The Science of Instincts and Intuition

Intuitive Intelligence in Times of Information Overload

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My monkey mind is quiet There is room in my brain I am paying attention I am clear

Long before we began using the Internet with all its various sources of information, such as social medias, blogs, Wikipedia, Google, and Youtube, well-renowned futurist Alvin Toffler² wrote as early as in 1970 in his bestselling book *Future Shock* that, In the three short decades between now and the twenty-first century, millions of ordinary, psychologically normal people will face an abrupt collision with the future. Citizens of the world's richest and most technologically advanced nations, many of them will find it increasingly painful to keep up with the incessant demand for change that characterizes our time. For them, the future will have arrived too soon.³

In the accelerated process of undergoing structural changes from an *industrial society* to an *information society*, people are being overwhelmed by information. To function effectively during such circumstances, an individual depends upon the power to predict, at least to a fair degree, the outcome of one's actions.⁴ However, when exposed to information overload, an individual's predictive accuracy decreases radically. As compensation, it is necessary to either *process far more information* than before, or



develop new strategies for making efficient decisions. As you begin this chapter take a moment to reflect upon the experience of being stressed out and overwhelmed by information.

An indication that we have not yet

succeeded in adapting to processing information faster and at larger quantities is revealed in a historical comparison of stress levels across the USA. From 1983 to 2009 stress

increased 18% for women and 24% for men,⁵ supporting Toffler's ideas about a *Future Shocked* society. These findings also reveal that the younger an individual is, the higher levels of stress they are experiencing.⁶ The main reasons for why stress levels are much higher today than 25 years ago are that, "Economic pressures are greater, and it's harder to turn off information, and it's harder to buffer ourselves from the world."⁷

Thus, in order to avoid becoming stressed out, turning off information, and buffering ourselves from the world, current and coming generations need to develop new approaches for choosing and managing information. Since information overload occurs when the cognitive processing capacity is exceeded by the amount of input,⁸ it would be appealing if one could reduce the amount of input and still make sound decisions. This is actually something that has been found in occupations where one needs to make decisions on short notice with limited amount of information, such as entrepreneurs, pilots, firemen, and military personnel. The key aspect has been to *include the use of intuition* in the operational work.

As an example, in the United States Army Field Manual on Command and Control (FM 101-5) a section on *intuitive decision making* is included.⁹ It has been shown that by including intuition in the military planning guide, planning time can be significantly reduced without sacrificing quality.¹⁰ A similar model for *intuitive decision making* has become standard for tactical decision making in the Swedish Armed Forces.¹¹

Understanding Intuitive Intelligence

In this chapter, a model for *intuitive decision-making* will be presented that intends to assist the reader in learning to choose and make decisions in times of information

overload. This model is called *Intuitive Intelligence*. Intuitive Intelligence primarily expands from two frameworks; the naturalistic decision making (NDM) model and the mind-boggling research relating to noetic science and nonlocal intuition. While the NDM framework focuses primarily "on the way people build expertise and apply it to cognitive functions such as judgment and decision making,"¹² noetic science uses rigorous scientific methods "to study the nature of direct inner knowing and the boundaries between the subjective and the objective."¹³

By combining the NDM model with the research relating to noetic science, Intuitive Intelligence is designed to both use the idea that intuitive perception is based on an individual's unconscious mind accessing information from *prior experiences and the ability to recognize various patterns*, as in NDM, as well as the human possibility to intuitively perceive information from a distant or future source, as has been demonstrated in the field of noetic science.^{14 15 16} Thus, Intuitive Intelligence intends to teach the practitioner how to use intuition to *access one's direct inner knowing*, which is the actual meaning of the Greek word *noetikus*.¹⁷

However, before deepening our knowledge about intuition, we will examine how intuition is related to animal and human instincts. Like all animals in the animal kingdom, we as mammals possess instincts. Yet as humans, most people no longer have fine-tuned instincts due to a large dependence on receiving information from language and machines. Therefore, let us take a moment to understand a bit more about instincts and how we can recapture our inherent ability to instinctually respond to our experiences.

Instincts and the Inheritance from the Animal Kingdom



In the field of behavioral science, instinct is "generally understood as the innate part of behavior that emerges without any training or education in humans."¹⁸ That means that an instinct is a *natural ability* that makes an organism act in a particular way *without needing to learn it or think about it*.¹⁹

One fundamental instinct is the self-preservation instinct

and the sexual instinct. While the self-preservation instinct helps us to either avoid or respond to danger, such as in the fight, flight, or freeze response, the sexual instinct plays a vital function in animal and human reproduction. Instinctual reactions are typically automatic, due to being governed by the older parts of the brain, located in the brainstem and the limbic system. Responding intuitively, on the other hand, involves processing instinctual data using logical and analytical reasoning, associated with newer parts of the brain, such as the neocortex.

Animals detecting danger through their instincts. To better understand the purpose of human instincts, let us investigate the role instincts have for animals in detecting danger. British biologist Rupert Sheldrake has written extensively about how animals are able to anticipate disasters and sense impending danger with the help of their instincts.²⁰ For example, he discovered that animals were behaving as if they were able to sense when an earthquake was about to happen. Sheldrake describes,

Some cats were said to be hiding for no apparent reason up to 12 hours before the earthquake; others were behaving in an anxious way or "freaking out" an hour or two

before; some dogs were barking "frantically" before the earthquake struck; and goats and other animals were showing obvious signs of fear."²¹

Sheldrake, as well as Chinese researchers, have found that numerous animals also behave in a similar way before avalanches, tsunamis, as well as man made disasters such as military air raids. As an example, in relation to the tsunami occurring in the Indian Ocean on December 26, 2004, elephants, leopards, monkeys, and birds miraculously were reported to escape by seeking refuge in higher terrain.²² Thus, instincts seem to play a vital role for animals to detect danger, even ahead of time, and as a result be able to successfully escape into safety. Humans may not be tuned to their instincts on such a deep level, yet our bodies are continually communicating with us, offering information to help us make accurate decisions, and yes, even prevent danger or unpleasant experiences.

Subconsciously reacting to danger ahead of time. Similarly to animals, the human autonomic nervous system responds to danger even before it happens. While nothing specific happens when watching a calm picture, the autonomic nervous system reacts several seconds *before* seeing a threatening picture. For instance, the electrodermal activity of the heart changes approximately four to seven seconds ahead of seeing a threatening picture.^{23 24 25 26 27 28} Imagine that!

When functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) was used to reveal which part of the brain was active before and during seeing the threatening picture, the result revealed that regions near the amygdala, which is a part of the limbic system, were particularly active.²⁹ Since these regions are involved in processing threat and sensory data with

emotional content, such as fear and rage, one may conclude that the emotional picture activated a stress response in the test subject.

When measuring the electric activity of the brain and the heart, with the help of electroencephalography (EEG) respectively electrocardiography (ECG), the results revealed "that the heart appears to receive intuitive information [about 1.3 seconds] before the brain,"³⁰ something that will be important to remember further on when practicing how to use intuition. These findings suggest that instinctual foreknowledge involves perception of implicit information by the body's psychophysiological systems, something that will be examined more in depth further ahead. However, before that, a quick question: Did you ever feel that someone was staring at you without actually seeing the person? Maybe you thought you were losing your mind, yet, research has shown that maybe you were right on!



Instinctively detecting when being stared at. Another aspect of detecting danger is that both animals and humans seem to be able to instinctively detect when they are being stared at. For instance, unconscious effects have been

measured in the autonomic nervous system when an individual is being stared at.^{31 32} Interestingly enough, it seems like the autonomic nervous system is reacting even when the person watching is looking through a closed-circuit television (CCTV).

Sheldrake argues that the ability to detect when being stared at is part of a natural survival mechanism, originally alerting prey animals when a predator is looking at

them.^{33 34 35} When Sheldrake investigated if it was possible to *consciously* sense when being stared at, in addition to the *unconscious* effects reported above, he found that the individual being stared at was able to guess right in 54.7 percent of the time, compared to 50 percent expected by chance.

When the test subjects were given a chance to receive feedback, whether they were guessing right or wrong, the scores drastically improved. For instance, eight to nine year old children in a German school, after having received training, were able to achieve an accuracy of as high as 90 percent. Since these results reveal that it is possible to learn how to become aware of unconscious instinctual information, they also indicate that *intuition is a skill* that can be enhanced through training.³⁶ What a treat to have this amazing tool to help us navigate through life's experiences!

To conclude this section, we have learned that instincts, and foremost the selfpreservation instinct, play a vital role in detecting implicit information relating to danger. When the autonomic nervous system is receiving and processing large amounts of sensory impressions, it appears that the human organism is even able to perceive beyond the traditional boundaries of space and time. The next topic to investigate is how instinctual responses are part of the intuitive decision making process, as well as to find out how the self-preservation instinct and the sexual instinct also can compromise and distort true intuitive impressions.



Intuition and the Intuitive Genius Within

One major difference between instinct and intuition is that instinct is associated with automatic responses *below the conscious level*, while intuition is a refined process in which unconscious data has been processed and presented as *conscious hunches, insights, or understandings*. That means that intuition is "a process that gives us the ability to know something directly without analytic reasoning, bridging the gap between the conscious and nonconscious parts of our mind, and also between instinct and reason."³⁷ By learning to acknowledge information related to our instincts, gut-feelings, and hunches, and subsequently combining these valuable impressions with analytical reasoning, an individual can learn to make intuitive decisions and become very adaptive in a world of rapid changes.

Researchers have studied individuals that need to make critical decisions under difficult conditions, such as intensive care personnel, military pilots, and firemen.^{38 39} Klein and his team found that when conditions were unstable, time was limited, and the stakes were high, some individuals were still able to perform exceptionally well. To the

researchers big surprise, they discovered that instead of using analogical reasoning and comparing different options, the key point was to use instinct and intuition.

Expert intuition in firemen. When studying firemen commanders in their natural environment, it became evident to Klein that some of the commanders just intuitively knew what to do. The key aspect was to *recognize familiar patterns* in what was happening around them. Instead of asking, "What do I do now?" the commanders asked themselves, "What is going on here?" The commanders then used their experience to assess the situation, match relevant cues to patterns they had already learned, and then decide the best course of action. This is something you too can do! It can be easy when you are mindful, quiet the "monkey mind" and pay attention to your "gut."

Although the researchers initially were biased to find that the commanders were wrestling with different choices and struggling with comparing them to each other, as described in various formal decision making processes, the results clearly demonstrated that they did not need to do that. Instead, after having used their imagination to internally experience if an option would work or not, the commanders went along with *the first identified* reasonable action. That means that the commanders could immediately rule out an action if it did not intuitively feel right to them, or go ahead if it seemed to be the right one, and as a result save a lot of valuable time.

This process is referred to as *mental simulation*, and is defined as, "the ability to imagine people and objects consciously and to transform those people and objects through several transitions, finally picturing them in a different way than at the start."⁴⁰ Mental simulation was studied in chess masters as early as 1946 and has been found to be

a crucial strategy for making successful decisions. Just as chess masters use their imagination to play out a sequence of actions and then determine if that sequence is doable or not, successful business leaders, entrepreneurs, airline pilots, anesthesiologists, nurses, and military officers do the same.^{41 42 43}

By using prior knowledge and experience to rapidly recognize familiar patterns and scenarios, these experts did not need to make their mental simulations very elaborate. Instead, the experts seemed to play out the scenario through only a few different transition states. Often it was sufficient to use only two or three key factors in each transition state, making it possible to run through the scenario without getting stuck in unnecessary details and as a consequence lose valuable time.



"Felt sense" and how intuitive

impressions are experienced. To better understand this automatic and subconscious process of recognizing patterns, we can

compare it to spelling or reading a word. When reading an incorrect spelled word, most people often automatically sense that something is wrong. For instance, when you read the words "shcool," "uze," and "mispelled," the brain often automatically recognizes the incorrect spelling and a subtle sensation is created, informing us that something is wrong. On the other hand, when the words are spelled correctly, as in "school," "use," and "misspelled," the brain automatically compares the word to the earlier learned correct spelling, and a subtle, often not even noticeable, positive or familiar sensation is created.

The perception of these subtle sensations is referred to as "felt sense." The term refers to the discovery psychotherapist Eugene Gendlin did when he discovered that successful patients of psychotherapy intuitively focus on subtle internal bodily impressions, also called somatic markers, containing information about how to resolve the problem the client is experiencing.⁴⁴ These somatic markers are pre-conceptual, meaning they exist before any mental constructions, abstractions or generalizations are created about a particular, lived experience. By using felt sense, intuitive impressions can be experienced on four different levels, the physical, emotional, mental, and universal level.⁴⁵

The first level of intuitive signals relates to the *physical level* of awareness and includes physical sensations, such as *gut feelings*, *tensions*, *tingling sensations*, *or various kinds of pain*; for example, in the stomach or in the head. The second level of intuitive signals is the *emotional level*, conveying intuitive information in the form of sudden *changes of feelings*, or an immediate *attraction* or *aversion* for something without

Exercise 1 – Felt Sense

1. Think about a person you dislike, are irritated at, or hold any other negative feelings towards. a. How does your body react (tension, posture, breathing)? b. How do you feel emotionally? c. What thoughts come to your mind? 2. Think about a person you like, are thankful to, or hold any other positive feelings towards. a. How does your body react (contract/relax, warm/cold)? b. How do you feel emotionally? c. What thoughts come to your mind? 3. How does your felt sense differ in the above examples? 4. What level (physical, emotional, or mental) was easiest to perceive for you?

logically understanding why. The third level of intuitive signals relates to the *mental level* of awareness and includes mental *insights*, immediate *comprehensions*, or sudden *flashes of knowledge*. On the fourth level, *the universal level*, also referred to

as the spiritual level, the impressions often come as a *greater understanding*, with a sense of a *grander interconnectedness* between different ideas, issues or individuals. Now use *exercise one* to better understand the experience of felt sense.



Receiving nonlocal information.

Although most intuitive information probably is related to an individual's expertise and experience, it also seems to be possible to receive intuitive information from a distant location, referred to as

nonlocal information, or information that is transcending time, referred to as *transtemporal information*. Unknown to a lot of people, numerous scientific studies have been conducted revealing that it actually is possible to receive sensory information from people over distance, such as in *telepathy*,^{46 47} or from distant locations, such as in *remote viewing*.^{48 49 50 51 52 53}

One class of telepathy experiment is the ganzfeld experiment. In this experiment the test subject is put in a light state of trance and is then instructed to pay attention to subtle sensory impressions. At the same time a sender, placed in a different room, is asked to mentally send a randomly selected image to the receiver. After about 15 to 30 minutes, when the sending phase is over, the receiver is given four images to guess the correct image from.

In a meta-analysis over 25 ganzfeld experiments, where the design enabled the test subject to guess right in 25 percent of the cases, the overall hit rate was 37 percent.⁵⁴ The

odds for this to happen by chance is about a trillion to one, clearly showing that there has to exist something else than coincidence that enables the test subjects to perceive the telepathically transferred image. When artistically gifted musicians from the Julliard School in New York City were tested, they were even able to produce a hit rate as remarkable as 75 %.⁵⁵ This result is a clear indication that with the right technique and strategies, it is possible to sharpen the acuity of intuition.

Besides demonstrating that it is possible for information to be transferred between two minds, as in telepathy, researchers have also discovered that it is possible for an individual to expand one's consciousness to receive information from a distant location, such as in *remote viewing*. ^{56 57 58 59 60 61} In a meta-analysis of 653 formal sessions and 126 non-formal sessions of remote viewing, conducted at Princeton University from 1976 to 1999, the overall results gave a significant result with odds against chance of 33 million to 1 that it was possible for an individual to receive sensory impressions from a distant location. ^{62 63}

An intriguing aspect of the experiments in remote viewing is that the target site often was randomly chosen *after* conducting the remote viewing session, indicating that the time aspect is not important in order for remote viewing to produce useful results.^{64 65} That means that it amazingly enough seems to be possible to receive *transtemporal information* in remote viewing, meaning that the information either resides in the past or the future, just as demonstrated when the human autonomic nervous system reacts four to seven seconds ahead of watching an upsetting picture.

Although there exists a vast amount of rigorous experimental research documenting nonlocal and transtemporal intuition, ⁶⁶ ⁶⁷ ⁶⁸ most mainstream scientists are either not familiar with these findings, or view them as anomalous.⁶⁹ The major reason for this may be that the theoretical knowledge for *how it is possible* is unknown or not that well understood by most people. Therefore, we will review a short summary of how it theoretically is possible to extend one's consciousness outside the traditionally known boundaries of space and time (for a more extensive review see Bradley,⁷⁰ Mitchell and Staretz,⁷¹ or Nordstrom⁷²).



Quantum processes enabling the reception of intuitive data. Although nonlocal and transtemporal intuition seems to contradict the traditional view of how the physical universe operates, three scientific discoveries can assist in better understanding how such phenomena can be possible. The first discovery relates to the verification of *quantum entanglement*,⁷³ the second concerns *the holographic principle*,⁷⁴ and the third is the

understanding of quantum processes occurring in the brain.⁷⁵

A fascinating aspect of quantum mechanics is that research has discovered that photons, electrons, and groups of molecules can remain in touch even when separated by great distances, a concept called *quantum entanglement*.^{76 77 78} That means that particles residing on one side of the planet can be entangled and interconnected with particles on

the opposite side of the planet, something Albert Einstein called "spooky actions at a distance."⁷⁹

The existence of entanglement was scientifically proven when two entangled photons, called photon A and B, were sent in two separate directions through 50 km of optical fibers.⁸⁰ When each photon arrived to its end station, called Alice and Bob, the entangled property of the sub-atomic particles was affected and then measured (see Figure 1). If photon A was spinning in a clockwise direction, the entangled pair, photon B, took on an opposing value, which in this example would be a counter-clockwise spin.





Quantum physicists believe that quantum entanglement is possible due to the existence of a "hidden" and vast field of energy, referred to as *the zero-point field* (ZPF).^{81 82 83 84} This field consists of massless "virtual particles," such as virtual photons, and is described as ever-present and nonlocal, meaning that it even exists in the empty space of vacuum and in the lowest possible temperature of absolute zero. The ZPF can also store unlimited amounts of information and is described as "nature's information transfer mechanism."⁸⁵ This means that everything in the entire universe is interconnected through the medium of the ZPF. However, before understanding how you and I can be interconnected through the ZPF, it is necessary to understand how the ZPF, the brain and

possibly the entire universe process information according to the holographic

principle. 86 87 88 89

What is a hologram? If you have seen the movie *Star Wars* you probably remember when Luke Skywalker's robot R2D2 projected a holographic image of Princess Leia. The image is threedimensional and appears in thin air due to



the light of two laser beams being used in a particular way. When the hologram is created, a single laser beam is split into two separate beams, beam A and B. While beam A is used to illuminate the recorded object, laser beam B is used as a reference beam. When the illumination beam A hits the object to be photographed, for example Princess Leia, the reflecting waves of light bounce off her and hit a holographic film plate (see Figure 2). The waves of light from Princess Leia collide on the holographic film plate with the waves of light from B, which creates an interference pattern. *Figure 2*. The process of recording a hologram.



The interference pattern created when waves of light collide is similar to the wave pattern created when two stones are dropped into a pond of water. When the waves of the two stones are interfering with each other, a crisscross pattern is created. This interference pattern carries the digital information of the object photographed in the form

of wavelength, amplitude and direction. That

means that the digital version of Princess Leia actually is stored as an interference pattern on the holographic film plate.



Then, to create a three-dimensional holographic image of the object, a reconstruction beam is beamed at the interference pattern. At the same time as the laser beam is diffracted at the holographic film plate, a three-dimensional holographic image is displayed in the air in front of the observer, just as R2D2 did with Princess Leia. By

cutting out a smaller piece of the holographic film plate and beaming a laser beam on the smaller piece, it is still possible to see the entire object. Truly fascinating! However, the more the original plate has been divided, the hazier the image will be. The reason for this is that each segment of the interference pattern carries data of the two interfering waves, such as wavelength, amplitude and direction. That means that each smaller part of the interference pattern also carries information about the whole, which actually also is a quality of the ZPF.

A very interesting idea, that has gained scientific and mathematical support over the past decade, is that the entire universe is constructed in accordance with the holographic principle.^{90 91 92} This idea suggests, "that the whole universe is in some way enfolded in everything and that each thing is enfolded in the whole."⁹³ For example, Bekenstein⁹⁴ has mathematically proven that when energy enters a black hole, it does not disappear into nothingness. Instead, the energy entering the black hole is converted and encoded onto the two-dimensional flat curved surface of the black hole. Bekenstein suggests that the surface of the black whole functions as a holographic film plate, storing the converted energy as an interference pattern of small pixels, having the size of Planck's constant, the smallest measurement known to science.

Other scientists have applied Bekenstein's theory to the entire universe and suggest that even the outer boundaries of the universe is a two-dimensional surface interference pattern, consisting of trillions upon trillions of Planck's constant sized pixels.^{95 96} If this is true, one could say that our entire space-time reality is projected into "thin air,"

similarly to how Luke Skywalker's robot R2D2 projects a holographic image of Princess Leia.

So how does the holographic principle relate to the ZPF? It is suggested that the interconnected aspect of holography is possible due to the ZPF functioning as an interconnecting medium while it is employing the holographic principle. Let us elaborate a little! There exists mounting evidence indicating that every physical object has its own unique "holographic blueprint" stored in the ZPF.^{97 98} By using a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine, which uses the holographic principle when it is creating two-dimensional or three-dimensional pictures of the internal structures of the human body, it has been demonstrated that it is possible to decode wave-interference patterns from the ZPF and turn that information into images.⁹⁹ What this shows is that objects in the physical reality are represented as quantum information in the ZPF.

Without going into too much detail, it is believed that two entangled objects are interconnected through *resonance* occurring in the ZPF.¹⁰⁰ As an example, if you place two identical guitars on opposite sides of a room and pluck a string on one of them, the same string on the other guitar will begin to vibrate in resonance with the first guitar. Then, just as the two guitars are sharing the same standing sound wave, causing them to vibrate in unison, quantum entanglement is believed to occur due to the two objects in resonance are sharing the same standing wave in the ZPF.¹⁰¹

With regard to receiving nonlocal and transtemporal information, which is believed to exist as energetic information in the ZPF, various scientists believe that an individual's consciousness can receive such information due to *quantum processes occurring in the*

brain. ¹⁰² ¹⁰³ ¹⁰⁴ ¹⁰⁵ ¹⁰⁶ ¹⁰⁷ Hameroff¹⁰⁸ ¹⁰⁹ ¹¹⁰, as well as other scientists¹¹¹ ¹¹² ¹¹³ explain that it is in the microtubules of the dendritic neurons that these quantum operations most likely occur.

These scientists suggest that the microtubules enable the brain to function as a massive quantum computer, "setting up a resonant condition with microtubules scatted throughout the brain tuned to the same frequency as the standing waves of the same frequency located in the ZPF."¹¹⁴ What does this mean? In the analogy of the two guitars, the brain is one of the guitars vibrating in unison with the energetic imprint of a specific object, individual, memory, or situation in the ZPF. In this sense, the brain uses the microtubules as an interface between the ZPF and the body, accessing data on a quantum level and then converting it into comprehendible information relating to our physical reality.

Thus, nonlocal and transtemporal information is believed to be distributed holographically in the ZPF and can be accessed through a subconscious connection through the ZPF. When this occurs, an outgoing field of attentional energy^{115 116} is believed to transcend constraints in time and space and even produce measurable quantum effects at distant locations, just as if our mind on a quantum level can become non-locally entangled. For example, research has revealed that when remote viewers receive impressions from a target site, they also create a measurable quantum effect at the target site. This effect consists of creating a burst of photons, similar to a miniature camera flash, 100 to 1000 times above the normal levels of virtual photons already existing in the room.^{117 118 119} This suggests that while the physical body is limited to a

certain location in space and time, it seems to be possible for human consciousness to use the holographic principle and the ZPF to move more freely in space and time. The result is that it is possible to "become entangled" to nonlocal and transtemporal information.

Reaching for the intuitive genius within. To conclude this section and get back to



something that by now hopefully is a little more easy to understand; by using intuition it is possible to reduce the amount of time to make a decision and still make the decision very sound and accurate. Research relating to how entrepreneurs,

business leaders, pilots, firemen, and military personnel make intuitive decisions even demonstrates that intuitive decisions produce better results compared to when only using analytical and logical reasoning. Thus, by building expertise, learning to recognize patterns, and paying full attention to one's intuitive impressions, it is possible to establish a direct connection with one's inner wisdom and make full use of intuition in one's everyday life.

This is a process that is very similar to how Albert Einstein described how he used intuition to guide him as a scientist. Einstein explained that he very often got scientific ideas from short intuitive insights and that he then used analytical thinking to penetrate deeper into these ideas.¹²⁰ Many very successful individuals in the fields of science, business, politics, and sports, have described how they do the same. Some of the most well known of these "intuitive geniuses" are inventors, such as Leonardo Da Vinci,

Thomas Edison, and Nikola Tesla, entrepreneurs and business leaders, such as Jeff Besos, Elon Musk, and Steve Jobs, political leaders and freedom fighters, such as Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, and sport legends, such as Wayne Gretzky and Michael Jordan.¹²¹

Although these individuals often relied on their intellect, logic, and reason, the true incentive to their achievement was that they listened to their internal intuitive voice. By paying attention to their intuitive and creative impulses, they excelled in their respective fields and were able to inspire and come up with new ideas that have transformed the world. This connection with our "intuitive genius within" is something that is possible for everyone. You know that experience when you are in the flow, when everything seems to happen naturally and you easily achieve at your best. Most people just happen to end up in this state by coincidence, but they do not really know how to remain there. It turns out that listening to intuition is the actual key to remain in this state, which is what we will talk more about in the next section.



Let the Magic Begin

In order to make full use of intuition there are certain skills that the intuitive decisions maker needs to develop. Two fundamentals skills are (1) being able to *quiet and focus the mind* and (2) knowing how to *discern between intuitive impressions and false data*. The reason for this is that otherwise it will be difficult to perceive the subtle impressions relating to the intuitive world, as well as to not confuse these intuitive impressions with incorrect "junk data," for instance, relating to unresolved personal issues.

Quieting the mind and achieving a high level of focus. Before tuning into intuitive information, it is necessary to be able to slow the mind down as well as to mindfully focus on one thing at a time without being disturbed. This relationship between reduced levels of mental noise and increased intuitive abilities is something that has been discovered in individuals that have done yoga and meditation for many years.^{124 125} However, it is easier said than done to actually manage to slow the mental stream of the conscious mind down and remain in a quiet state.

One way to gradually develop the ability to quiet the mind is to begin to meditate. Throughout your "Beyond Stress" experience, the Mindful MAC guide meditations give you the opportunity to establish a mindful meditation practice, as well as to begin to us various other tools for living mindfully. There also exist many other forms of meditation that can support quieting the mind. Depending on preference and level of competence, one can use a form of meditation that is either directed externally or internally. In an external meditation, which to most people is easier to perform, the eyes remain open while the practitioner focuses the attention on a specific external object, like a candle, a black dot, or the tip of the nose. In an internal meditation the eyes are closed and the practitioner can, for instance, focus the attention on the natural breath, repeat a word, relax various body parts, or attune to a specific emotion.

Another very efficient way to quiet the mind is to engage the peripheral vision, which is something the ancient shamans of Hawaii, the Kahunas, used to do in order to cease the mental stream of thoughts and reach a focused state of mind. In

Exercise 2 – Quieting The Mind

1. Choose a spot on a wall in front of you. Let the spot be slightly above your eye level.

2. Stare at the spot and just let your mind go loose. Eventually, after a minute or two, your focus will spread out and you will gradually begin to see more of the peripheral view.

3. Enter peripheral vision by transferring your focus from the spot to also include everything you can see in your surrounding, as if you are seeing everything at the same time.

4. Every now and then you can close your eyes for a **minute** or two. Remain in peripheral vision even with your eyes closed. Do your thoughts become more or less active?

Hawaiian this method is called Hakalau, which means, "To stare at, as in meditation and to allow to spread out."¹²⁶

In *exercise two* you can practice quieting your mind by activating your peripheral vision. Since the heart is reacting to intuitive impressions before the brain does,¹²⁷ it is advised to bring the awareness into the area of the heart while engaging peripheral vision.

Discerning between correct intuitive impressions and incorrect false data. In



order to understand how intuitive data can be distorted, it is helpful to understand that unresolved experiences often influence how an individual makes both conscious and unconscious choices. The reason for this is that

unresolved subconscious blockages often direct an individual to avoid the painful and unpleasant aspects of life, relating to the self-preservation instinct, as well as to follow the desire to attract, possess, and experience pleasure in life, associated with the sexual instinct.¹²⁸ ¹²⁹

With regard to using intuition, the process of reacting to unresolved content relating to *fear of anything that can cause pain* and *desire for anything that is pleasurable*, can therefore be said to distract the conscious mind from correctly "hearing," "feeling," or "seeing" the much more subtle intuitive data. In this sense, intuitive expressions are internally "played with a low volume," while subconscious fears and desires can be described, from an auditory perspective, to be very noisy when they become activated, thereby, overtaking the mental stream of consciousness and making the intuitive data appear as faint background noises.

Thus, a key aspect in the mental simulation is to be able to intuitively perceive if the result of the simulation will work or not. In this process it is helpful to become aware of how true intuitive impressions are experienced. A very important aspect to remember here is that true intuitive data not necessarily is the same as a "feeling in the gut," or gutfeelings, which also can be related to unresolved emotions, something that will be discussed more in detail further on.

An easy and efficient way to calibrate how true intuitive impressions are experienced is to attune with past situations in which the intuitive guidance turned out to be correct.¹³⁰ For instance, the sensation of being intuitively *guided to* perform a certain action is often experienced very differently from being *warned about* doing something, similarly as how a word spelled correctly versus an incorrect spelled word is experienced.

As an example, the intuitive "go ahead signal" can feel like a *surge of positive energy* being released in the stomach, slowly moving upwards. The tissue in that particular region of the stomach may *relax* and one may experience *becoming a little warmer*. Different parts of the body *may loosen up* and it is common to feel a sense of *excitement and happiness*. On the other hand, when intuitively sensing that something is wrong, that something will not work, or that one should avoid doing something, the sensation is almost the opposite. For example, the region of the *diaphragm may contract*, as if a small knot the size of a golf ball is located in the solar plexus. It can feel like *being drained of energy* and one might even *become tired*, as if the nervous system is time travelling and experiencing how one would feel in that future scenario. In Table 1 you can view some

common positive and negative somatic markers relating to when making big life

decisions.

Table 1; Description of positive and negative somatic markers¹³¹

Positive somatic markers	Negative somatic markers
Energy / energy flow	Fatigue / less energy
Expansion of the upper body or abdomen	Compression of the upper body or abdomen
Easy to breathe	Hard to breathe
The heart beats faster	Stomach pain, upset stomach
Feeling of warmth	Feeling of coolness
Excitement	Stress
Muscle relaxation	Muscle tension
The body wants to move, jump	The body moves slowly
Openness	Closedness
Harmony	Sweating

learn how to calibrate your intuitive "yes" and "no" signal, also referred to as the "go ahead signal" and the "avoid doing signal." The more you continuously practice calibrating and sensing how intuitive impressions are experienced, compared to distorted impressions, the easier it will be to differ between the two.

In exercise three you will

Exercise 3 - The Yes and No Signal

1. Identify two separate events, one when your intuition has been guiding you to *go ahead with something*, such as which direction to take in life, and one event when you have been guided *not to do something*, for instance, being warned about danger or a person. It is important that afterwards it turned out that your intuitive guidance was correct.

2. Close your eyes and think about one of the two intuitive events. Imagine yourself being back in your physical body at the time of the event.

3. Calibrating your intuitive yes and no signal.

a. How did you experience the sensation of intuitively knowing what to do on a mental, emotional, and physical level?

b. In which area of your body did you perceive a change? How big is the size of that area? Golf ball? Tennis ball? Put a matching color to that area.

4. Repeat the same process with the remaining event from point 2.

5. Notice the difference in sensation between when intuition is *guiding* you to do something from when it is *warning* you from doing something.

A key point here is that intuitive impressions, especially concerning a decision that will have a major influence on one's life, almost always will be blended with incorrect "junk data" relating to one's unconscious fears and desires. Some examples of these fears and desires can be a fear of not succeeding, not being good enough, not having enough money, not being liked or accepted, respectively the desire to possess things, the longing to take the easy way out, to wish for things to happen without needing to work for it, or not wanting to take responsibility for ones actions. To make the data "purer," one can either try to deepen one's level of relaxation, or use a therapeutic method for resolving the unprocessed data.

How to perform the mental simulation when making intuitive decisions. When



you have calibrated your intuitive "go ahead signal" and "avoid doing signal," the next step is to begin practicing on constructing mental simulations. As discussed earlier, when making a decision or solving a problem, it is necessary to allow for the subconscious

"super-computer" to perform pattern recognition, as well as potentially receive nonlocal and transtemporal information relating to the particular situation.

The following five steps will assist the practitioner in performing the mental simulation: (1) think about the problem at hand, (2) quiet the mind and enter an intuitive reception mode, (3) intuitively come up with suggestive solutions, (4) use felt sense to determine the validity and usability of the received information, and (5) determine and

act upon the first intuitively congruent action identified reasonable to act upon (see more Figure 3.).

Figure 3. A general flowchart of how to perform a mental simulation.



Step one is to *think about the problem at hand* and set the intention to receive or discover a solution to the situation. Use an "internal mental screen" to make it easier to picture the situation as vividly as possible, preferably with all your inner senses. For instance, if you are in a situation in which you are having a problem with a friend, use your internal 3D movie screen to imagine that you are seeing the face of your friend, hearing the friend's voice, and sensing that you are physically present with your friend.

In Step two, enter an *intuitive reception mode*, in which your mind has quieted down substantially, and the intention is set to receive intuitive information. Try to have no expectations since that will distort the intuitive information. Use felt sense while paying attention to any intuitive impressions being conveyed on the physical, mental, emotional, and/or universal/spiritual level. If your analytical mind becomes too active, focus on your breathing until you are back in a receptive mode.

In Step three, allow for the subconscious "super-computer" *to creatively pop up suggestive solutions*. There is no need to be too serious, too strict or too exact in this process. Instead a playful and enjoyable state of mind is very much preferred. The reason for this is that otherwise the intuitive information from the subconscious mind will be blocked by the analytical mind. This is similar to as when calling a friend and the person cannot answer because he or she is busy talking to someone else.

In Step four (which often can be done simultaneously as step three) use felt sense to determine if the received information is (1) useful, (2) needs to be modified, or (3) cannot be used at all. What does this mean? While part of your awareness is busy constructing a mental simulation on your internal movie screen, another part of your awareness is using felt sense to determine if the different parts of your mental simulation are constructed in accordance with your intuition or not. That means that intuition and your felt sense function as an "internal compass" deciphering if the mental simulation is in alignment with the performed subconscious pattern-recognition and/or the subconsciously perceived nonlocal and transtemporal information.

Until you intuitively perceive that you have reached a valid solution, meaning that your felt sense coincides with your "go ahead signal," you can go back and forth between step three and step four. Begin by changing the solution your are testing by either (1) breaking the test scenario down into more or less details, (2) modify or replace certain key aspects of the test scenario, or (3) try out a totally new test scenario.

Remember that if you are experiencing conflicting or incongruent feelings while performing the mental simulation, there is probably some sort of unresolved feeling or emotion that covertly is influencing the process. Since any form of fear of experiencing pain and negative emotions, or any kind of desire for experiencing pleasure and positive emotions, will filter the "pure" intuitive information, it is vital to look deeper into these obstructing elements.

The final part of step three and four is to put the information together into several transition points and then use your felt sense to determine a solution for the entire scenario. Here you may use your mental screen to imagine about two to three key events, as if they were played on a movie screen, and then use felt sense to determine if you feel congruent about your mental simulation. As an example, an individual who is deciding whether to move to another city might imagine the following snapshots: (1) selling the apartment, (2) moving into a new apartment in the new city, (3) doing a particular activity in the new city such as working out, meeting friends or going for a walk.

Then, when felt sense has been used to confirm the scenario presented in the mental simulation, *step five* is to determine the first best action to act upon. Remember, that a vital part of expert intuition is to go with the *first identified reasonable action*, meaning

going ahead with the first intuitively congruent action. In the example above, the first best possible action can be, for example, to contact a real estate agent or start looking at new apartments in the new city. Once again, felt sense and a mental simulation can be used to determine if the first intuitively presented real estate agent or apartment is an "intuitively intelligent" alternative or not.

A difficulty in this process is that the novice in using intuition easily can get trapped in filtering out or not paying attention to the first reasonable option. When that occurs it is common that the analytical mind runs through too many different scenarios, instead of going with the first best option. If that is the case, it often helps to deepen the *intuitive reception mode* by enhancing one's level of relaxation.

Another common experience is that incorrect junk data, originating from obstructing unresolved feelings and emotions, influences the process negatively. When that is the case, it is necessary to resolve these elements. Until a resolution has occurred it is recommended to not make any decision at all. Then, when the issue is resolved, one can start all over again.

Now you can use *exercise four* to begin practicing performing your own mental simulations. It is necessary to remember that without a "sufficient amount of expertise and background knowledge, it may be difficult or impossible to build a mental simulation,"¹³² therefore, if you want to begin using your intuition for solving problems and making decisions, it is vital to build expertise in the area you want to be efficient in.

Since this book is about stress management, it is necessary to build more expertise concerning life and oneself. One efficient way to do that is to adapt an approach to life in which you review and recapitulate major experiences in your life and ask yourself questions like, "What have I've learned from this experience?" "What can I do differently if it would happen again?" and "What actions can I take right away to demonstrate that I've learned from this experience?" The rewards of

Exercise 4 – The Mental Simulation

1. Think about something you want to make a decision about.

2. Enter an *intuitive reception mode* in which your mind is quiet with the intention of receiving intuitive impressions about possible solutions.

3. Pay attention to and write down the intuitive impressions that you are receiving. Remember that intuitive information often just pops up into your awareness. Stay open to receiving a wide variety of impressions, for instance, images, sounds, smells, knowings, memories, physical sensation and emotional impressions.

4. Receiving more information or if you are not getting any information:

a. Deepen your level of relaxation by exhaling slowly.b. Stay passive by just remaining quiet and waiting for more intuitive information to surface.

c. Become active by inner dialoguing with your intuitive mind. Ask for something specific that you can hear, feel, see, or sense in any possible way. Remember to remain in a state of non-attachment, meaning that you do not expect the information to come in any specific pre-supposed way.

5. Use felt sense while imagining suggestive solutions on your mental screen. Continue until you have reached a valid solution, meaning that your felt sense is similar to your "go ahead signal."

6. Go ahead with the first best action to act upon.

Remember that in the beginning it is easier to practice on decisions that are not that important and does not have a huge impact on your life.

this approach in life can be many, as briefly discussed in the next section.



The path of flow and synchronicity. Here

is an interesting observation I have made from counseling clients over the years. The more an individual acts upon intuitive guidance, the more *flow and chance like coincidences* also

seem to occur in their life. While psychology professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has

studied the sensation of flow in people who spent their time engaged in activities they really enjoyed doing, such as artists, athletes, musicians, chess masters, and surgeons;¹³³ Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung has written extensively about the idea that two or more events can be meaningfully related, referred to as *synchronicity*.¹³⁴

The state of flow, which is something that everyone experiences from time to time, is by Csikszentmihalyi defined as "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it."¹³⁵ This unselfconscious state can also be characterized by being in effortless control, feeling alert and strong, and at the same time performing at the peak of one's ability.

However, a common idea is that it is not possible to experience flow when it comes to performing some of the more mundane tasks of everyday life. Interestingly enough, Italian psychologists have discovered cultures that have evolved in such a way that the inhabitants' everyday working activities clearly resemble flow activities.¹³⁶ The most noticeable feature of such cultures is that the inhabitants rarely can separate work from spare time, and it can be argued that they either work 16 hours per day or that they never work.

Thus, imagine if one could spend more time in a state of flow, no matter if one is studying, working, or doing any other activity. A key aspect seems to be choosing in accordance with what intuitively feels right, what feels exciting, and gives energy, as well as doing the things that one is curious about, not because someone else thinks I should do something, but because I am really interested in the subject or the particular

activity. This is *not choosing out of selfishness, indolence or laziness*, but rather to do self-inquiry to discover what do I find purpose in and really enjoy doing at the same time.

One of the many difficulties is that it can take a lot of courage to follow one's inner guidance. To do something new when one is afraid of loosing something old can be very challenging. However, the more an individual has learned from one's experiences in life and as a consequence gradually improves one's ability to predict various life patterns, the easier it also seems to be to trust one's intuitive guidance.

People who choose in accordance with one's inner truth and experience the state of flow for a longer period of time, often report that they experience that events strangely coincide in startling ways. Jung refers to this as synchronicity and describes it as "the occurrence of meaningful coincidences which, in themselves, are chance happenings, but are so improbable that we must assume them to be based on some kind of principle, or on some property of the empirical world."¹³⁷

Jung explains that a synchronistic event consists of two factors: (1) An unconscious image, idea, or insight that has sprung into consciousness, and (2) An objective situation that corresponds to the subjective content. Although often no causal connection can be found between the two parts of a synchronistic event, they are still meaningfully related. Therefore, Jung believed that synchronistic events demonstrate the existence of a larger underlying pattern to how we experience our daily life, similarly to the earlier presented information about quantum processes enabling the reception of intuitive data.

One of the key aspects to experiencing flow and synchronicity seems to be to choose in accordance with one's inner truth and intuitive guidance. Therefore, one may

conclude that when following one's curiosity, excitement, and natural instinct to grow and learn new things, it is common to experience a natural flow in life, as if one is on the "right track" in life. I refer to this track as the *path of flow and synchronicity* (see Figure 4.).

Figure 4. The path of flow and synchronicity (the blue line) demonstrates that when using intuition it is common to experience a higher level of flow and synchronicity in one's life. The path of fears and desires (the black dotted line) relates to when our choices are influenced by fears of experiencing pain and/or desires of experiencing pleasure. The *learning experience* either reflects an *inner change* in how one experiences the world, and/or a direct external change of some sort.



Remember, the path of flow and synchronicity is an *ideal model* of the world, not a real model. Its purpose is to symbolically demonstrate that when choosing in accordance

with intuitive guidance and one's deeper inner truth it is common to experience a higher level of flow and synchronicity. This is in contrary to when an individual has been choosing out of alignment with one's inner truth for too long, which may lead to an experience of the external world as being harsh and difficult to master.

That one's experience is being influenced by fears and desires, which in figure four is symbolized by *the path of fears and desires*, is a natural part of living and something that

everyone recognizes. A

constructive way to deal with it is to become aware of when it happens and then try to learn from it. That means that when an individual has been struggling, suffering, and experiencing lack of flow for a while, it is often very helpful to learn from the past and make some sort of change in one's life. These changes can either be reflected by an *internal change* of how one experiences the world, or an

Exercise 5 – The Intuitive Compass

1. When you are about to make a choice, **list the different options you can choose from.** At least consider three different alternatives.

2. Close your eyes and think about one option at a time.

a. Imagine yourself **being in one of the future alternatives** as vividly as possible. Pay attention to how you are reacting on a physical, emotional and mental level.

b. Rate and write down your experienced level of excitement/curiosity/energy on a scale from 1 to 10, where 8-10 is very excited (ex. high level of flow), 4-6 is moderate (ex. can do it but not that much flow), and 2-3 not excited at all (ex. loosing energy).

c. Discern if your **"intuitive judgment" has been clouded.** *Fears of experiencing pain and negative emotions* may be influencing your rating negatively (ex. you may first feel excited but then you become scared), or *desires of experiencing pleasure and positive emotions* may make your rating too high (ex. wishful thinking/hoping for a change). Change your rating if necessary.

d. Repeat the above process with your remaining alternatives.

3. If possible choose the option with the highest rating.



external change of how to go about things in the world, such as changing a behavior, activity, or relation.

As a part of becoming "your own scientist," who tests and examines things in your life and discerns what is your truth and what is the truth of other's, you may ask yourself the following question for the next couple of months: *When I act upon my intuition and what feels meaningful to me, do I then more regularly experience flow and synchronicity in my life?* That means that when you are following your curiosity and excitement, no matter whether it relates to the small or the large decisions in life, do you then more often experience being on the right track in life?

Remember, that rather than coming up with the "right answer," the aim is foremost the process of asking the question and *searching* for an answer. In this process you will automatically direct your attention towards observing how you choose in life, and over time hopefully enhance your ability to intuitively perceive the outcome of your choices.

To assist you in finding your own answers to the above question, you can use *exercise five* as a way to discern when you are choosing out of curiosity, excitement and the natural urge for growing and learning new things, compared to when you are choosing out of old habits and how you *should* do things.

Then, when you have more practical experience of using your intuition consciously, you can determine whether you can use intuition as one of the new strategies for making efficient decisions, tackling information overload, and dealing with the rapid changes of our time, as futurist Toffler discussed back in the 1970s. Thus, as suggested in the beginning of this chapter, is it possible that by becoming more "intuitively intelligent," the individual of the 21st century will be able to choose wiser, save valuable time, experience more exciting things, develop faster, and get to know the deeper aspects of

oneself even more exquisitely. The future will tell! Until then, "Vincit qui se vincit!" (eng; He conquers who conquers himself).

Quiz questions related to Chapter VI:

- 1. Describe the concept of Intuitive Intelligence discussed in this chapter.
- 2. How is a hologram created and what specifically is it that enables one piece of an interference pattern to contain information about the whole?
- 3. What are the suggested functions of the zero-point field (ZPF) in relation to perceiving non-local and transtemporal information?
- 4. Describe what "a felt sense" means.
- 5. Have you ever experienced that your instincts have warned you of danger? Elaborate and discuss with a friend.
- 6. How does paying attention to instinct help one in making better decisions?
- 7. How does quieting the mind foster increased access to information from your instincts?
- 8. What are the major differences between instinct and intuition?
- 9. How can your intuition be used to determine what and when to eat, drink, and rest?
- 10. What does the concept of "flow" mean?
- 11. Discuss the concept of synchronicity.
- 12. What can you do when you are experiencing a lack of flow and synchronicity in your life?

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