

Follow Your “Gut”

BY SAUNDRA PELLETIER

Primitive man followed his visceral senses. When the hair stood up on his arms, he knew danger was close by. Today, we ignore our instincts and intuition, and instead, seek advice from the Internet, gurus and media. The lost art of simply “following our gut” should be the fundamental basis of self-exploration. Once we know ourselves, we can rely on our instincts with unwavering confidence.

Instinct is about what feels good, tastes good, looks good, sounds good and smells good. Intuition is the silent dialogue that exists within each of us that provides a moral compass, letting us know right from wrong.

Haven’t we all found ourselves wishing we had followed our instinct and intuition after we made a bad decision? Didn’t we promise ourselves that the next time, we would follow our gut instinct?

We should treat instinct and intuition as muscles that will grow with usage. If you have lived your life always following society’s imposed rules and regulations, you may think that this advice is irresponsible. However, if you believe that taking calculated risks is the only way to build courage, you will embrace the suggestion that we are no different than primitive man. We have simply forgotten to rely on ourselves and make decisions that align with our self-integrity.

What is self-integrity? YourDictionary.com defines “integrity” as “steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code.” If this code aligns with your core values, that equates to self-integrity.

Too often, we develop values based on what was important to our parents. To live a truly fulfilled life, we must examine our own values and develop a mission statement that represents who we are and what we want from life. When we create a foundation of beliefs, we can be comfortable exercising our instinct and intuition because our goals will be aligned with what we want. You should never set your goals based on what other people deem important. Only *you* know what is best for you. Why should you care about keeping up with the Joneses? How can the Joneses determine what is important to you?

If you are wondering how to determine your core values, you should simply segment your life into 10-year periods of time. Reflect on what was most

important to you in each of those phases of life, and ask yourself why it mattered.

Self-exploration is taking the time to identify not only your likes and dislikes, but also your inherent abilities. What are you naturally good at? What comes easily to you? Who are the kinds of people you gravitate toward or away from?

You must take the time to analyze what makes you unique so you can rely on your instinct and intuition with confidence. You must also believe that life is meant to be lived effortlessly if we can know ourselves and then make decisions accordingly.

In your life, can choose to be a victim, a flatliner or a deliberate creator. Victims justify and rationalize why they tread water. Their excuses are compelling, and others are always to blame for their misfortunes. They use statements like “I have to,” “I have no choice,” and “Bad things always happen to me.” They have dug their grave, and now they must lie in it.

Flatliners settle for a life of vanilla. They decide that their life is better than most, better than their parents’ and siblings’ lives, better than the lives of the people in their immediate circles, so it is “good enough.” Their statements include “No one promised me a rose garden,” “Real life is not like the movies,” and “My family has a standard of living that I must maintain.”

Deliberate creators embrace possibility thinking, “Someone has to be first. Why shouldn’t it be me?” “If this way doesn’t work, let’s try a different way.” “I’m learning”, not “I’m no good at it.” Deliberate creators know

that prosperity is more than a thick wallet and that their thoughts do create their actions. Remember, nothing has meaning until we give it meaning. This is the fundamental difference that sets deliberate creators apart from victims and flatliners. Being impenetrable to negativity is a key factor in transitioning toward the life you want. Don’t allow negative people to drain your energy or limit your potential.

Instinct and intuition are commonly relied upon by deliberate creators. They are the God-given tools that make us unique and vibrant individuals. Only we can listen to our instincts and intuition and determine the appropriate

weight we will give them. Make the decision *today* to leave a powerful stamp of authorship on your own life.

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