

News for Life after 55

Inviting Heightened Levels of Intuition into Your Retirement

Hello. This newsletter highlights Frances Vaughan's book called "Awakening Intuition" and shows how her findings are applicable for those of us in retirement. It also includes findings from Reb Zalman's book "From Age-ing to Sage-ing."

Tuning into our intuition

At Blackwater Pond

At Blackwater Pond the tossed waters have settled after a night of rain. I dip my cupped hands. I drink a long time. It tastes like stone, leaves, fire. It falls cold into my body, waking the bones. I hear them deep inside me, whispering "oh what is that beautiful thing that just happened?"

May Oliver

Do we want a retirement full of learning and promise that includes time for self-development and spiritual growth? Or, do we want a retirement focused on our waning physical and mental powers and social uselessness as our mainstream culture portrays us?

Awakening and developing our intuitive levels of knowing is a powerful movement in our desired direction and according to Vaughan and Reb Zalman is the way to develop our *full human potential*.

When you think of intuition, what images come to mind? How has intuition played out in your life? Take a moment now and visualize an image that symbolizes intuition for you.

What did you see?

One Vaughan student saw a chalice, another saw a crystal ball, I saw a rose.

Intuition is from the Latin word *in-tuire*, which can be translated as looking, regarding, or knowing from within. As a way of knowing, it is experiential and wholistic. According to Reb Zalman, intuition is a nonlinear way of knowing that leaps ahead of our slower moving rational mind to show us the big picture often through direct inner knowing.

This term [intuition] does not denote something contrary to reason, but something outside the province of reason.

C. G. Jung



In our retirement, developing our intuition allows us to do such things as explore new avenues of thought, receive creative inspiration, solve our personal problems in new, unexpected ways, and makes us more permeable to the sacred in everyday life.

Four levels of intuitive awakening

Vaughan has found that intuition awakens within us on four levels of awareness including physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual intuition awakenings. Let's look at these now.

Physical—Focuses on intuitive awareness through physical sensation. A strong body response may be experienced in a new situation where there is no reason to think that anything unusual is going on. For example, when a new neighbor (who later proved to be hostile) first said hello to my dog, the hair stood up on the back of my neck and Zoe growled at her.

Emotional—Focuses on intuitive awareness through feelings and is commonly called *woman's intuition*. For example, a woman met a man six years prior to her marriage and knew he was the man she would marry although he was rather ordinary. Emotional intuition is often associated with an increase in meaningful coincidences (what C. G. Jung calls *synchronicity*) and psychic experiences.

Mental—Focuses on intuitive awareness through mental activities such as problem solving, mathematics, and scientific inquiry. Often intuitive flashes or *aha* moments follow exhaustive use of logic and reason. For example, how many times have you worked hard on a problem to no avail and had the solution suddenly occur to you while you were relaxing in the shower, driving your car, or taking a walk?

Spiritual—Transcends our physical, emotional, and mental intuitive awareness and provides *direct transpersonal experience of the oneness of life*. In yoga, spiritual intuition

is called *soul guidance*. Sri Aurobindo calls it the memory of truth. Many of us have these *peak experiences*. What was one of yours?

Here is one of mine:

I walk my dog, Zoe, three to four times a day (morning, afternoon, evening, and night). In the afternoon, we leave the sidewalk and take a path through the redwoods and oak trees leading into a grove of tall eucalyptus trees. Dried grasses line either side of the path that leads us forward. I look up at the towering trees above. As we enter the grove, the light softens and a hush falls over the place. The floor covered in eucalyptus leaves crunches under my feet and a faint smell of eucalyptus fills the air. The tensions leave my body as we walk quietly among the trees. There is a timeless sense of mystery or presence in this place. We walk to the edge where the path narrows and drops into steep switchbacks to the lagoon below. We see several cormorants sitting on a large branch stretched over the water and we can hear wings flapping on the water as several of them bath. Looking up I can barely see a fledgling cormorant flapping its wings in a nest high up in the trees. Zoe and I linger for awhile then turn around and head out.

Yoga masters share how this level of spiritual awareness, my peak experience can be sustained and become a constant.

How to strengthen our intuition

Developing our intuitive levels of awareness used to be a rare phenomenon reserved only for a few gifted artists, scientists, philosophers, and mystics. But now once secret teachings—Eastern mysticism, Contemplative Christianity, Kabbalah, Buddhism, and many other of the world's wisdom teachings—are available to all of us. Here are some practices for developing our intuition:

Cultivating a more inner-focused life

According to C. G. Jung, *the task of the first half of life is to establish one's roots in the outer life—marriage, family, career*. We have completed this first stage of life when we have an increasing sense of boredom and wonder to ourselves, *Is this all there is?* Questions about meaning and purpose begin to re-emerge: *Who am I really and how can I be more of who I was meant to be? What can I contribute?* We often take a journey to rediscover deeper dimensions of ourselves.



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Events & Services

The *Crafting Your Life After 55* Workshop — Come explore creative ways to recognize and align with your life purpose after retirement. One participant said: *Outstanding! Amazing! Inspiring!* Capitola Recreation
Saturday, Sept. 7th and 14th, 10 am to 12:30 pm, 4400 Jade St., Capitola CA
\$73 Resident/\$93 Non-resident. Call (831) 475-5935 to register.

The *Crafting Your Life After 55* Workbook Release 3.1 Is Available

With Release 3.1, the workbook now contains all the information covered in the workshop with even more exercises. It also provides guidance on cultivating flow in your life and taking healthy risks. One participant said: *This was one of the best things I've done for myself since retiring. So valuable.*

\$19.95 plus \$6.74 tax and shipping. (Unbound budget version \$8.95 plus \$5.95 t/s)
Pay using PayPal or send a check to Robin Everest,
1555 Merrill St., Santa Cruz CA 95062. Please include your shipping address.

Robin Everest has taught *Finding Your Life's Work* workshops in the bay area and *is leading Artist's Way and women's 62+ hiking groups in Capitola this fall*. She retired in 2018, from teaching professional writing at Santa Clara University.

We begin to explore new directions and rediscover renewed dreams and heart's desires and reclaim lost aspects of ourselves. In this second stage of life, we are developing our capacity to listen more deeply to ourselves and as we do we grow in self-awareness and cultivate a more inner-focused life.

Managing our inner critic

We all have an *inner critic* who is threatened by new ideas and growth and always has negative and critical things to say. Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way* calls it our *inner censor* and warns that this inner critic will say anything to stop us such as *What a stupid idea. What a waste of time. You will never succeed.*

Marilyn Schlitz Ph.D. and Cassandra Vieten Ph.D. former members of the management team at the Institute of Noetic Sciences discuss the vital importance of being able to *bring our inner critic into more conscious awareness so we can choose to ignore these crippling internal messages or reframe them into more positive and compassionate guidance.*

Letting ourselves dare to dream

Our attitude also has a direct impact on the unfolding of our intuitive awareness. C. G. Jung has found that *nature will answer in all her fullness* the more we have faith and optimism rather than skepticism and resistance. Artist David Edwards has found that *the inner world of imagination will unfold its wonders to you to the level that you greet what you find with Openness and Curiosity. Beware—if you judge, criticize, or discourage, you'll nip it in the bud.*

These messages are echoed by Vaughan who finds that cultivating a receptive, nonjudgmental attitude allows intuition to come into our conscious awareness without interference.

Quieting our mind

Quieting our mind is also an essential practice for developing our intuition according to Vaughan who recommends meditation and physical relaxation. I find that *retirement itself* lends to the quieting of the mind for many of us.

Schlitz and Vieten in their article called *Conscious Aging and Worldview*

Transformation discuss tools that help us quiet the mind as we age including meditation as well as contemplative prayer, journal writing, walks in nature, gardening, book clubs, golf, and subtle energy practices, all of which allow us to be with our awareness is life affirming ways.

Vaughan notes that we cannot make intuition happen, but these practices help us receive and acknowledge it when it occurs. Developing our intuitive abilities enables us to receive artistic inspiration, perceive patterns and possibilities, make science discoveries, invent things, have mystical experiences, explore extrasensory perceptions, and cherish and heal the earth.

What's happening in our brain

According to Reb Zalman, most of us are only using 10% of our brain's capacity and developing our intuition awakens our immense untapped brain-mind potential.

Vaughan and Reb Zalman both note that our schools tend to focus mainly on developing our rational and intellectual abilities. So it is not surprising that many of us in retirement are drawn to developing our intuitive ways of knowing, especially when we are dealing with the larger questions of life that need spiritual responses.

More about spiritual intuition

Vaughan predicts that as humanity evolves it will transcend the present mental level and become more and more intuitive.

As we do, a mystical path emerges in the second and third and final stage of life where we become fully inner-directed. We cultivate more quiet and being than doing in our lives and manifest a deepening sense of self.

We discover that intuition is a powerful purifying awareness that sees into the nature of all things. As we find what we seek, we gain more certainty and live into the Buddhist teaching that intuition not reason is the ultimate truth and wisdom.