



**Intuition**  
**A Sense Of Knowing**

**INTUITION: THE SENSE OF KNOWING**  
**(BEING ABLE TO SAY, "I TOLD YOU SO!")**

**GOAL:**

Accept intuitive knowing as a legitimate technique of leadership.

**KEYWORDS FOR APPLICATION**

1. Intuition
2. Gift of Knowing
3. Group Power
4. Female vs. Male Intuition
5. Intuitive Motivators
6. Nurse Administrator (DON)
7. Nurse Leader (RN)

"I knew it would happen that way," was the claim. Yes, he/she DID know it would happen that way, through intuition! Intuition is a GIFT, and the use of its power provides an edge on KNOWING.

The first known use of the word was in about the 15<sup>th</sup> century. By a dictionary definition, it means a quick and ready insight, knowledge, or conviction without rational thought and inference. Nursing (by itself) most often occurs as deliberate decisions that, over time, will lead to a goal; whereas, intuition is most often a quick, fleeting feeling of knowing. It is a quick "mind mapping process" of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation, so automatically done, it appears to come forth in the blink of an eye. The mind is quick to assimilate the essential information and provide rapid access to crucial data. It is a means of bypassing formal knowledge. It is more than a "hunch," but involves a quick short brain-circuiting process. It is often the informal knowledge that identifies hidden problems and diverts disaster.

Maturity in nursing is an outcome of continuing education and life experience resulting in expertise. The nurse overlooks the possibility and intuition skill gained by problem-solving and their manifestations. As time goes by, the nurse begins to make an intellectual synthesis between specific issues, behavior, and physical events. Intellectual synthesis is a natural happening.

The experienced nurse has what is called tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is implicit, and unstated knowledge enhanced over time. The nurse registers these connections in the subconscious over time. Intellect, maturity, and life experiences enhance psyche abilities. Intuition reveals itself in the unexpected knowing of, at least, "something is wrong"—and, as a nurse leader with experience, you know the problem probably is THIS----- . How many times has a nurse walked into a room and intuitively known that something is wrong---or even, what is wrong!?

*Intuitive Knowing is about you--*

1. Using active subconscious thinking.
2. Knowing past and present events with expedient recall.
3. Seeing the problem/situation as a whole without recognizing the data or cues immediately.
4. Using emotions and feelings rather than intellectual logic to determine a decision.
5. Weighing several rational options and selecting the option with the highest and most likely weight or probability.

### **INTUITION IS PERSONAL POWER—A SENSE OF KNOWING!**

Knowing is POWERFUL. How does it come? Such power comes from a “feeling,” the “revelation,” and sometimes the mysterious “little voice from within.” Is it just learned? It is more likely to be a natural ability and learned skill combined and often considered a “gift.” Knowing is integrated into ourselves from outside stimuli. Knowing is integrated into ourselves without warning or personal awareness. Some will say there is a tangible sequence of events that gives us signals. The collection of unidentifiable signs could tell us probable outcomes. The collection of these events is unrecognized by the self. Events are stored in the brain to determine our intuitive responses. The sharpening of this mysterious ability occurs as we age and have meaningful life events.

Nelson Mandela, in his Inaugural Speech of 1994, made reference that our deepest fear is NOT that we might be inadequate in our knowing, but that we are *powerful beyond measure* in our knowing.

### **ENHANCING YOUR ABILITY**

Increasing your ability to use intuitive skills can be recognizing your expertise. Listen to the information presented every day. Enhancement of intuitive skills enables a nurse to read almost any situation and respond correctly. *Recognize cues* that others don't recognize and, then, verbalize your knowing ability.

Now is the time to challenge your awareness of intuitive thought. It is an unleashing of your mind power! The time to begin is at the beginning of a nursing career, and then it is enhanced by time, knowledge, and experience.

### **GROUP POWER**

A single nurse's intuition might provide *fewer* successful results than a team effort in the sharing of intuitive thoughts. Unconscious thoughts gain accuracy and power when multiplied. Collective intuition is known to give a better chance of successful endeavors. Group discussion by employees can be a starting point as they listen to the cues identified by others.

## **INTUITION MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN LEADERSHIP**

Experienced nurses seem to have the ability to tap into what their senses tell them. A nurse that assesses a situation has many times turned to another person and requested further information than was offered. He/she knows that there was something left out of the equation that would determine the problem. And so it goes, on and on, with the examples of our knowing! The unexplainable and mysterious knowing causes nurses to act with uncanny awareness. To accept this gift can empower a nurse to open the door to more realms of universally shared knowledge. Imagine the potential creative advances in problem-solving if we pay more attention to covert signs. Adding intuitive knowing is the mysterious skill that divides any novice nurse from an experienced nurse.

To be a nurse requires that there be increased intuitive thoughts regarding personal employee behavior and an employee's behavior toward others. Listening to and watching the acts of others through intuitive thinking helps the nurse's intuitive ability to know what to do or the direction to go during problem-solving and decision-making. It will inform the nurse of an employee's skills and personal gifts. It provides information to consider and conform to legal nursing compliance. After all—it is not wise to cause a legal problem as a consequence of not using intuitive thought!

*Supportive Information that Provides the Basis and Enhances the Ability of Intuitive Thought---*

1. *Philosophy, goals, and expected outcomes* of the facility/organization determining an employee's possible deviating behaviors. (and)
2. *Existing situations* and how they do or do not meet anticipated results (and)
3. *Usual/normal functioning* of each employee or groups of employees under certain circumstances

**NOW IS THE TIME:** Assess how much practice you need to improve your intuitive skills as a nurse! Knowing who you are and your ability to respond and assess others is the intangible you—even your biases, past experiences, and talents. All of these aspects of YOU determine how you “read” others—or shall we say, intuitively know others. How you “read” others will influence your ability and accuracy to use your predictive intuition. Practice *now* to improve your intuitive sense of knowing. Practice to the point that you recognize your thoughts, “I told you so!” (or) “I always knew that!” (or) “I am not surprised—I saw that coming!” Talk about power--WOW!!

## **FEMALE VS. MALE INTUITION**

Research tells us that men and women are “wired” differently, but no difference in intelligence. Females have slightly fewer brain cells, but a higher number of connections between brain cells. Females also have a larger corpus callosum and a more extensive limbic system. Some believe that those factors increase the bonding and caring abilities of females in every culture.

Now—what is your intuition telling you as to which is the most intuitive gender? Regardless of your choice or suspicion of one gender over the other, you are wrong! There are just “motivators” for both genders that *encourage* intuitive thought.

Many studies have hypothesized that women are more accurate in their intuitive thought than men. The so-called “woman's intuition” has been determined to be unfounded. Most studies under

controlled circumstances that compared the genders showed no significant difference—just the existence of the above stated “motivators.”

*Female: The Intuitive Empathic Motivator--i.e., Identification with the Thoughts and Feelings of Another Person---*

During some testing, the natural motivator for females that ultimately showed more intuitive empathic ability in tested females over-tested males was:

1. Tell women that intuition should be, and is expected to be, excelled by females over males.
2. Ask women to rate their intuitive, empathic ability.

In combination, these two motivators increased female intuitive, empathic abilities.

Other studies confirmed the evidence that females respond on an emotional level and rely heavily on intuition. Some believe that females are more open to psychic awakening and are more attuned to be “mind-readers.” Is this why there are known to be more intuitive female healers than males in our western culture?

In the reading of the philosophers, there is some belief that females (by nature) are closer to nature (God) and the spiritual world through their emotional sensitivity. Others believe that women are more interactive, thus, increasing the subconscious collection of information that increases intuition.

*Male: The Intuitive Empathic Motivator --i.e., Identification with the Thoughts and Feelings of Another Person--*

During some testing, the natural motivator for males to pay attention to the accuracy of their empathic-related intuitive response was a monetary reward. *Money mattered!* So, the key was just to pay them to do it! The everyday motivation as “mind-readers” was not a motivating factor as in females.

Other studies have found that males are usually more aggressive and use more logic to direct problem-solving. Males have been shown on testing to be more intellectually knowing. Even though there is a possible “intellectual knowing” in males, there is known to be some social pressure for males not to show evidence or focus on their impressions or even to make them publically known.

## **GENDER INTUITIVE OUTCOME**

Intuition, then, is probably not a supernatural happening or specific to one gender or the other—just different. There is, however, a motivator to enhance the personal use of the intuitive, empathic ability for each gender. Across both genders, there is a known mix of observations, deductions, and subconscious cross-referencing of the information acquired through the senses. This varied collection of data lends itself to a predictive forecast regardless of gender.

This information is to be used only to enlighten our knowledge about the two genders—not to discriminate between genders. Nurses (regardless of gender) could be motivated to increase intuition by using the researched motivators, as indicated above. Such information about motivating factors might give the nursing leader an edge on the effective placement of nursing employees.

## TEACHING INTUITION TO STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

Thoughtful encouragement of employees to use their intuition is essential to accurate problem-solving. Teach and encourage student nurses and nursing employees that the subconscious information provided by a logical and quick response is possibly the intuitive response needed to produce significant problem-solving.

Teach nursing students and nursing employees that intuition is extremely valuable when:

1. Problems are ill-defined
2. Quick and expedient decisions are needed
3. Procedures, rules, or regulations are lacking to govern a response
4. Facts and information are conflicting or confusing

## LAST THOUGHTS

**\*“THE INTUITIVE MIND” IS A SACRED GIFT AND THE RATIONAL MIND IS A FAITHFUL SERVANT. WE HAVE CREATED A SOCIETY THAT HONORS THE SERVANT AND HAS FORGOTTEN THE GIFT!” (ALBERT EINSTEIN)**

**\*SHH—NOW YOU KNOW THE SECRETIVE INTUITIVE POWERS THAT WILL HELP MAKE YOU SUCCESSFUL.**

## CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. When was the last time (or first time) you have known something, and no one told you?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. If you do nursing employment interviews, why, intuitively, did you hire or not hire a particular nurse?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What messages of covert behavior do you intuitively see in another person that tells you “something is not right?”

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are your unspoken/secret observations of others that you have used to build your intuitive knowledge?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Can you recall a personal observation that, in retrospect, identified your ability to be intuitive?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What are your plans to pay more attention to your intuitive powers?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONS

1. The accepted definition of "intuition" is:

- A. A slow response to understanding
- B. A quick feeling of knowing
- C. An intermittent energetic jerk
- D. A lingering sense of remorse

2. Intuition will tell the experienced person that:

- A. The feeling will go away
- B. Everything is okay
- C. He/she is reliving a dream
- D. Something is wrong or right

3. To get the most power out of the use of intuition, an administrative person most likely would:

- A. Call a group meeting
- B. Go on a vacation
- C. Pay a female to be intuitive
- D. Look at notes from the following day

4. A man's intuitive, empathic motivator is an outcome of research to be:

- A. A woman
- B. A car
- C. Money
- D. Success

5. A nurse uses intuition in a helpful way when:

- A. Setting up rules, regulations, and policies
- B. Solving a perplexing and confusing problem
- C. Doing objective evaluations
- D. Chastising an employee for being late

## **ANSWERS**

1. B
2. D
3. A
4. C
5. B

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking (Paperback) by Malcolm Gladwell (2005) (Classic)

Intuition: Knowing Beyond Logic (Paperback) by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Leela Itzler (2001) (Classic)

What is Intuition, and How Do We Use It? (Psychology Today) (2011)

The Science of Intuition: How to Measure “Hunches” [www.lifescience.com](http://www.lifescience.com) (2016)

The Power of Female Intuition (Web MD)

The Difference Between Female and Male Intuition-- Kristina.com.au/the-difference-between-female-and-male (2018)

**AUTHOR: Carolyn R. Taylor, Ed.D. M.N. R.N.**