Listening to Your Inner Voice

Introduction

"Your inner voice." This has become a bit of a clichéd or hackneyed phrase. People tend to use it dismissively or without knowing what it really means. They do not understand that truly hearing and following the guidance of your inner voice can transform your life for the better, often dramatically.

In this book, I will explore the concept of the inner voice in detail. I will reveal what you can do to more effectively hear and be guided by the reliable and wise coach that exists within you. You will be given the knowledge and tools you need to understand your unique journey and take control of your life. In this process, you will be asked to complete a number of interactive and illuminating exercises. I recommend keeping a special notebook or journal in which to complete these exercises. I will refer to this as your "Listening to Your Inner Voice Journal."

Chapter One: What Is Your Inner Voice?

Your inner voice is the coach and guide you can always turn to for guidance that is right for you on *your* specific life journey. Your inner voice is your intuition and insight, and your inner wisdom. It has an intrinsic understanding of your life's journey and what is right and wrong for *you*.

Keep in mind that your inner voice or inner wisdom does not always take a voice-like form. It can show up in many different signs and signals connected to the emotions and body. The ethereal nature of the inner voice makes it difficult to define, and it takes dedication and discipline to know how to differentiate it from other influences, such as destructive fear, baseless anxiety, and a host of other negative and/or counterproductive emotions.

If you have never thought about your inner voice before, it is easiest to begin by equating it with *intuition*. The intuition of your inner voice, however, is much deeper and more complex than what many people mean when they talk about "intuition." The word "intuition" is often used to signify insights that may pop into someone's head even when the noise of the outside world and other people are interfering with the mind's processing.

The inner voice, however, is your intuition's "voice" when you have successfully blocked off the interference of the "guidance" (often destructive) offered to you by the outside world. In his article, "How to Hear Your Inner Voice" published on the LinkedIn "Pulse" page (https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140902180537-117825785-how-to-hear-your-inner-voice)[i], David Goleman points to insightful advice given by the late Apple founder and CEO Steve Jobs: "'Don't let the voices of others' opinions *drown out* your inner voice.'" The wisdom of this statement really cannot be emphasized enough.

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Chapter 5: The Importance of Self-Awareness

In his TED talk "The Importance of Self-Awareness" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LH12DmOwWRk)[ii], Valon Murtezaj argues that "self-awareness is the foundation of personal growth and success." This is a very wise statement. Without self-awareness, it is very difficult to hear and understand your true inner voice and fulfill the purpose of your life. Valon Murtezaj explains that through self-awareness, which includes knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, and what one wants and doesn't want, he was able to progress from living in the horrors of war to eventually securing a position as a professor at a prestigious French university. He achieved success by being an authentic human being, and a true leader.

You will remember that I touched on the concept of self-awareness in an earlier chapter. In this chapter, we will discuss the concept of self-awareness in greater detail, as well as the reasons why strong self-awareness is a necessary condition for being in close contact with your inner voice and wisdom.

As we learned earlier, self-awareness is closely linked to the concept of intrapersonal skills. If you have ever taken a rudimentary learning style or "multiple intelligences" test, you have probably come across the concepts of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. While interpersonal skills are the skills you need to successfully understand and interact with others, intrapersonal skills are the skills you need to be able to understand your own mind, heart, and motivations. Therefore, intrapersonal skills are absolutely essential to the development of strong self-awareness. Without strong self-awareness, it is impossible to be able to easily access and understand your inner voice and wisdom.

If you are like many people, you are probably uncertain about the current state of your intrapersonal skills (or intelligence). Let's take a simple quiz that will help to give a sense of the current strength of your intrapersonal intelligence.

Simple Intrapersonal Intelligence Quiz

1. When alone, do you enjoy your own company? Or do you always feel frantic to be around someone else?

a) I usually enjoy my own company.

b) I am usually frantic to gain the company of others as soon as possible!

2. How well do you understand your own motivations?

a) Most of the time, I understand my motivations quite well.

b) My motivations are often a mystery to me.

3. Do you enjoy debating subjects that require a lot of intense thought?

a) Yes, I love it! I am always well-prepared, as I am an intense thinker.