

Heed the whisper of intuition

Begrudgingly, I opened my eyes and emerged treading water in a sea of dizzy confusion. Disoriented and light-headed, I focused on slow, deep breaths to alleviate the pain. My vision was blurry, but the room came slowly back into focus as I scanned the sterile hospital walls for the loud-ticking clock. It was 2:30 a.m.

My roommate, both of her legs broken and casted, had just violently pulled me out of REM with her bloodcurdling screams for cigarettes and anger toward the nurses, who argued back firmly and refused to supply them. “No rest for the weary.” I winced as I silently mouthed the words.

Regardless, like a turtle retreating into its shell, I dived under and managed to escape the towering chaos of crashing waves around me. By the time I resurfaced, one short hour later, an exhausted quietude had returned to our room.

Alone with my thoughts, feeling surreally castaway on my own deserted island, I was at eye level with an alarming revelation: The decision I’d made to have this surgery, while seeming a bit helter-skelter to everyone else, may have very well saved my life. (For specifics on my personal health journey, I encourage you to watch the video below.)

It was an independent choice over which my family members were apprehensive, fearing it might be an unnecessary risk. Authentically motivated by love and best intentions, they had shared their concerns with me beforehand.

But my personal guiding force was undeniable. This unique inner signal had piloted me to safety many times before, both personally and professionally. And at that pivotal intersection, thank goodness, it exceeded anyone else’s influence.

In fact, this life-altering force is something that exists within every one of us—our intuition. There is no greater life compass. Everyone is born with it and can learn to trust it. Ever-present, it never lies.

When we are deeply attuned to it, intuition also points to higher social intelligence—a theory developed by American psychologist Edward Thorndike nearly 100 years ago. He defined it as “The ability to understand and manage to act wisely in human relations.”

An empowering leadership tool in the workplace, intuition helps us relate to one another, excel in social situations, know what to say (and what *not* to say), navigate complex change management and, ultimately, drive organizational success and outcomes.

Like a dangerous undercurrent, some decisions threaten to overwhelm, especially when colleagues offer conflicting advice or we’re distracted by other professional data.

Declutter your mind, meditate, stay curious, emphasize the positive, and never ignore your gut instinct. All of this and more can help to balance external feedback with valuable inner feelings, allowing us to make space for intuition in decision-making.

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