



Personal Spirituality

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Written by John Van Auken

Antonio Damasio, head of neurology at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, gave subjects four decks of cards — two rigged to lose, and two to win. He wired the subjects to skin conductance response sensors (SCRs) to record changes in their body's reaction to the situation. The findings were amazing.

With only 10 cards turned over, their bodies were revealing clear signs of grasping the pattern in the decks! Yet they could not verbalize their "hunch" until 50 cards had been turned over. It then took another 30 more cards before they could explain why their hunch was right. Obviously, their "gut reaction" knew what was happening long before their cognitive minds.

Interestingly, Damasio also found that emotions played a role in intuitive knowing. When he used subjects who had damage to the portion of the brain where emotions are processed, they never expressed hunches. Damasio concluded that emotions get the whole process started, presenting the mind with a need or problem.

Interestingly, many now-famous businessmen claim that their initial idea came from an intuitive moment of knowing. Fred Smith, founder of FedEx, intuitively knew his idea would work, even though his college professor gave him a "C" on the paper he wrote about an overnight delivery service that would guarantee next-day delivery. Howard Schultz, founder of Starbucks, was relaxing at a cafe in Milan when he suddenly "knew" that Americans would pay \$3 for coffee-and-conversation. The

INTUITION



Businessmen and Generals Swear by It! What Have They Learned That Can Help Us?

moment of realization was so powerful that he recalls how his body was literally shaking with excitement! Former Penguin Putnam president, Phyllis Grann, selected authors not by formal analysis or rules, but by gut-feel for what she "knew" was good. In the end, she launched the careers of Tom Clancy, Robin Cook, Patricia Cornwell, and Amy Tan.

Marine Corps Lieutenant General Paul Van Riper believed the best way to make decisions was to frame a problem, collect data, formulate alternatives, and then evaluate the options. Almost every organization that trains decision-makers has followed the same approach. But General Van Riper learned that these methods don't work in actual combat.

Inspired by cognitive psychologist Gary Klein's work with firefighters, who have to make life and death decisions quickly, General Van Riper brought his Marines to the New York Mercantile Exchange in 1995, because the jostling,

confusing pits reminded him of war rooms during combat. To no one's surprise, the Marines did not fare as well as the traders. But when the General brought the traders to the Marine's base to play war games, he and many others were amazed when the traders trounced the Marines at war! When the Marines analyzed the humbling results, they concluded that the traders were better "gut thinkers." Thoroughly practiced at quickly evaluating risks, they were far more willing to act decisively on the kind of imperfect and contradictory information that is all you get in war.

Today the Corp's official doctrine reads, "The intuitive approach is more appropriate for the vast majority of ... decisions made in the fluid, rapidly changing conditions of war when time and uncertainty are critical factors, and creativity is a desirable trait."

Dave Snowden, director of IBM's new Cynefin Centre for Organisational Complexity in Wales, identifies—

4 Types of Decision-Situations

1. The Situation is Covered by Rules – Since existing laws, standard operating procedures, or practices that are proven to work are available and clear, one simply identifies the proper rule and applies it. Reason is all that is required in these situations.

2. The Situation is Complicated – Here reason is still the primary tool, but one needs judgment and expertise. These are situations that face engineers, doctors, lawyers, and other experts. "Artificial intelligence copes

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well here: Deep Blue plays chess as if it were a complicated problem, looking at every possible sequence of moves.”

3. The Situation is Complex – In these situations too much is unknowable. One cannot get all the information needed to solve the problem. Snowden states that “Complexity is coherent only in retrospect.” Such as the 9/11 attack – there were foreshadowing events and indicators, but it would have taken pure luck to see the pattern beforehand – or an intuitive knowing. Complex situations are the realm of intuition. Snowden says the strategy is to allow patterns to surface and trust your gut to recognize them.

The game *Go* was created by humans and is mastered by them, yet artificial intelligence can't seem to understand the game because it is not a game of analysis, but one of contemplation. Humans have an uncanny ability to see “a pattern or behavior emerge, then reinforce it (if one likes it) or disrupt it (if not).”

In these situations, the intuitive knowing comes from seeing the situation as a whole, seeing it “all at once,” says Sue Strafford, philosophy department head at Simmons College. The solution is not calculated; it is perceived by a feeling, all-at-once.

4. The Situation is Chaotic – In these situations the most basic intuitive reaction is called for: *instinct*. There is no time to analyze. One must act. Snowden says “You must impose order.” Do something, right or wrong; do something. In the doing will come the understanding. Too often a bad situation gets out of hand because of delays in wanting to find the “right” or “proper” answer. In fact, there may be several actions that will bring order to the chaos. And since order is the first priority, any of these reactions is key to surviving a situation that is out of control.

Examples of these are the General's

battlefield situations but also normal people's lives, such as an imminent car crash or an argument or date that suddenly turns ugly. There is always a tendency to believe that if only we get enough data, if only we examine all the alternatives, we'll find the right answer. In these situations one needs to go with the instinctive feeling fast! In most of these cases, our body has already instinctively reacted (as in the rigged

“You have to express your willingness to listen to what the ‘felt sense’ has to say, without an agenda of your own.”

decks of cards). Overriding this with mental analysis or attempting to rationalize or apply rules is not going to discover a better way.

Cayce on Intuition

According to Cayce's readings, “intuitive influences come more from the soul than merely from the mental activities of an entity.” He says that “intuition can be developed by keeping the body, the mind, the soul, in attunement with the spheres of celestial forces rather than earthly forces.” A “closer communion with the spirituality of things, peoples, conditions, circumstances will gradually make for the development of intuitive influences.” He warns us that “as the intuition unfolds let less and less of self enter in but more and more of divine love” and to “measure these abilities against that the entity would hold as its ideal.” He gives us an idea of an ideal that will lead nowhere and how to choose a higher ideal: “If the soul's abilities are being expended for the gratifying of a material desire, they come to naught. If they are expressed and manifested in such ways and manners as to be to the glory of the Father, to the understanding of thy brethren that they may know the love the Father bears for the children of men, then indeed shall they grow and bring a hundred fold – what? ‘My peace I leave with you - not as the world gives peace, but my peace I give unto you’ – you that use, that apply that power of God in yourself through thy intuition, yes through thy soul force, that thy visions, thy dreams, yes thy powers make thee walk closer to God!”

According to Cayce, intuition can be developed, but when asked if it can be “trained,” he replied, “Train intuition?

How would you train electricity? Not train, but govern! Govern it by knowing in the mind, the body, that these are not sidetracked from the ideals and purposes that are set before self. For God, the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, guards, and guides, and keeps those that in sincerity seek to know His way, irrespective of the influences that may be about the body.”

How could the bodies of the participants in Damasio's rigged card decks experiment know how the decks were arranged after only turning over ten cards? Because, according to Cayce, our soul is in this body with us, through the deeper autonomic nervous system. It sees

through the same eyes as we do. Its feelings or knowings affect the body in subtle but knowable ways. If we can only learn to feel our body's often subtle reactions to people, events, challenges, and opportunities, then we will have an intuitive edge in decision making. But since we cannot carry SCRs with us, we must practice feeling our body's subtle changes. Cayce once recommended that we write out our intellectual decision or choice, and then sit quietly and allow a reaction to come from within us. If this reaction is uncomfortable, then we ought to rethink our decision. When Howard Schultz conceived his vision for Starbucks, he didn't just intellectually know it was good, his body reacted with excitement. The soul is in the body through the deeper nervous system. We need to learn to feel its reactions to outer situations more quickly, even if we can't verbalize the feeling.

In one case in the Cayce files, a person who had developed her intuition began to intuit things about the people around her. Cayce warned her, “That there are weaknesses and inclinations in the experience with some of thy associates, thy relations, thy companions, is evidenced. Judge not too harshly. Judge with fairness, that open-mindedness as ye would want to be judged by others.” One of the problems with intuitive development is knowing so much about others and then realizing how much can be known about oneself. We all like to think that our innermost thoughts are secret, but one cannot keep a secret from the all-knowing mind of God. When Cayce was giving a reading for someone, there was

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nothing he couldn't know about that person. In fact, it was very difficult for him to tell the difference between whether a person had just thought about doing something or had actually done it. Thoughts were as real as actions, and as knowable! Thoughts make an impression on the Collective Mind within which all life exists. The more we develop our oneness with the All-Knowing, then the more we will have to develop patience, understanding, mercy, and forgiveness for one another.

In talking about intuition and what he calls "intuitive influences," Cayce explained that "the Atlanteans were a *thought* people, those of an intuitive influence." They developed their intuition. It allowed them to "see the end of an incident without knowing just how, where, or being able to give any definite details." He said that intuitive knowing comes "as from out of nowhere," and that one may not be able to give all the details, but the knowing comes as a "feeling" of what's happened or going to happen.

In one reading he encouraged us to develop our intuition by becoming more aware of our activities in sleep, explaining that woman, symbolizing natural intuition, was gotten out of sleep – he refers to the Garden of Eden, where God cast a "deep sleep" over "adam" (meaning *the being*) and drew woman out of the sleeping being. Sleep is when the outer consciousness is suspended, allowing the deeper consciousness to come closer to the surface. These activities are "an essence of that which is intuitive in the active forces [in the outer life]." He explains that "intuition [symbolized by the woman] is an attribute" that came to consciousness "through the suppression of those outer forces [the man, symbolizing outer activity] from which it [the woman, and therefore intuition] sprang." Then he adds this example: "All are aware that the essence of Life itself as the air that is breathed, carries those elements that are not aware consciously [we don't see the air we breathe], yet the body subsists, lives upon such. In sleep all things become possible...." This is so because our outer self and its limitations are set aside during sleep, allowing for the forces that are beyond rational thought to come alive. As we become more aware of our activities during sleep, we

integrate the inner intuitive with the outer activities, and the knowings come more readily.

In addition to sleep and dreaming, Cayce recommended meditation as a good aid to developing our intuitive abilities. Meditation is like sleep, except that we do not wait for Nature to subdue our outer consciousness, we do it

"The Atlanteans were thought people – those of an intuitive influence."

ourselves, using various techniques that lead to a quiet outer self and an awakened inner self.

Cayce explained that "going against intuition by listening to the advice of others without really analyzing the motivative influences" brings "confusion." He told one seeker, "Had the body



not allowed what others said to influence the body to keep intuition out of the life, much greater would have been the development of this body." Intuition is an indicator of soul development. He explained that it is a natural ability of the soul, and as the soul grows, so our intuition grows.

Psychologists have identified—
4 Ways to Increase Your Intuition

1. Practice – Howard Gardner, a Harvard professor and psychologist, believes that "gut instinct is basically a form of pattern recognition." The more you practice, the more patterns you intuitively recognize without analysis. The trick is not letting yourself be talked out of them. This also comes with practice.

2. Learn to Listen – Flavia Cymbalista, an economist who specializes in uncertainties in financial markets, has developed a decision-making approach

adapted from a psychological technique known as "focusing." She calls it Market-Focusing, and she uses it to teach business people to find the "felt sense" that tells them they know something they can't articulate. "You have to express your willingness to listen to what the felt sense has to say, without an agenda of your own," she says.

3. Tell Stories – We can free up our imaginations if we fictionalize a problem or pretend that it is happening to someone else. Dave Snowden has been working with anti-terrorism experts and finds that they think more creatively if he poses problems set in a different time – the Civil War, for example.

Another kind of storytelling is what cognitive psychologist Gary Klein calls a "pre-mortem": imagine that your project or situation has failed and gather your team to assess what went wrong.

4. Enhance Gut Thinking – Since gut feelings are hard to express, don't let people jump on a dissenter who hesitantly says, "I'm not sure..." Instead, say "Tell us more." In families or groups go around twice to give people a chance to put hunches into words.

The New Age is said to be an age of the mind more than the body. Can we become once again a "thought people of intuitive influences," as the Atlanteans? The business people and Generals seem to think so and are investing a lot of their time and money in learning how. Shouldn't we spiritual seekers be investing too? After all, we don't want the moneymakers and warriors to be the only influences in this world with a developed intuition. §

To develop your intuition, consider taking a homestudy course from **The Edgar Cayce Institute for Intuitive Studies**. Visit their web site at: www.eciis.org or call and get materials mailed to you: 757-457-9034.

Acknowledgment: Ideas and material for this article were inspired by Thomas A. Stewart's article, "How to Think with Your Gut," in *Business 2.0*.

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News & Info

GOD AT WORK

"Why would we want to look for God in our work?" asks Gregory Pearce, a publishing executive and the author of a new book called *Spirituality@Work*. "The simple answer is most of us spend so much time working, it would be a shame if we couldn't find God there. A more complex answer is that there is a creative energy in work that is somehow tied to God's creative energy. If we can understand that connection, perhaps we can use it to transform the workplace into something remarkable."

These executives are in the vanguard of a diverse, mostly unorganized mass of believers who want to bridge the traditional divide between spirituality and work.

A conference at the business school of Santa Clara University, a Jesuit institution in Silicon Valley, begins with the chime of a Tibetan bowl, a reading from the Sufi mystic Rumi, and a few moments of silent meditation. Executives, academics, and theologians then discuss such topics as how to find one's true calling.

At a lecture series called *Faith@Work* organized by the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City, the Reverend Dr. Thomas Tewell urges business people to become "points of distribution" for God's love in the marketplace. "Are you willing to be a channel in the divine economy?" he asks.

At a church retreat near San Antonio, parishioners listen to the message of "everyday Christianity" delivered by David Miller, a former IBM executive and investment banker who now leads a faith-in-the-workplace group called the Avodah Institute. Avodah is a Hebrew word that means both "work" and "worship."

The spiritual revival in the workplace reflects a broader religious reawakening in America, which remains one of the world's most observant nations. (Depending on how the question is asked, as many as 95% of Americans say they believe in God; in much of Western Europe, the figure is closer to 50%.) The Princeton Religious Research Index, which has tracked the strength of organized religion in America since World War II, reports a sharp increase in religious beliefs and practices since the mid-1990s. When the Gallup Poll asked Americans in 1999 if they felt a need to experience spiritual growth, 78% said yes, up from 20% in 1994; nearly half said they'd had occasion to talk about their faith in the workplace in the past 24 hours. Sales of Bibles and prayer books, inspirational volumes, and books about philosophy and Eastern religions are growing faster than any other category, with the market expanding from \$1.69 billion to about \$2.24 billion in the past five years, according to the Book Industry Study Group. Literally hundreds of those titles address spirituality at work, from Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, and nondenominational perspectives. §

—From Marc Gunther's article in *Fortune*.

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Questions & Answers

In the Magic of Listening in the October issue you quote Cayce about praying for a dear one who has passed on because God is God of the living. I take it to imply that God is no longer the God of my dear wife who passed on one year ago. Could you explain it to me please? —G.S.

The answer is simply that there are no dead, despite our common belief. There is no death and the "dead" are actually alive. Therefore, God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

This phrase is found in the Gospels and in Exodus 3:6. In each rendering in the Gospels, Jesus is trying to convey to his listeners that the dead are not dead but alive, and that God is the God of the living. The situation is this: some people had been trying to trick Jesus with a question about the resurrection of the dead, asking who in heaven would be the husband of a woman who had had two husbands on Earth. Jesus answered that there is no marrying in heaven, and then he turns his attention to the question about resurrection after death. At that time there was a belief that the dead were actually dead, even to the point of being located in their graves - completely unconscious - until the final trumpet sounded, and only then did the dead awake. Jesus counters this by saying, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." (Matthew 22:31-32) This scene and the comment are also recorded in Mark 12:27. But in Luke 20:38 Jesus adds a little closing comment to the phrase: "Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live in him."

The Cayce reading is simply picking up on this idea, saying that our "dead" relatives are not dead but are alive and are affected by our prayers for them. These mediums you see on TV are not connecting with a dead being on the other side but a live one, who is communicating in real time. Your dear wife is as alive as she was when she was in this world, and your prayers for her are as important now as they were when she was here.

I hope this explains the misunderstanding about Cayce's quote and my use of it.

The question that came to me while reading your article on the Universal Christ (Nov-Dec. '02) is — Okay, Christ is incarnate through all these people, but is there a Jesus soul? Is Jesus a specific soul? —S.D.

Here's the reading you're referring to: "Christ is not a man. Jesus was the man; Christ the messenger — Christ in all ages. Jesus in one, Joshua in another, Melchizedek in another...."

A soul is a complex being. Its many incarnations and other-world sojourns create a multifaceted entity that is capable of being a companion to the Creator of the universe. There are also levels of consciousness to a soul (conscious, subconscious, superconscious, and oneness). During a single incarnation, much of the depth and complexity of a soul is beneath the veil of conscious-

ness. We are a new personality in a new body. That is why our outer self has no past-life memories. But if that personality opens the veil, then the soul is present. Jesus was a personality of a complex soul. To add to the complexity, a soul may also become one with *The Soul* within which all souls exist. Then, an incarnate personality would not only know its own soul but be in a state of oneness with the Infinite. Jesus indicated his realization of this when he said, "Before Abraham was, I am."

Furthermore, Jesus was only the *masculine* half of the whole soul. According to Cayce's readings, a complete soul has both the masculine and feminine, and as bizarre as it may sound, these two can incarnate at the same time. Cayce teaches that Mary, Jesus' mother, was the feminine half of that complete soul. If you read the Gospels carefully, you'll notice that Mary also received "the Holy Spirit" and "the power of the Most High," was tested, and ultimately ascended into heaven, not dying.

The Essenes knew the classic yin-yang concept, and they had read Genesis carefully enough to know that the feminine was prophesied to precede the masculine incarnation of the Messiah. Like Jesus, Mary was also immaculately conceived by her mother Anne, who spent her pregnancy in the Essene temple on Mount Carmel.

Christ is a universal Spirit of God with whom Jesus and Mary made themselves one and manifested this Spirit in their actions, thoughts, and words. These two halves of the same soul have traveled through many incarnations (Cayce named a few of them). They have both lived the human experience and know it firsthand. There is no challenge we face that they did not face. Therefore, they are examples to us of how to live with our divine nature in harmony with our human nature.

However, we are entering a time when the yin-yang of a whole soul will no longer incarnate separately. Cayce indicates that in the future (and some of this is happening now), souls will not separate their genders but will incarnate with both united in one body. In fact, Cayce's readings told him that when he reincarnates in the year 2158, his feminine and masculine will be united in one body. It will also be a time when Western humanity is finally opening to the concept of reincarnation.

In his recent incarnation as Edgar Cayce, his feminine half was separated into the entity we knew as Gladys Davis Turner, his longtime secretary and the stenographer and indexer of the readings.

One last point. Cayce explains that we will ultimately know ourselves to be our soul-selves and yet one with the Creator and, as one Cayce reading put it, "one with the people of the universe." Not simply the people of this world, but of the entire universe! There's so much more to us than we often realize. That's what makes this personal spiritual journey so exciting. §

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