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## Visionary Skills: Tapping Inner Wisdom – Part 2

Phil Nuernberger, Ph.D.

### Intuition: The Discerning Mind

The power of discrimination is subtle, and involves the core of how the mind forms knowledge. While discrimination is the basis for rational analysis, it is not an analytic process but one of discernment. Discrimination is not limited by the sensory functions of time/space and pain/pleasure. As a result, discrimination, and the knowledge it forms, is not limited by conditioning, or habits. It is also free of the powerful influence of our emotions. Because of this, its voice is subtle and quiet, easily buried beneath the noisier, more demanding distractions of our habits and emotional reactions.

*The quality of our concentration is far more important than the amount of information we gather.*

When we use the power of discrimination with the sensory function, we think things out, analyze and make conscious decisions. The more skillfully we use our discrimination, the greater our capacity for rational thought, and the more clearly we think about things.

Through discrimination, we discern the subtle critical elements of cause/effect relationships as they now exist, as well as their outcomes. We experience this as intuition, the ability to "see into the future." This is not fortune-telling, nor is it intelligent guessing, but a clear recognition of cause/effect relationships.

### Concentration: Key to Knowledge

There are many techniques to develop intuition, and all depend on the ability to concentrate. When we pay attention to something, it is as though we've

inserted a disc into a computer to copy a program on it. If we add extraneous data during copying, such as a computer virus, it interferes with our programs. When distracted, we add extraneous data to our inner programs. The more distracted we are, the more difficult it is to form accurate knowledge. The more concentrated, the more perfect the knowledge.

Simply collecting information does not lead to intuitive insight. We must be concentrated to generate relevant information. The quality of our concentration is far more important than the amount of information we gather.

Studies of executive decision making clearly show that successful executives make decisions based on far less information than executives who aren't successful. Likewise, studies of scientific insight show that reverie and daydreaming are more important than the amount of information. Information is useful, but more important is our ability to discriminate and comprehend intrinsic connections and cause/effect relationships.

### The Elements of Intuition

To use intuition skillfully, we must observe the subtle thoughts and images in our mind. This is called reflective attention. Letting the mind focus in a calm, untroubled manner on the problem and then clearing the mind completely, allows the unconscious processes to form knowledge. Learning to listen, to focus without strain, takes skill. The more relaxed, the less troubled the mind, the greater the

ability to concentrate, the more sensitive you are to intuitive wisdom.

Along with reflective attention, the following are crucial elements that develop and enhance intuition:

- **Self-Awareness:** Perceptual sensitivity and skill; the ability to be sensitive to the more subtle skills of the mind and body. We gain an enhanced awareness of our inner strength and knowledge.
- **Fearlessness:** a calm and tranquil mind, free of fears and anxieties; non-judgmental attitude, skilled in the practice of non-attachment. Genuine self-confidence.
- **Concentration:** Committed, fully involved and concentrated on the task; inner concentration leads to direct awareness of intuitive knowledge; external concentration leads to task absorption.
- **Playfulness:** Willing to experiment, learn from mistakes; creative, open to new ideas, new ways of doing things.
- **Incubation Periods:** Stillness is necessary for inner awareness and developing intuitive knowledge. A busy and/or a stressed mind is seldom intuitive.
- **Flexibility:** Physical, mental and emotional flexibility leads to enhanced intuitive knowledge and personal effectiveness.
- **Openness, Receptivity, Courage and Love:** Respecting oneself and others; compassion; a willingness to listen and learn from others; a sense of humility.

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# The SIS-TIM<sup>®</sup> Method

## Strategic Intelligence Skills – Tools in Motion

### Brief Relaxation Exercises



Relaxation is one of the two foundation skills for effective self-management. Diaphragmatic breathing is the other. Relaxation means having no excess tension. As we go through the day, solving problems, meeting deadlines, dealing with difficult people, we often unknowingly become more and more tense. We seldom have an opportunity to lie down and practice a deep relaxation exercise, or even the time to take a walk in a park at lunch. But if we are skilled with deep relaxation, we can use any number of quick and effective techniques to bring us back to balance and eliminate tension. The following brief exercises are simple relaxation techniques that can be done very quickly. The more skilled you are at deep relaxation, the more effective these brief techniques are.

#### Smoothing the Forehead

This is a simple relaxation exercise, and yet one of the most effective. Close your eyes and visualize your forehead becoming as smooth as a piece of glass. In the mirror of your mind, imagine all the lines, wrinkles and bumps gradually smoothing away until you can imagine or feel

your forehead as smooth as silk. Then allow that smoothness to flow down into the rest of your face into your neck and shoulder muscles, and all the way down to your toes. After becoming skilled with this technique, practice with your eyes open until you can completely relax at a moment's notice, regardless of the activity around you. After some practice, this can become a simple, quick and effective relaxation technique.

#### The Pebble and the Pool

Imagine yourself as a small, flat pebble being tossed into the center of a quiet pool. As you strike the surface of the water, the water supports your weight and gently allows you to sink slowly to the bottom of the pool.

Imagine yourself wafting gently from side to side, gently floating down to the bottom of the pool. As you reach the bottom, a soft bed of sand allows you to slowly sink into complete support. It is very still, cool and calm, as you rest gently at the bottom of the pool. With a little practice, this ancient zen technique becomes a useful tool for immediate relaxation.

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### Mind Food...From the Spirit

Two friends were walking through the desert. During some point of the journey,  
they had an argument; and one friend slapped the other one in the face.

The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything wrote in the sand:  
*Today my best friend slapped me in the face.*

They kept on walking until they found an oasis, where they decided to take a bath.  
The one who had been slapped got stuck in the mire  
and started drowning, but the friend saved her.

After she recovered from the near drowning, she wrote on a stone:  
*Today my best friend saved my life!*

The friend who had slapped and saved her best friend asked her, 'After I hurt you,  
you wrote in the sand and now, you write on a stone, why?'

The friend replied, "When someone hurts us, we should write it down in the sand  
where winds of forgiveness can erase it away.  
But when someone does something good for us,  
we must engrave it in stone where no wind can ever erase it."

Learn to write your hurts in the sand and to carve your benefits in stone.  
They say it takes a minute to find a special person ,  
an hour to appreciate them,  
a day to love them,  
but then an entire life to forget them.