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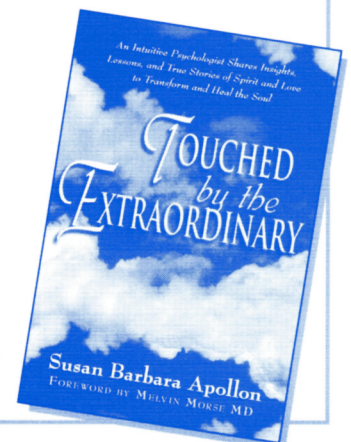
Intuition 101: A Beginner's Guide to Sharpening Your Sixth Sense
Tune into that voice of higher wisdom we call "intuition" and you'll transform your life.
Intuitive psychologist and author Susan Apollon explains how to get started.

Yardley, PA—We've all heard stories about people whose "bad feeling" led them to cancel a flight, only to discover later that the plane crashed. That's intuition. Your experiences with intuition might not be so dramatic, but they're no less valid. Maybe you can't shake the feeling that you should call your mother, and when you do you find her sick in bed. Or your "little voice" tells you a business deal is going to fall through—and the client withdraws right before the contract is signed.

Clearly, intuition is a powerful phenomenon. And while many people think this "sixth sense" is something you're either born with or not (like blue eyes or perfect pitch), Susan Apollon says we all have this deep sense of "knowing"—and we can all learn to use it.

"Being intuitive is really listening to your higher self, your higher wisdom, your soul's wisdom," says Apollon, author of *Touched by the Extraordinary: An Intuitive Psychologist Shares Insights, Lessons, and True Stories of Spirit and Love to Transform and Heal the Soul* (Matters of the Soul, 2005, ISBN: 0-9754036-4-8, \$19.95).

"It's the ability to pick up energy, positive and negative. So in order to become more intuitive, you have to be able to connect more quickly to your higher sense of wisdom."



You probably are already using your intuitive sense to a certain degree, says Apollon. But you *can* further develop and hone your capacity to intuit—to tap into that “ability to know” that resides deep within you—and there are many good reasons to do so. You will not only make better decisions, you’ll just *feel* better. Safer. More grounded. More in control. Your self-esteem and confidence will increase while your fear decreases. Quite simply, your intuition will amaze you!

So how do you begin? First understand that what you’re really trying to do is to listen to that voice of higher soul wisdom—*listen* being the key word. To do this, you first quiet yourself. Once you are quieted, you energetically shift your mind and body to a place where you feel at peace. That takes practice. Apollon suggests that you set aside 15 minutes every day (preferably in the earlier part of the day) to do your intuition work. Here’s how:

- **Set the stage.** Choose a room that feels good and that has a chair or a comfortable place to sit: peaceful, safe, and inviting. If possible, use the same location and sitting position every time. You want to create a sense of strong association. This scene will become a trigger in your mind’s eye. With enough practice, you will be able to immediately quiet and center yourself just by thinking of the space.
- **Play quiet, gentle music.** Apollon recommends Pachelbel or Native American flute music. However, anything that helps you relax and get centered is fine.
- **Assume the “meditative or intuition posture.”** Sit comfortably with spine straight, feet flat on the floor, palms up. This will help you visualize. With your feet on the ground, you can visualize that you are connected to the earth. With palms up, you will feel more inviting and that the universe is open to your energy and you are open to the energy and wisdom of the universe.
- **Count slowly to 10 as you begin to quiet and center yourself.** Then, hold your breath to a fast count to 10; then very slowly release your breath to a count to 10 again. (Bend the tips of your fingers in to touch your palms to help you count to 10.) While you are exhaling, visualize the breath moving through the body, as it travels through every cell in your body. (The next two tips provide more details on how to do this. Understand that these tips are not necessarily sequential; some of them will happen simultaneously.)
- **Give your breath color and shape.** Both see *and* feel the warmth of your breath as you breathe in. Visualize that your breath has a shape and color. You might find it helpful to choose a color that symbolizes your intent. For instance:
 - Green = Healing
 - Blue = Peace

White = Divine energy

Pink = Compassion

Research with imagery has validated the importance of visualizing your breath. As you consciously breathe deep relaxing breaths, chemicals in the brain much like an elixir are released to help you feel greater warmth and relaxation.

- **Follow your breath on its travels.** *See* the breath actually entering the crown and watch it start the journey through the body. You want to *see it* and to *feel it* in your mind's eye and in your body. Visualize it going through every organ, limb, vertebrae, muscle, and tissue. Picture it flowing through your bloodstream. Envision every cell delighting in the breath. Notice yourself feeling the increased warmth and *see* yourself feeling well. This facilitates progressive relaxation. "While doing the breathing, you will experience an increased sense of heaviness," notes Apollon. "The paradox is that you will notice a feeling of lightness."

- **Find your mantra.** *I'm feeling more relaxed. I'm feeling more peaceful. I'm becoming pure love.* These are just a few suggestions. Your mantra can be a favorite expression, the first line of your favorite prayer ("The Lord is my Shepherd"), or something that just helps you relax like "Shalom." Whatever you choose, associate the tone of your mantra with finding peace. Whatever your mantra is, say it over and over in your mind. This creates your "mind's ear" connection.

- **Make a connection with something greater than yourself.** It doesn't matter whether your "something greater" is God, Jesus, Mary, Buddha, Universal Energy, or Mind. Just imagine breathing in Its divine energy. Ask your Higher Power for help and guidance.

- **Begin with gratitude.** Be certain to give thanks. The vibration of "thank you," and/or the vibration of "blessings," is very powerful. It draws to us what we secretly desire. Gratitude is a higher state of consciousness.

- **Love is the key. Fill your body with love.** Imagine your whole body being filled up with love. Not romantic love, but pure, unconditional love—the kind you would feel for a baby, a puppy, or a kitten. Make it your intention. Give it a color and a shape. *See* yourself feeling it and becoming love. If you are intuiting specifically "for" another person, consciously fill your heart with feelings of love and warmth for him or her. Visualize and feel yourself becoming loving energy.

- **After you've made the shift, state your intention and ask your question.** After about 10 or 15 minutes of breathing, you will feel an inner shift of consciousness. The shift may be very subtle and the time required to reach it will shorten with practice. You will know this subtle shift when it happens; it means you have established a connection with your higher wisdom. This is the time to state your intention. (You may also state your intention at the beginning of the process, before you begin your breathing.) *I want to tune into _____ (fill in whatever questions for which you're seeking answers). I will focus my attention to receive information for either myself, or a particular person or situation. Please enable me to receive this information.*

- **Listen for your answer.** It may come in flashes of insight, which can easily be overlooked if you're not paying attention. Or it may take the form of a feeling in the gut or the head. Stay focused. Ask "What do I need to know?" It is important to realize that the answer you're seeking may not come right away. Often you may need to "sleep on it" and the answer will come in the morning or later in the day. As you surrender it or forget about it, you may find that the answer comes to you. It will often come to you in your silence or as you distract yourself with other things.

- **Track your "wins."** Apollon suggests that you record all the occasions you listened to your intuition and were proven right (or not). Remember, it's the head that judges and the heart that discerns or notices. Leave all judgment behind. Keeping track will help you learn the difference. "Intuition and confidence go hand in hand," she says. "And nothing builds confidence like a written track record of your intuitive abilities."

Remember, this daily practice is meant to help you learn to shift your consciousness more quickly and to sharpen your intuitive sense. Eventually you will be able to call on your intuition at a moment's notice. If you wish, you can supplement this work with energy healing modality classes such as yoga, reiki, tai chi, or therapeutic touch. Intuitive training exercises can also be helpful. **(NOTE: See attached sidebar.)**

"The more you use your intuition, the more sensitive it will become," says Apollon. "Yes, you'll be able to intuitively pick up on fear and pain in others, but that's only the beginning. Enhanced intuition is very healing. It is energy that feels good. You will learn to notice if you aren't feeling well and to shift so that you can connect with this higher energy. More and more, you'll come from a place of love and gratitude instead of from a place of fear. That's a change that can transform your whole life."

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About the Author:

For close to twenty years, Susan Apollon has worked as a psychotherapist, psychologist, and healer, treating children and adults who are traumatized, diagnosed with cancer or other life-threatening illnesses, dealing with death and dying, and those who are grieving. She brings to her patients a gentle blend of warmth, compassion, and wisdom gained from surviving her own illnesses and losses; her expertise and training as a wife, mom, teacher, psychologist, researcher, and student of energy, mind, and consciousness; and finally, her own intuitive development.

Coming from a family of physicians (father, brothers, aunts and uncles, and daughter, Rebecca), Susan's intent is to heal (emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually), but at the level of the soul—and always with love and compassion. Focusing on the many blessings each of us has, she guides her patients to the recognition that we are here to live life in joy and peace (to be happy) and that the resources for this are within each of us. "Intention is everything," she often tells her patients. "With love, clear intent, and choice, transformation, healing, and very often, spiritual awakening, become our reality. And when this occurs, everything feels wonderful."

Among Susan's most treasured blessings are her husband, best friend, and partner, Warren, a practicing orthodontist in Langhorne, PA, whom she has known and loved for more than forty years, and her two grown children whom she respects, honors, and adores—David, a marketing consultant, and Rebecca, a third-year resident in emergency medicine. She has been in private practice in Yardley, PA, since 1991.

About the Book:

Touched by the Extraordinary: An Intuitive Psychologist Shares Insights, Lessons, and True Stories of Spirit and Love to Transform and Heal the Soul (Matters of the Soul, 2005, ISBN: 0-9754036-4-8, \$19.95) is available at bookstores nationwide and from major online booksellers.

For more information, please visit www.touchedbytheextraordinary.com.