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Trust your gut and listen to your intuition for easy decision making

We're often told to listen to our gut instinct, but how do you follow your intuition with confidence and clarity? Read on to discover how to gain trust within your body to let your gut feelings be your life guide. Decision making has never been so easy

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By Jo Upcraft, Content director, editor and journalist



Are you hungry ...or is your gut trying to tell you something else?

By Jo Upcraft

Build self-awareness and resilience by going with your gut feeling

We all have our own way of handling dilemmas life. When it comes to problem solving and decision making, perhaps you ask everyone you know (and some you don't) for their opinion. Maybe you put a poll on Instagram. Some people,

however, simply look inwards for a conclusion, in particular to their gut. Also known as intuition, it's our immediate understanding of something with no need to think it over. And it's entirely possible to trust your gut and listen to your intuition for answers.

Wait up! We know that letting your stomach dictate decision making doesn't appear logical. But medical neuroscience has proven that our gut acts as our "second brain". When we're told to "trust your gut" it's because along with our mind, it's sending us millions of little warnings and signals every day.

"Our gut feeling is our intuition which is our inner compass, innate wisdom and internal GPS," explains Christina Michele Rios, a ceremonialist and intuitive healing facilitator. "It works like a muscle. The more we train it, the more we tone it, the more frequently we rely on it, the stronger it gets. We learn to hear it and we begin to trust it. In turn, we become more self-reliant."

Self-reliance and empowerment

Indeed, the benefits of going with your gut instinct are tenfold. Along with self-reliance, it can fuel self-empowerment and build up a strong connection to subtle energy. Crucially, it can stop you seeking answers externally from others, after all, you are the owner of your life and the navigator of your own journey (not Angela, your manicurist). As Christina points out; "Cultivating the ability to trust your gut and listen to your intuition ensures that we always have our own back."

But what if the only signals coming from your belly are that it wants cake, had too many cocktails last night, or that you might be getting ill? "Rekindling your relationship with your gut is a process of peeling back layers of conditioning and starting to remember what intuition is," Cristina says. "As little kids we listened to our guts, but as we grew older many of us forgot how. We got used to trusting *our brains* instead of *our bodies*."

Like every relationship, building one with yourself takes time and patience. Christina recommends starting by shifting your awareness from the external world — which keeps us distracted — to the internal world. "Begin with small everyday mindfulness practices to get you more in touch with your feelings, such as eating intuitively. Pay attention to every mouthful; how the food tastes, the texture, and how it makes you feel within your body."

Move on to mindful activities that can make you feel more grounded such as spending time in nature, being alone, and breathwork. Notice the vibrations or weight of energy within yourself. Is it heavy and full of anxiety? Or is it light, subtle and positive? "When faced with these sensations, take a deep breath, put your awareness in the centre of your body just below your navel and ask: 'Does this feeling light me up?' " suggests Christina. "Feelings are messengers. They inform us that something is misaligned, and an anxious feeling in the pit of your stomach can be a key indicator that something is out of alignment with your intuition. It's your body physically flagging that something deeper is off."

Mindfulness for decision making

Apply the same mindful practice to your decision making. It's important to note that any dense, heavy emotions you experience can cloud your gut feeling. Self-doubt, insecurity, shame, guilt, lack of confidence, resentment, fear and anger are all examples of lower vibrational feelings that drown out the subtle higher vibration that takes place when you listen to your intuition.

"When this happens, try to work through these heavier emotions by listening and accepting what they have to tell you," says Christina. "Explore the context of these emotions. Are other people telling you what you should do but your gut is rebelling?"

Once you've come to a conclusion, it can help to tell your gut out loud what you choose. Declare it verbally and see if your gut tightens or relaxes. Says Christina, "Ultimately, we know ourselves, our path and our soul's mission better than anyone. Our intuition is there for us no matter what. All we need to do is trust our gut, and let it guide us back home to self."

This feature was originally written by Jo Upcraft and published on The Soothe, a digital wellness platform for holistic wellness in Singapore and beyond. Christina Michele Rios is an intuitive healer and ceremonialist. Follow her on Instagram

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