

How to Tell Your Gut from Your Gremlin

By Connie de Veer

In his fun and informative book, *Taming Your Inner Gremlin*, Rick Carson calls the part of ourselves that operates out of fear, our gremlin. Most of us have more than one gremlin, by the way. When faced with a dilemma or a decision, how can we tell if our inner guidance is reliable or not? Are we taking action out of fear (gremlin), or does our guidance induce a sense of calm certainty, even optimism (intuition)?

First and foremost, our gremlins want to keep us safe. If nothing changes and we don't rock the boat, then we should be safe, they reason. But at what cost? Is it really possible to maintain the status quo, forever and ever? What about growth, expansion, new opportunities?

Information from our intuition, or our "gut," comes from a deep part of our true selves, informed by our higher wisdom. It may even come from mysterious, unknown forces. The perspective of intuition is broader; it enables us to see the relationship our choices have on the greater whole.

Use the table below to explore who, or what informs your choices --- gut, or gremlin.

Gut (intuition)	Gremlin
Allows us to "see" more deeply, to see the nuances, gray areas.	Wants to keep us safe, therefore sees only "black" or "white."
Often shows up in subtle, yet profound and grounded ways – a gentle nudge or idea, a soft whisper, a mental picture.	Wants to narrow the focus, out of fear and a belief in lack, scarcity. "The world is not safe; and you aren't enough to deal with it," is its message.
Comes from the soul/heart. A deep well of knowing.	Its beliefs are perhaps outdated, no longer relevant, holdovers from an old parental message perhaps.
To access it, it's best to be relaxed and unattached. When we try too hard, it escapes our grasp.	Uses fearful or extreme language – should, must, can't, there's not enough, I'm not enough, ought to, have to, they won't, always, never, right, wrong, good, bad, It's just a fact; yes, but.
May be accessed by any activity that quiets the conscious mind - meditation, art, play, dance, particularly, repetitive movements, like running.	There might be a gremlin lurking when we feel: foggy, low energy, bored, feel paralyzed, frustrated, worried, when we're obsessing, whining, telling a long story starring us as "the wronged one;" or when we express victim energy, anger, fear, or try to justify or defend ourselves and our actions.

Quiet the gremlin; access your intuition.

If you find yourself in the grip of a gremlin, remember that it's important to love your whole self, gremlins and all. The gremlins have noble intentions, just lousy tactics and limited vision. You don't want to be in an adversarial relationship with a part of yourself.

So, the first thing to do when you notice gremlin chatter, is to soothe it, thank it for its concern and love for you, suss out the wisdom in its message (yes, often there's legitimate guidance), and send it out for a cappuccino.

Then use the following steps to access your intuition:

- Go someplace where you can be alone and quiet.
- Breathe, for at least 3 minutes.
- Imagine that distracting or worrisome thoughts are floating by, like leaves on a stream.
- Imagine your energy rooting down to your feet or the base of your spine, into the earth.
- Keep breathing.
- Ask a question, related to the topic that has center stage in your mind right now. Sit, breathe, and listen for inner wisdom. Remember that intuitive "hits" sometimes show up after we've asked questions, sometimes by hours, even days. Trust that your intuition is working on bringing you some guidance when the time is right.

Choose one or some of these questions to ponder:

Where does my strength come from?

What is available to me in this situation?

What do I want to focus on in this situation?

How do I choose to be with this situation?

What is also true?

What is the deep learning available to me?

What is the best action to take, for all concerned?
