

Developing Intuition

Shakti Gawain

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Whether it's called a hunch, a "gut feeling," or simply an inner sense, intuition is a powerful guiding force for weighing options, choosing a path, and making sense of decisions. The use of intuition, however, is not honored in western culture. The complexities of modern life bury the intuitive sense under an avalanche of responsibilities, multiple options, and the pressure to "get things done."

In *Developing Intuition*, Gawain, author of the bestseller *Creative Visualization*, crafts a down-to-earth guide to opening the door to inner guidance, showing in no uncertain terms that one needn't retreat to an ashram in order to nurture, access, and use intuition. Intuition is a practical tool that anyone can use. The author states, "Intuition is seldom dramatic, grandiose, or particularly mystical." It is a sense that is always available to help people choose a path that works.

Gawain offers a no-nonsense series of meditations and exercises to develop intuition that people can use in their everyday lives. From the simple tool of the relaxation exercise to the more elaborate "inner guidance meditation," she shows how the intuitive sense can be engaged. Her instructions are clear and filled with examples of how intuition works in her own life and in the lives of people who took her intuition workshops. She even has a "quick intuitive check in" exercise that can be done in the midst of activity, a tool to ground and center the awareness, allowing access to intuition while one is working, cooking, or running errands.

The benefits of trusting the intuitive sense are numerous. Gawain presents case after case of situations where people followed their intuition, showing how the choices they made enriched their lives. One woman found her life's work "helping troubled teens" after her intuition prompted her to turn down a lucrative position, a job that would provide material wealth, but would strangle her soul. Another woman did not pay attention to her inner guidance telling her to balance her work life with relaxation and rest. This woman put in so many hours at her job that exhaustion led to an automobile accident that forced her to stop working so hard.

The benefits of using intuition are clear. Gawain, however, states, "Listening to, trusting and acting on your intuitive inner guidance is an art." Once the gate to inner guidance is opened, following intuition becomes a new way of life, an "on-going process in which we are always being challenged to move to a deeper level of self-trust." It is a journey that is well worth the risk.

CAROL LYNN STEWART (September / October 2000)

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