



Beyond Intelligence



Discovering Your Powers of Intuition

By
Brother Bhumananda



Most of us do not learn much about intuition as part of our formal education. Through years of grammar and high school and university, can you remem-

ber it being mentioned even once by your teachers? Rather, the emphasis is upon intellectual growth: developing one's ability to reason, memorize, analyze, and theorize.

As schoolchildren in the 1950s and 1960s, each year we were given standardized IQ tests. To have a high IQ meant you were smart, someone special, bound to succeed in life if you applied yourself. But no one tested us for intuitional development. Did you ever consider what your intuitional "IQ" might be? For most of us, intuition seemed exotic, like ESP or telepa-

thy: exciting in a mysterious sort of way, but without much relevance to our daily life.

But intellectual development alone does not give us all the answers we need to find our way successfully through life. When I was a student at University of California, Berkeley, my economics professor was one of the smartest men I have ever known. On loan to Berkeley from the Brookings Institute, an internationally renowned think tank, he went on to become one of the President's most influential economic advisors. I remember seeing him featured in a front-page article in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Listening to his lectures, there seemed no limits to the insights and understanding he possessed. But studying one night I came up with a question pertaining to the core of the subject. When I excitedly presented it the next morning in class, without hesitation he proceeded to outline a reply I can only describe as dazzling. "The man is brilliant, absolutely brilliant," I thought in awe. But afterwards, though I could not put my finger on it, I felt uneasy about his answer. As the day went on, I felt uneasier. Suddenly I realized that, despite his self-assured reply, he had not actually been able to

answer the question!

*Intuition Insures
Right Judgment in Any
Given Situation*

Granted, forecasting the ups and downs of the national economy is far from an exact science. But this little incident brought home to me that even the greatest intellects—the sought-after advice of today's ubiquitous "experts"—may fall short when it comes to charting the right course through the twists and turns of our daily unpredictable life. And a question formed in my mind that remained with me for some years: "What is the difference between intelligence and wisdom?" It was not until I found the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda that I discovered a satisfactory answer—and it consisted of one word: *Intuition*.

"Only the wise few have discovered and consciously nurtured the wisdom-producing intuition that lies hidden in the expression of intelligence," he writes in his commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*.

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“If intuition is not awakened and fully operative, the conclusions of the reasoning intelligence may be erroneous....

“Truth endures, false intelligence disappears....The works of mighty intellects can be dazzling to the eye of mankind’s imagination, but if not founded in truth they are like fireworks that amaze the beholder but fade quickly.”

In another passage he wrote, “The intellect can be cultured by education, but discrimination flows from intuition and is obtained only through soul force, through contact with the soul....Discrimination born of intuition through soul contact insures right judgment in any given situation. The soul, through the agency of intuition, drops divine guidance into the consciousness of the devotee; the intuitive guidance manifests as wisdom.”

Intuition Connects Your Individual Intelligence With Cosmic Wisdom

To understand how intelligence differs from the wisdom of intuition, consider the Internet. If you rely upon the resources of your personal computer alone, your information is limited. But through the agency of the Internet you are connected to a vast worldwide

computer network with its corresponding voluminous databases of information. Your stand-alone computer may be limited, but by using its Internet connection it can, for example, locate a rare book by searching through inventories of thousands of bookstores containing millions of titles, a task far beyond its individual capacity.

Similarly, by learning to use our soul faculty of intuition we bridge the latent connection between individual consciousness and the universal consciousness to which we belong. The resources of any individual mind, no matter how brilliant, are limited; the scope of the cosmic mind is infinite. The more intuitive we become, the more we transition from the ordinary reasoning of a single “stand-alone” intellect to the vast wisdom-perceptions inherent in a cosmic consciousness that is the real power and inspiration behind our minds and the minds of all others.

In his writings, Paramahansa Yogananda explains this universal consciousness is the consciousness of God. He said: “Christ Consciousness is that aspect of God’s consciousness which is present in all creation, and of which we are a part. Each intelligence is a part of the vast Christ Intelligence. We are

like the jets in a gas burner. There are many little holes through which the ignited gas is pouring, but under the burner is but one flame. We are the little flames coming from the big flame of Life. Breathing through all the pores of life is the one Life, and within all flowers is the one Life, and behind all nature is the one Life.”

It is because the saints and masters speak from this state of God-realization that they are able to speak with surety.

In the later years of St. Anthony (one of the “Desert Fathers”), a learned man visited him who felt drawn to his path of total renunciation but with some reservations. He told Anthony, “I understand that a man should prefer to live without men, but I cannot see how it is possible to live in seclusion without the solace of books.” The saint replied, “My book is the world of all created things; and whenever I wish to read the words of God in it, it lies open before me.”

Paramahansa Yogananda, speaking from a similar state of consciousness, once said, “I have not read twenty books since I came to America twenty years ago....I would have been wholly ignorant if I hadn’t had, through meditation, the consciousness of Spirit. When I

look at a book I see that whatever truth it contains has already been given to me from God. All thought and truth come from Spirit; if you commune with Him you receive His wisdom direct.”

Develop Intuition by Practicing Calmness

To develop your intuition, begin by practicing calmness. As a youth, one summer I vacationed in Mexico along the beach and enjoyed snorkeling. Some days the water was rough and if you’ve ever tried to snorkel in choppy water, you know that it doesn’t work! The waves stir up the sand and debris so that the water is clouded; you can’t see anything. But on other days the ocean was quiet and calm. All debris settled to the bottom; and swimming through the water, you could see the beautiful fish, shells, and reefs very clearly.

We want to see truth clearly through intuition, and use it to guide our daily lives. If our minds are filled with restlessness, desires, and negative emotions, our vision will be clouded. To see clearly we have to still the mental turbulence. We have to practice calmness.

How? Begin by *choosing* to think calming thoughts. Psychiatrist David D. Burns, M.D., author of the

best-seller *The Feeling Good Handbook*, writes: “Your thoughts create your moods....The messages you give yourself have an enormous impact on your emotions. And what’s even more important, by learning to change your thoughts, you can change the way you feel.”

Try this simple experiment: Think of a serious problem in your life, a major challenge. Take a few moments to dwell on it. Now observe the impact this has upon you. Perhaps you feel anxiety arising in your heart. You may also experience mental tension and physical stress as well, such as a tightening up of some of the muscles in the back or neck.

Now visualize yourself standing before a door that leads to your favorite peaceful place. As you enter, leave your problem behind and close the door. Mentally disassociate yourself from your troubles, at least temporarily. Sit down, consciously relax the body, and repeat the following affirmation:

I am the Changeless, I am the Infinite.

I am not a little mortal being with bones to break, a body that will perish.

I am the deathless, changeless Infinite.

Repeat it slowly several times:

first in normal intonation, then softly, then in a whisper, and last, mentally.

Pause briefly after saying each phrase, and deeply feel the thought you are expressing.

Sit quietly for a few moments afterwards, perceiving the Truth in that affirmation.

Try doing this now. Then observe again your body and mind. Has anything changed? You will begin to find that the anxiety and tension dissipated to some degree. You will begin to feel some peace and inner strength arising from within.

In his writings, Paramahansa Yogananda gives affirmations with different orientations: will affirmations for focusing the will power, feeling affirmations for those of devotional temperament, reason affirmations for developing pure understanding, and so on. Any of these, practiced regularly, can help us to attain mental focus and calmness—clearing the way for expression of the guiding influence of soul-intuition in our various endeavors.

Balance Fast-Track Living With “Time-Outs”

In our high-powered, fast-track society, the pace of modern liv-

ing is intense. An architect told me that when he first started working thirty years ago, his clients were perfectly satisfied with his taking three weeks to complete a certain type of job. Now, with email and faxes, the usual expectation for the same task is twenty-four hours. If we are not careful, the frantic pace of the world becomes our pace. Our days become so filled with the whirlwind of constant activity and striving that we never allow ourselves the chance to become calm and take stock in a deeper way of what our lives are like and where we are going. Our intuition is always speaking to us through the quiet still voice within, but caught in the hustle-bustle of the moment we never take time to listen. If we want to have an existence that is more than a human version of the rat’s treadmill, we have to make conscious decisions that support getting in touch with the wisdom of our higher Self.

Even businesses are acknowledging that intense activities and problem-solving sessions need to be balanced with periods of relaxation and quiet reflection. The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company conducted a study of successful executives and senior managers from a cross section of

industries, corporations, and non-profit organizations. “The study’s key finding is that quiet plays a profound and active part in most top executives’ methods....Many use quiet to seek a condition of inner tranquility where distractions are swept away and the mind can be focused on a point with laser-like intensity.”

When I was a university student taking computer science courses, we were given an assignment to write a complex computer program in machine language, a difficult task most students in the class failed to complete. I worked on mine to a certain point; and on paper my program looked very good. But it did not run, no matter how I tried to correct it. I had never tried so hard to solve a problem, working many hours every day until about three A.M. Finally I ran out of time. It was late, the assignment was due the next morning, and I gave up. Walking home I felt exhausted but relieved. At least the ordeal of trying to accomplish this “impossible” assignment was over. For the first time in several weeks I loosened up and relaxed. Suddenly in an instantaneous flash of insight I knew what the error was. My intuition spoke to me. Or rather, for the first time in weeks I allowed enough

space in my consciousness so I could listen to it. I walked back to the campus computer center, made the correction and the program ran perfectly like I knew it would.

My experiences since then have confirmed that initial lesson: If you want the best solutions, balance your efforts to reason and problem-solve with quiet periods where you can take time off from pressing demands of the day. Try having a period of silence and solitude in the early morning and late evening. As the body relaxes and the mind becomes calm, the hidden resources of intuition are more accessible.

Meditation Opens the Doorway of Intuition

Most persons, in such times of tranquility, have experienced sudden inspirations that bestow new understanding and insights. Usually these intuitive experiences mysteriously come and go, prompted by faculties that the person does not fully comprehend. Yet by practice of the science of yoga, we can learn to consciously operate subtle natural laws that remain hidden from the everyday man or woman. Regular meditation practice activates the intuitive faculties and can enable us to enter the intuitional state at will.

Today millions of people recognize the value of meditation. Physicians and therapists recommend it to patients. Companies and airports offer the convenience of meditation rooms. Numerous scientific studies have documented its diverse benefits. Unfortunately, enamored with meditation's attractive rewards for body and mind, many have forgotten its higher spiritual purpose. Some meditation teachers do not even mention the words *God* or *Spirit* or *Divine*.

Meditation is more than a simple relaxation technique. It was not to the goal of lowering blood pressure that the *rishis* of old devoted their lives! The physical, mental, and emotional benefits of meditation are wonderful, but the wise men of India searched for something greater. Realizing the transitory nature of this material world, they sought passageway to a higher existence, a new life, a cosmic awareness that fulfills the very purpose of human life. To this end they developed scientific methods of meditation that lead one to the highest states of consciousness: realization of the higher Self, the soul, and its blissful omnipresence in oneness with God.

In *Autobiography of a Yogi* Paramahansa Yogananda describes

this state of cosmic consciousness:

An oceanic joy broke upon calm endless shores of my soul. The Spirit of God, I realized, is exhaustless Bliss; His body is countless tissues of light. A swelling glory within me began to envelop towns, continents, the earth, solar and stellar systems, tenuous nebulae, and floating universes. The entire cosmos,

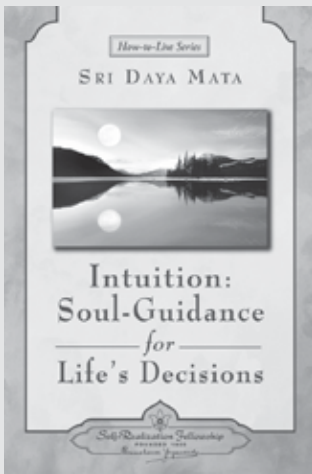
gently luminous, like a city seen afar at night, glimmered within the infinitude of my being.

By patient, systematic effort, the yogis of India's ancient higher ages forged the key that unlocks the wisdom-door of intuition that leads to Self-realization and grants us passage into the infinite realm of Spirit: devoted, daily practice of scientific techniques of meditation. □

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