

Exercise 8 – Listening To Our Inner Voice

This exercise is simple to do. You will need to time and some peace and quiet. You need to have a pencil and a few sheets of paper. An exercise book is a good idea. It can become your Inner Voice Journal. Find a room in your house that has no external stimulus. Sit at a table or on the sofa or couch with your Inner Voice Journal in front of you with your pencil. Ideally have a desk lamp on the table and turn the room lights off or dimmed if you think it will help you. Make sure you are well rested, well fed and free from the effects of alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs and even paracetamol) for at least 24 hours prior to the session.

Try to ensure that there are no interruptions, so turn your mobile phone off, put the house phone on answerphone or just take it off the hook, shut the curtains, turn off the desk light and sit there.

Don't try and think about anything particularly.

Just sit there, concentrating on listening to your inner voice. Listen actively some of the time and then listen passively. You may find yourself drifting, feeling self-conscious, going into a trance or nothing may happen for a while.

Do not be tempted to put on relaxing music or whale song! The silence is important here.

As you sit there with no external stimulus to keep your consciousness occupied, thoughts and images that are in your sub-conscious may start to assert themselves.

Different people react in different ways to this exercise. When you first start sitting there, all sorts of thoughts and images will come into the forefront of your thoughts. These may be quite random and jumbled.

This is a sort of 'white noise.' Imagine a snow globe that has been shaken vigorously. When it is no longer being shaken, the snowflakes start to settle. This is what's happening here. Your thoughts are swirling around and around whilst they settle. You might consider trying the breathing exercise detailed later in this chapter when you do this, so finish the chapter before starting the exercise.

The speed of this settling varies enormously depending on many factors, but, given enough time and space, it will happen. You might need to have a few sessions on just 'being' before the white noise settles and stops. It will stop, in time, and your inner voice will speak to you.

This is where your Inner Voice Journal comes into play. As you concentrate on listening to your inner voice, you'll find that some thoughts, ideas or concepts may come to the forefront. If you feel that they are significant, take the pencil and write them into your journal. If you do not feel they are important, disregard them.

There may be negative thoughts, let them come, we will need to identify them for removal later anyway.

Once you've written in your journal, let your inner voice be heard again.

This can throw up some interesting and illuminating thoughts for you to digest.

However, it may be that your inner voice doesn't speak to you at first. This is also fine. Your mind is using this 'down time' to process and digest information. It might seem boring at first, however, the very 'boring' nature of the exercise allows your mind to work.

It's very different to the rest and processing that our minds undertake as we sleep because our conscious mind is unaware of what's going on.

In this exercise, you're fully aware of what's happening and the opportunity for a deeper understanding of yourself will come. Ideas will present themselves and solutions to problems will become apparent. When either of these things happen, you must write them down into your journal.

If you are worried about too much time elapsing, have an alarm clock that will notify you after two hours. Some people have struggled with setting aside two hours for this exercise, however, this procedure works best if you allow yourself up to two hours of listening to your inner voice. You may not need two hours, however, if you don't prepare a two hour slot, you may not feel relaxed enough to get the most out of the session.

You may come to some major realisations during the time, and if you reach any major breakthroughs (or 'end points'), it is acceptable to end the session, after, of course, updating your journal.

This exercise can be used to solve problems or just as a general session for listening to your inner voice.

Please note that this can be quite challenging, and even if nothing noticeable happens after two hours, internally, quite a lot of processing will have taken place at a deeper level.

Have a go now, if you're able to. Finding two hours where you can be alone and quiet every week can be difficult. The reward, though, is well worth the effort.

Do this regularly, once a week, once a fortnight. It's like yogic meditation and if that is preferable to you, you will get a benefit from that as well. If you feel too comfortable, your mind will switch off completely and you will fall asleep. This is not the objective of the exercise. The objective is for your mind to process whilst you are aware and awake.