



*TH Wellness Project's Vision:
to empower personal well-being, improve mental wellness and increase life joy.
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Are We Being Mindful in our Lives

“The opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty.” – Anne Lamott

“...intuition is really a sudden immersion of the soul into the universal current of life, where the histories of all people are connected, and we are able to know everything, because it’s written there.” – Paulo Coelho’s *The Alchemist*

Intuition

- A rapid-fire, unconscious associating process- like a mental puzzle. The brain makes an observation, scans its files, and matches the observation with existing memories, knowledge, and experiences. Once it puts together a series of matches, we get a ‘gut’ on what we’ve observed.
- Sometimes our intuition or our gut tells us what we need to know; other times it actually steers us toward fact-finding and reasoning. As it turns out, intuition may be the quiet voice within, but that voice is not limited to one message. Sometimes our intuition whispers, “Follow your instincts.” Other times it shouts, “You need to check this out; we don’t have enough information.”
- Intuition is not a single way of knowing- it’s our ability to hold space for uncertainty and our willingness to trust the many ways we’ve developed knowledge and insight, including instinct, experience, faith, and reason...

Certainty

- Silences our intuitive voice...
- Most of us are not very good at not knowing. We like sure things and guarantees so much that we don’t pay attention to the outcomes of our brain’s matching process. For example, rather than respecting a strong internal instinct, we become fearful and look for assurance from others. “What do you think?” “Should I do it?” “Do you think it’s a good idea, or do you think I’ll regret it?” “What would you do?”

What does your Gut Say?

- We shake our heads and say, “I’m not sure.” when the real answer is, “I have no idea what my gut says; we haven’t spoken in years.” When we start asking people questions like what do you think, what should I do, etc. it’s because we don’t trust our own knowing. It feels too shaky and too uncertain. We want assurances and folks with whom we can share the blame if things don’t pan out.

Learning to Trust our Intuition

- It can even tell us that we don’t have a good instinct on something and that we need more data...Another example of how our need for certainty sabotages our intuition is when we ignore our gut’s warning to slow down, gather more information, or reality check our expectations. “I’m just going to do it. I don’t care anymore.” “I’m tired of thinking about it. It’s too stressful.” “I’d rather just do it than wait another second.” “I can’t stand not knowing.”



Charging into Big Decisions

- It may be because we don't want to know the answers that will emerge from doing due diligence. We know that fact-finding might lead us away from what we think we want... Intuition isn't always about accessing the answers from within. Sometimes when we've tapped into our inner wisdom, it tells us that we don't know enough to make a decision without more investigation.

Mindfulness and Faith

- Faith is a place of mystery, where we find the COURAGE to believe in what we cannot see and the strength to let go of our fear of uncertainty.
- Faith and reason are not natural enemies. It's our human need for certainty and our need to "be right" that have pitted faith and reason against each other in an almost reckless way. We force ourselves to choose and defend one way of knowing the world at the expense of the other.
- It's our fear of the unknown and our fear of being wrong that create most of our conflict and anxiety. We need both faith and reason to make meaning in an uncertain world.
- 'My scientist friends have come up with things like 'principles of uncertainty' and dark holes. They're willing to live inside imagined hypotheses and theories. But many religious folks insist on answers that are always true. We love closure, resolution and clarity, while thinking that we are people of 'faith'! How strange that the very word 'faith' has come to mean the exact opposite.' Richard Rohr
- Faith is essential when we decide to live and love with our whole hearts in a world where most of us want assurances before we risk being vulnerable and getting hurt.
- To say, "I am going to engage wholeheartedly in my life" requires believing without seeing.

Time to Practice Letting Go

Letting go of certainty is a challenge. Physical responses to "not knowing" can include anxiety, fear and vulnerability combined. Stillness and quiet become essential.

- Identify some of your physical responses to 'not knowing.'
- o _____
- o _____
- What are things you do and/or think would be good to do to let go of certainty?
- o _____
- o _____

Wrap Up

The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen!



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