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Breathe in Nourishment for the soul • The art of seeing • Nordic bathing • Everyday mindfulness
Breathe out Deep listening • Creative downtime • Embrace stillness • Find the power of pause

Deep listening

Tune into your intuition through the practices of stillness, space and silence to unlock your inner secrets.

Words HELEN JACOBS

Imagine if all the answers you need right now are at your fingertips. And what if all you had to do to receive these answers and guidance was to slow down enough to notice them. Would you do it?

Just underneath the surface of our mind's constant chatter is a vast depth of information and guidance just waiting to be plumbed. Yet, such answers aren't found "out there", but "in here". You find them in your heart, in your body's sensations and in your gut. The noise and distraction "out there" keeps you separate from what's "in here".

More and more, we hear the need to step away from our devices and the 24/7 "on" button. We are reminded to take our annual leave, to slow down, sleep more and take better care of ourselves. Often, the benefits of slowing down simply focus on the physical, but slowing down also reconnects us to our intuition and, when we're tapped in there, life opens up in the most unexpected ways.





When we tune into our body and our feelings, we can begin to tap into the deeper wisdom there.

What is our intuition?

Our intuition, or “inner-tutor”, is our internal wise counsel, a part of us that already knows the best course of action to take. Confusingly, it often arrives as an illogical feeling, hunch or sense to move in a particular direction that makes it so hard to follow.

Many years ago, in my 20s, my intuition told me to leave the security of my public relations job to become a psychic reader. You could imagine what a leap of faith it was to ignore my logic and follow that hunch. The thing is, it paid off, several times over, and in ways I could never have logically anticipated. Not only did my intuition lead me to my true life purpose, but it also led me to my husband and our children and indeed just about every other life decision since. That’s the beauty of intuition; it’s highly personalised.

Interpreting such personalised messaging requires a certain fluency in its language. Intuitive language is subtle, often communicating via feelings – both our emotions and the physical sensations in our body.

Consider how you know you’re in love. Maybe butterflies in your tummy, a warmth

in your chest or a lightness like you’re walking on air. We each feel love differently, but as we can’t see or touch it, we must rely on how it feels.

How about when something doesn’t feel right. Maybe the hairs on your neck stand up, you feel sick in the stomach or there’s a moment’s hesitation before you act – more intuitive data for us to mine.

Despite these huge clues underneath the mind’s constant chatter, we’re not actively paying attention to our feelings, nor giving them enough credit in our day-to-day lives. Instead, we go back to our minds and try to analyse our way out of everything. If we’re too busy rushing and racing, we may miss these signals. And even if we do notice them, we don’t always know what to do with them.

Jacqui Fifer, co-author of *The Portal*, a book on mindfulness and meditation, says, “A friend of mine once put it beautifully: ‘Intuition isn’t fearful ... intuition is courageous.’” We must overcome fear and logic and trust our inner senses by truly listening within. “I think we all feel the truth in that but with so much mental noise, the voice in our head giving us all the reasons ‘why not’, it can be a struggle to trust our

intuition, let alone act on it – it’s risky putting yourself out there,” Jacqui adds.

So, just how do we move out of our heads and into our hearts, into our bodies and the sensations of our intuition? By creating stillness, space and silence.

Stillness. Space. Silence.

In my book, *You Already Know*, I share the importance of slowing down and creating natural rhythms and signposts in our days, weeks, months and years, which help us shift our perspective from constant output to receiving input (such as intuition). Fostering morning routines that set your intentions, reflection via regular journaling or pulling oracle cards tune you into the wisdom of the moment.

Meditation is often touted as the go-to tool to help us become still enough to listen – and for good reason. Tom Cronin, co-author of *The Portal* and founder of meditation movement The Stillness Project, says, “Our minds are constantly changing with thought after thought moving through it. This constant noise leads to hyper-stimulation in the nervous system and body. When we meditate, we slow all of this down and create space and quiet, not just in the mind, but also in the body.”





Like meditation, small daily rituals allow our nervous system to reboot, bringing us back to centre where our intuitive feelings can rise to the surface.

When we tune into our body and our feelings, we can begin to tap into the deeper wisdom there. "This quietness allows us to hear the voice of our fine level of feeling, what is also known as intuition and creativity. It's always there, however we rarely are able to tune into it and hear it," Tom adds.

A formal practice of meditation can work wonders, but guided meditations specifically designed to connect you to your own inner guidance are perfect for beginners looking to turn inwards.

Other ways to dim the distractions and recentre your focus can include connecting with nature, having fun and creatively expressing yourself through art and movement. My personal favourites for creating connection within are journaling and pulling oracle cards, as well as creating rituals that are special and sacred for me. Sometimes these rituals might be a sacred spiritual ceremony, while other times, they're as simple as a long bath or quiet cup of tea.

Like meditation, these small daily rituals allow our nervous system to reboot, bringing us back to centre, where our intuitive feelings can rise to the surface.

Rhythm and ritual

Rather than finding more time in our routines, slowing down and tuning in can take place during naturally occurring transition points in our days. Switching from sleep to waking, the pause between school drop-off and arriving at work, the peace of a lunch break, the silence as the kids doze off each night... Consciously using these natural peaks and troughs syncs us with our internal voice once more.

It's not just our personal rhythms we're out of sync with, but also the natural world's seasons and cycles, too. Simple ways to tune back in are to eat more seasonally, as well as to honour that you're slower in winter and that there may be days where you're less productive than others. Tuning into your menstrual cycle or the lunar cycle can also reconnect you to centre. When we're in sync with our own rhythms (and nature's), we start to listen more when our body tells us to rest and recover as much as when our body says it's time to get moving.

Creativity in motion

Creatively expressing what's in our hearts and on our minds is an extension of our own intuition, which holds the secrets of our life's true path. "To reach our potential, we've got to get good at

creating a space for ourselves free from all of that (distraction)," Jacqui says. Tuning into the ideas, dreams and visions within us, and taking small steps to honour them, connects us with our inner voice.

"When we're not feeling so critical, we are more likely to trust our ideas, so possibility suddenly opens up in front of us," Jacqui adds. "Creativity soars, you get flow and all sorts of cool stuff happening, including personal progress. Intuition is definitely courageous, we've just got to learn to listen to it."

No matter the starting point, creating stillness, space and silence in any of these ways helps lay the foundations for us to deeper connect with ourselves and the myriad ways our inner wisdom is trying to reach us, if only we listen.

After a successful career in PR and marketing, Helen Jacobs left to pursue her own intuitive nudges and forged a flourishing practice as a psychic and mentor. Helen is the author of You Already Know and host of The Guided Collective Podcast.

