

In reality, this conscious mind, which we think is so important, is only the tip of the iceberg. And the tip of the iceberg is truly just the tip! This is quite humbling to realize that we are prone to make decisions about our lives based solely on somewhat less than 10 percent of the resources we have available to us. When the conscious mind really realizes that it is only a small part of what is going on within the psyche, it can become humbled and perhaps confused or scared. More than that, if you carry the reasoning of the conscious mind a little further, you can perhaps realize that one of the reasons that our lives continue to turn out the way they do is because we continue to make the same decisions, believe the same old beliefs (even though they've never worked before, and expect that our lives will turn out differently! Now this is, indeed, quite a remarkably 'dumb' thing to do. Any rational human being knows that! Yet we continue to do it.

We have forgotten how to tap into our deeper resources.... or, more importantly, we hear our inner voice and override it! I sometimes ask people, who are dealing with the effects of decisions they've made which they later come to regret to tell me when they knew that they should not have made that decision, they tell me, time and again, that they knew before they made the decision that they shouldn't. Yet, they overrode this knowing, probably out of some other need, fear, or desire. They did what they knew they shouldn't. Do you know what I am talking about?

This journey of consciousness is an exploration into identifying what is conscious and what is unconscious that is directing our lives. The conscious mind consists of old and familiar habits in many different costumes and disguises; it consists of our learnings, as well as thoughts and feelings about these learnings, about ourselves, others, and life. The unconscious contains information that we aren't consciously aware of, perhaps personal experiences we've just forgotten or purposefully forgot because they were scary or difficult, it contains material from our collective unconscious (that which all people share in), as well as what might be called the transpersonal side of the psyche, that which connects us to our experience of the Divine. When we explore our inner world of dreams, deep desires, mythology and sacred stories, and inner images of these, then we are exploring the unconscious. These are places in our own psyche that we can consciously grow into!

I have written before about learning to listen to the inner, intuitive voice, that voice of deep knowing which gives us information/messages critical to the directing of our lives and especially our spiritual development. Learning to listen to the cues and hear the messages is a learning experience which sometimes requires some assistance from someone who has learned. We are so accustomed to not knowing that we often do not know how to listen and know.

My Intuitive Voice sometimes speaks in a very direct way and other times it is a more subtle, quieter voice. I recently had an experience that gave me more information about the more subtle voice than I had had before. In addition, I was able to see, in retrospect,

the ability my conscious mind has to discount the information and to override the knowing.

During this last January I contacted my India travel agent to begin the plans for the tour to India/Nepal/ and Ladakh that I wanted to lead in 1993. As we talked, and, because I was wanting to go to India, I allowed myself to be persuaded to plan the trip for this year. I got excited! But I was also 'hearing' that I was not to go this year... that I needed focus on other things. What was I to do? I heard the inner knowing and I overrode it with my conscious mind's decision making power. I got excited and began the planning, all the while, continuing to hear the other instructions.

Well, guess what happened? Which voice was right? You guessed it! I am not going to India/Nepal/Ladakh this year.

And I was correct in feeling that I was to travel this year. However, the opportunity came about in a way that I did not expect. About 3 weeks before I was to make the final cancellation for the India trip, I saw an announcement from the Institute of Noetic Sciences for a journey in December to mystical Turkey, which was including a very special event for me. This special event is the opportunity to attend a special ceremony rarely seen by Westerners, which celebrates the death of the great poet Rumi (Melvana) featuring the whirling Dervishes. You may remember a picture in the Los Angeles Times about a year ago of President Bush watching the Dervishes. The Dervishes are a branch of the Sufis who use the whirling to enter a deep state of meditation/prayer. When I saw the announcement, I was deeply interested because the trip also includes a visit to many places sacred to many spiritual traditions. My inner knowing was that I was going, even though the trip to India was not yet cancelled and I was still committed to the trip, even though I was hearing that it was not to happen this year.

Learning to listen to and heed the inner intuitive voice is an act of trust that we must learn.... or remember. As you learn to listen to the inner voice, you must develop ways to test to see if the voice you are hearing is the inner intuition, or if it is some part of your ego, conscious mind. Ask yourself to teach you how to listen and how to tell if this is your deepest knowing or some other part of your psyche.

There are several ways that I have found that help me.

First of all, I listen to the tone, style, and message of the inner voice. There is a clear difference in the inner voice. It is clear, direct, in accordance with reality and good sense, as well as in accordance with Unconditional Love. Unconditional Love is a space of inner harmony and balance, a place of connection to the Divine aspect of the Self. Even though it may call for me to expand my sense of self, it will be in attunement with reality. It does not call me to hurt another or myself. It may lead me onto a path that is new, and therefore perhaps somewhat fearful, but it is not self-destructive. I ask myself for help as I learn to listen; I learn by paying attention and then checking it out. Sometimes I will misunderstand the message, and as I analyze what happened, I learn more clearly how to listen. Sometimes the inner voice speaks with a clear direct command, sometimes in response to a conscious inner query, sometimes it speaks of something that I need to become aware of. Sometimes it's a general feeling, or a gut feeling. Sometimes something comes up in my mind and it won't go away. Sometimes it is a deep knowing. It can come in a dream. It can come in the events that begin to happen.

Sometimes I examine the pros and cons about a decision and then just let it rest. I then wait for an inner knowing. Rarely do just the pros and cons give me what I need to know.

3. When what I am dealing with has to do with another person, if I have some question about the response I receive, I will ask, in a flash of the moment, for the inner intuition to give it to me again if it is correct. I sometimes ask for it to be given the third time. This inner asking occurs in the flash of an eye. I ask Give it to me again if I am to follow this information. Then I let go and keep doing what I am doing, and when it comes a second, and sometimes a third time, I speak it and check it out. There is a story in the Old Testament where Gideon did a similar thing with God to be sure what God was asking him to do. I'd suggest you try it out and learn how to check inside to get more information.

4. I have learned patience. Sometimes something has to happen before something else can happen before something else. I have learned to not let the Chicken Little part of my psyche trick me into acting hastily or inappropriate. I sometimes have to let my fear/anxiety in the form of Chicken Little just run through the chicken yard until she is calmed. Then I keep waiting until I hear/feel the voice speaking.

I've found that the pay off for listening to and living in accordance with this deeper knowing is well worth the process of learning to identify it and understand it. I find that my life is smoother and more exciting, and always leading me into a deeper exploration of myself, as well as into a deeper experience of trust. Often I'm led into challenges, into a process of development of undeveloped aspects of myself. My experience is that we'll never be led somewhere where we don't have the inner resources to deal with; however, we may need to access these inner resources that we've ignored before; but that is also what this is all about anyway. We're being led on a path of inner development so we can be more of who we are.

Always, we'll be engaged in the process of going deeper. Practice being in a centered space of Unconditional love and appreciation of your continuing learning process. Remember to take your learning process with a measure of humor while you are learning to listen so that you can stay out of self-judgments during the process when you misunderstand. From this place, you'll be able to see yourself more clearly and truly appreciate the value of the inner intuitive voice.

Namaste,

Judith