

# Got A Hunch?

Chances are, it's right. **SASHA GONZALES** tells you how to listen to your intuition and use it to help you make decisions, solve dilemmas, live your dreams and more.



**My intuition** has always been spot-on. Whether it was warning me about a particular situation, or reassuring me about a decision I made, I can't think of a time that little voice inside of me was ever wrong.

I never used to take my hunches seriously. Very often, I'd get negative vibes in certain places or when I was around certain people, but I'd write those feelings off as plain paranoia. It's only in recent years that I've started to pay attention to my intuition, after discovering I could use it as a kind of compass to guide me through life.

## THE SIXTH SENSE

Intuition can be described as inner wisdom; an inkling; a knowing. When you "have a feeling" about

something, it is usually your intuition communicating with you. When you go with your gut, run with a hunch or follow your heart, you are usually acting on an intuitive feeling.

Intuition does not use logic or reasoning, says Sydney-based psychic and intuitive mentor Cimone-Louise Fung. "It is our sixth sense," she explains. "The body is a truth monitor, and every day, it helps and guides us. Sometimes, when you don't feel good about something, you may get goose bumps or your hair may stand – your body is actually picking up on those negative vibes and telling you, look, this is not right."

We don't always listen to our inner voice as we are not sure if we

should trust what it is saying. So is there a way to tell if a hunch is indeed right? Cimone-Louise says you can usually feel it in your upper body. "You know your intuition is leading you in the right direction when following it leaves you content. Somehow, you can sense that you are right about something," she answers. "The feeling is that of a strong, firm knowingness in your heart and stomach area. There is no doubt."

It is always our ego – our logical side – that makes us stop and question our intuition. Elisabetta Franzoso, trainer, author, motivational speaker, and founder of coaching and counselling company Inside Out You, notes that within each of us, there is the voice of ego and the voice of the spiritual self (our "real, spiritual self", or essence, as she calls it).

The trick is to identify which voice to listen to. "Many people go with the voice of ego instead of paying attention to their inner voice," she says. "They still need to work on this area and 'wake up'. At times, we mistake our thoughts and emotions for intuition and that can set us off on the wrong path."

## I'VE GOT A FEELING

I realised I could no longer ignore my inner voice when I started using it to guide me in making big decisions. More often than not, those decisions ended up being the right ones.

Seven years ago, faced with the decision of whether to relocate for a new job, I went with what my gut was feeling. It told me to make the move – I did – and the decision to relocate boosted my career in ways I could not have imagined. It also opened up a whole new set of professional and personal opportunities for me.

I also started using my intuition as a kind of screening device when meeting new people. It's helped me distinguish between the ones who were out to take advantage of me, and those I could genuinely call friends. It was the same with dates – if I felt uneasy at the start of the evening, it usually meant I was in for a horrible time, and that the guy was a dud – even if he seemed good on paper.

When looking for a new place to

live, I went with the apartment I felt "most right" in, although my voice of logic told me otherwise (it was the farthest from work and it cost way too much). The other apartments I saw gave me the creeps or didn't feel welcoming or safe. In the end, it proved to be the perfect choice.

Over the years, my instincts have also saved me from potential harm. I have avoided minor traffic accidents, food poisoning and more, simply by listening to that little voice inside of me.

By trusting what I was feeling, I could more or less predict how something would pan out, so increasingly, I started to rely on my intuition to help me, especially when I was feeling "stuck" or conflicted about a certain decision or situation.

## AWAKEN YOUR INTUITION

Cimone-Louise believes that intuition is a natural gift – something we are all born with. But it is up to us to strengthen and nurture it, in order to keep it finely tuned. "Think of it as a spiritual muscle," she says. "You must learn not to fear it, but instead, utilise it. Learn how to make it work for you."

The way to nurture your sixth sense is simple – just listen to what it is saying to you. Be still and quiet, and ask: "What is my next step to take, to heal or to grow?"

Then wait for the answer in the form of a feeling. You know your intuition is working when that feeling you have seems "right" to you. Once you get into the habit of trusting what you feel, you can slowly start using it to your advantage.

Unlike thoughts, your sixth sense is not something you question or analyse. "Intuition is consistent, it just flows," says Cimone-Louise. "On the other hand, ego, of which your sense of logic is a part of, is always questioning and changing its mind. Following your heart is about listening to your inner wisdom and letting it guide you, even if logic overrides it."

Adds Elisabetta: "Yoga, meditation, walking in nature, reading, or just sitting in silence are excellent ways to remove distraction, so you can connect with your inner voice – your true voice." **SH**

## "Listening To My Hunch Paid Off"

THREE WOMEN SHARE HOW THEIR INNER VOICE GUIDED THEM THROUGH TOUGH DECISIONS.



"Many years ago, as head of the marketing department in a cosmetics firm, I started looking for a new team member. One day, a business associate introduced me to a new hire of hers. Instantly, I knew this girl was perfect for the job. Right there and then, I asked my business associate if I could offer her employee the position and she agreed.

Turns out I made the right decision. She brought a lot to the company and in just one year, she was promoted to a managerial position.

Looking back, I can't pinpoint what made me decide she was the one for my team. I just felt I had to hire her. Later, she also said she felt a positive connection to me when we first met." – **Reena Rodrigo, 44, regional marketing director**



"I was alone when a man in his 40s approached me. He seemed decent and articulate. When he found out I was in between jobs, he suggested putting me in touch with his business contacts. His phone didn't work, so he asked to borrow mine to call his contacts.

Soon, an elderly woman showed up. She seemed to have difficulty walking and breathing, and asked me to take her to the clinic in a cab. When I was about to flag a taxi, the man who had my phone said he had to go to his car. As I helped the woman into the taxi, I noticed the man had not returned. Suddenly, I had this feeling that I might be the victim of a cheating scam. I told the taxi driver to wait while I ran to the man to demand my phone back. He sheepishly handed it back and drove off. When I turned around, the woman in the cab was gone. Losing my phone was one thing, but I wonder if anything would have happened if I'd got into the cab with the elderly lady. Thankfully, my instincts saved me." – **Beverley Wong, 34, communications manager**



"I'd spent weeks looking for an apartment with little success. Then I was ushered into a lovely flat in the East Coast area, and right away, I knew it was the perfect place for me. Even before negotiating with the agent, I knew I had found my ideal apartment. Ten years later, I am still living there – in fact, I also have plans to purchase it from the owner.

Some years later, I recognised that feeling of 'rightness' once again when I was buying property overseas. I really believe we are all steered in some way by our inner wisdom. We need only listen to it." – **Mai Tatoy, 40, media relations director**