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Intuition & Coaching

Connecting yourself and your clients to this powerful source

Why Intuition Needs to Come Out of the Closet

Clairsentience: Somatic Markers & the "Gut Response"

Intuition: Your Inner Success Coach

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Get Out Of Your Mind!

Connecting clients to their own intuition



By Siobhán Murphy, MCC

We are all born with an internal guidance system that can seem magical. This guidance system speaks to us in a variety of ways and has access to additional information beyond what our conscious, rational mind can process.

What is this magical system? It's known as intuition. Long thought of as a woman's gift, smart men also trust their 'gut feeling' or 'hunch.' Can this skill be taught? Medical intuitive and author Caroline Myss, PhD, answers this way: "I can teach anyone to read music, but few people are Chopin." In my experience, some clients are highly intuitive and others are just getting used to accessing this source of guidance. To access the guidance your intuition offers, you just have to learn how. It's a skill that can be developed like working a muscle.

Assessments (e.g. Myers Briggs, Profile XT™, etc.) show us that some people are more logically oriented and some are more intuitively oriented. Intuition has been called our 'sixth sense.'

We as coaches can assist our clients in recognizing and using this additional source of knowing. Here are three ways I've used:

1. Assist clients to learn the language of their own intuition

Penny Pierce, author of *The Intuitive Way*, spoke at a coaching conference in the late '90s. She took the audience through an exercise I've used successfully with many clients.

- Invite the client to get quiet, close their eyes, put their feet on the floor, and pay attention to their breathing.
- Assist them in formulating a decision they are considering into two choices — Choice A and Choice B.
- Ask: What does Choice A look like? Encourage the client to be open to whatever their intuition or body may offer.
- Continue asking about Choice A: What does it sound like? What does it smell like? What does it taste like? What does it feel like?
- Next, consider Choice B.
- Again, ask: What does Choice B look like? Sound like? Smell like?, etc.
- Encourage the client to consider their choices. Ask: What information did your intuition offer you?

Here is an example. Bob faced an opportunity to take a new job after working at the same company for several years. The new job offered more money and training and new technology, but it involved a long commute. The other option: he could continue in his current job where he was a star performer and only 10 miles from home. I walked him through the process of

getting quiet, formulating the choices, and asking the questions. Bob's answer came in the form of a sound—one choice sounded like fingernails scratching a chalkboard, the other like Mozart. He knew which choice would give him more peace.

Another leader metaphorically swallows his choices and notices whether they get stuck in his craw or go down smoothly. No matter what his advisors or the data suggest, he doesn't move forward on a course of action unless he can stomach his choice.

Intuition may speak to your client in pictures, sounds, smells, sensations or tastes. My own intuition speaks in words I 'hear' and in a strong physical sensation of 'the chills' that has nothing to do with the temperature. Most often, clients report having a 'feeling' sensation in their body.

2. Use images and other non-rational ways to access intuitive information

The Center for Creative Leadership sells a wonderful tool called The Visual Explorer. Over 300 evocative images cover a range of human and natural phenomena. These images evoke the deeper knowing people have about them-

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selves. I've used these images in many workshop and business settings to take the conversation deeper and assist the participants in accessing their deeper knowing.

Example: The client selected an image in answer to the question, "What do I now need to know about my business?" The image was a group of musicians playing music to a delighted crowd. In further exploring the image's meaning, and through conversation with a partner in the exercise, the client realized he had not been playing his 'song' very often.

3. Ask transformational questions

Questions, of course, are our currency as coaches. To have clients say "that's a great question" is music to my ears. That happens most often when I ask a question that cannot be answered with the logical mind. Laura Berman Fortgang, in *Living Your Best Life*, calls these Wisdom Access Questions, or WAQ. Kurt Wright, in his book *Breaking the Rules*, suggests using questions that are creative, if not a bit cheeky, that have a sense of impossibility and take the client out of the typical problem-solving mode. Ideally, they tap into the client's

wholehearted commitment. Wright recounts asking a manufacturing company what would happen if they were to buy supplies from their competition. The company had gross inefficiencies in its system. The idea that they could buy materials from their competitor because their own process was so inefficient seemed preposterous. Yet it captured the imagination and yielded creative solutions that were not likely to be evoked by the typical problem-solving methods. Other WAQ examples include: What will you wear to the award ceremony when your project is a success? What's the most fun way you can double your income while taking more time off?

With all the information bombarding us on a daily basis, we can't afford to rely on having all the facts in order to make decisions in a 'rational' manner anymore. The conscious, rational part of our minds gets exhausted trying to handle it all in its sequential processing manner. Daniel Goleman in his book, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, calls intuition "the Inner Rudder." This emotional competence is essential to leadership and business success. Assert with confidence the power of intuition and invite your clients to get curious about their own.

Love-Based Leadership

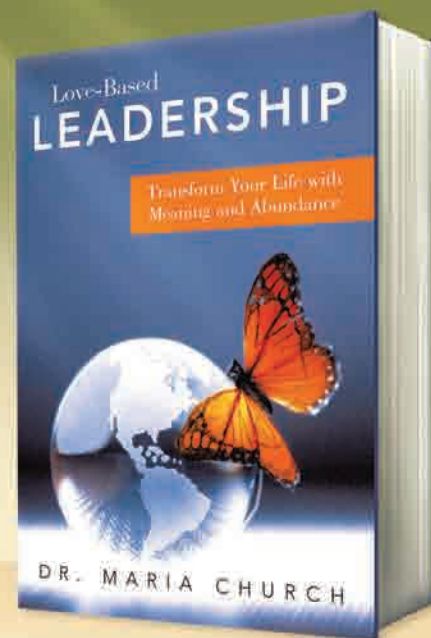
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