

Trust Your Intuition in Your Career and Life

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

When I was around 11 years old, a couple of friends of mine, Charlie and Dave, had found a use for an amazing garden of sculptured bushes that was behind Charlie's house. I had never understood or appreciated how exciting a garden could really be.

Charlie's dad was a very successful salesman of something or other, and he and his family lived in a giant corner house on a street called Sunningdale, in Grosse Pointe Woods, a nice suburb of Detroit. Charlie was about the richest kid in our elementary school class, and he was also a really nice guy. Charlie's backyard had a giant garden of all sorts of topiaries and so forth. It must have been an acre in size; it alone was larger than the lots on which most of the houses around us were situated.

In contrast, Dave was one of the poorer kids in our class, and he was always getting in trouble. He had always been an incredible athlete and a very fast runner. However, when I saw him several years later, he was no longer playing sports. When I asked him about it, a classmate standing next to him spoke up and said, "Are you kidding, he's on the weed team!"

David had moved to Detroit from Chicago. He had had all kinds of problems growing up, and his mother had been married several times. He had been in a juvenile detention center at one point and it seems he was headed for more trouble.

I sat between David and Charlie in my fifth-grade class. One day they started an inside joke in class.

"*Grade A!*" David would say.

"Yep. Nothing but *Grade A,*" Charlie would say back.

This went on all morning in class, and I had absolutely no idea what these guys were talking about, but I was curious. It was very strange to me that they kept going back and forth like this. At recess and lunch I pushed them to tell me what *Grade A* meant, but they refused. For the next couple of days they kept saying *Grade A*, and they told me that they could not tell me what it meant because if they did, they would get in trouble.

Finally, one day Charlie decided to let me in on the secret. "Come over to my house at 7:30 tonight and meet me in back, in the bush garden, and I will tell you what 'Grade A' means. You are going to need to bring three dollars though."

Charlie's enormous house was a decent bike ride from my neighborhood. Something inside of me told me that I should not go over to Charlie's, but I decided to go anyway. I am not sure what it was, but I was a little scared, and my intuition told me that something bad was going to happen. What frightened me was not just meeting in some bush garden outside in the evening, or the words *Grade A* and the fact that they signified trouble, but the fact that Dave was involved. I knew if he was involved it was likely to not be good.

It was cold that evening and I arrived at the massive topiary collection at the appointed time. It is hard to know exactly how many ten-foot-high bushes there were, all carved and organized in the backyard--but it was quite a site. I stood next to a particularly menacing bush for some time, and then Charlie came out, wearing earmuffs and fancy wool gloves. Charlie was a country club kid, who wore things like earmuffs when the other kids wore dime-store hats.

"David should be here in a few minutes," Charlie said. "He left for the grocery store 15 minutes ago and called me before he left. Did you bring your three dollars?"

"Of course. I have the three dollars right here."

"Okay. Give it to Dave when he gets here."

A few minutes later Dave pulled up on his crappy bike. He was holding on to the handlebars with only one hand. He had a giant brown paper grocery bag, which he was supporting with his other hand.

"Excellent!" Charlie exclaimed as Dave pulled up.

"Nothing but *Grade A!*" Dave responded.

Dave put down the bag on a curb and then, for reasons I did not understand, he went and hid his bike across the street in a neighbor's yard. Charlie grabbed the bag and proceeded to unload several cartons of eggs. He handed me three cartons. Stamped on the packaging in giant letters, of course, were the words "Grade A."

I quickly realized that we are about to start throwing eggs at passing cars, and it looked like it was going to be a lot of fun. I actually got pretty excited about the prospect of doing this. Given the massive amount of bushes, I realized that it would be next to impossible for anyone to catch us after throwing the eggs, because we could disappear into the bushes so quickly and easily.

Since they had been doing this for some time, Charlie and Dave had a ritual of sorts. Dave would watch for the cars and then hit them in the side, while Charlie would aim for the windshield. The cars would typically stop after getting hit. Then the owner would get out and look around, and then drive off. A few people tried to chase us, but the topiary collection was so extensive that we were able to hide behind one of 100-plus giant bushes, and when people ran in there they would give up looking for us after a few minutes.

After 30 minutes of this foolishness, it was dark outside, and we were down to our last few eggs. We saw a car coming down the street extremely fast, with its lights off, and it seemed peculiar, to say the least. The car must have been moving at least 60 miles an hour, and we were on a 25-mile-per-hour street. The vehicle was moving so fast that we certainly did not think we would be able to hit it--but we were all in position. The car approached rapidly, then, all of sudden, screeched to a halt directly in front of us. The door of the car opened and we ran into the bushes. Whatever was going on did not seem good.

We all went in separate directions, and as I took my hiding space I saw a man climbing along the ground with a flashlight, moving very rapidly. I realized that, because he was crawling, he could see our feet and where we were hiding as he got closer and closer to us. It was one of the most terrifying episodes of my life. As we did a military crawl through the bushes, the man spotted us one by one, yelling "Freeze" every time he saw us.

He was a police officer.

Within minutes he had put us in the back of a police car, and one by one, he proceeded to drop us off at our homes and give our parents serious lectures about how we had frightened people by throwing eggs at their cars.

"The eggs are frozen on their paint, and some of the people may need to have their cars repainted!" he told us.

I actually felt pretty sorry for Dave when we got to his house. He did not seem at all upset about being caught by the police because he had apparently been through it so many times before.

"Just chill out," he told us. "This cop will just take us home and that's it."

Dave's mom and current stepfather were not home when we got to his little house. His brother came outside holding one of Dave's many little brothers and sisters. This one was around 2 years old. The officer lectured the 14-year-old brother about Dave, then Dave went inside and that was it.

I was very upset with myself after that episode because it was no fun getting brought home by the police. My mother was extremely upset with me, and if I remember correctly, I was grounded for a few weeks for this episode. I also felt after this that I could not associate with Dave or Charlie ever again. I stopped speaking with them and their friends, and consequently, I was a bit of a loner for the rest of my time in elementary school. Because I had never been in such serious trouble before, I probably overreacted to what had happened. Getting brought home by the police left an impression on me that took years to shake. While this episode may not seem that significant in the grand scheme of things, for better or for worse, it made me more guarded and afraid to have fun doing stupid things throughout the rest of my life.

What was most upsetting to me about all of this was that I knew I should have listened to the voice inside of my head that had told me not to go over there that night. Intuitively, I just knew that something was very wrong and that I was going to get into serious trouble.

Each day we have intuitions about various things. Many of these intuitions are about various areas in which we want to improve or about things we want to avoid. These areas could be our finances, our relationships, or our careers. In most cases these little pieces of intuition are right. By trusting and following our intuition each of us can generally avoid bad things.

There are many famous episodes of intuition throughout history:

- Halley's comet was seen the day Mark Twain was born. He predicted that on the day he died Halley's comet would also be seen, and it was. Twain had also had a dream that his brother would die, and he pictured him being placed in a casket in a certain way. Shortly thereafter, his brother was killed in an explosion. When Twain reached the funeral, his brother was in the casket the same way he had been in Twain's dream.
- Calpurnia, the wife of Julius Caesar, dreamed the night before Caesar was killed that he would be stabbed by a friend the next day. She warned him not to go meet his friend.
- Abraham Lincoln had a dream of his death 10 days before he died. He dreamed that he had been assassinated and that his body lay in the East Wing of the White House--just as it did after his assassination.
- Adolf Hitler dreamed that his trench would be struck by a shell. His dream caused him to quickly jump out of his trench right before a shell hit, killing everyone inside.
- Nostradamus correctly predicted the day he would die, and also the day that his casket would be opened.

In addition to these episodes, there have been numerous cases of airline passengers refusing to fly on planes when they got to the gate, due to a premonition or intuition telling them that something bad was going to happen. Oftentimes the airplanes end up, in fact, crashing.

Every single one of us has strong intuitions about this and that throughout the average day. We get an intuition not to do something, to do something, or to change something. These intuitions are incredibly powerful, but most people simply ignore them and go about their business.

I believe you need to connect with your intuition at all times in your life. Our subconscious mind is always at work, even when we may not realize it, making all sorts of calculations, observations, conclusions, and so forth about everything around us. It is picking up all sorts of things from our surroundings, which we might not be aware of consciously.

Every single one of us knows our weaknesses and what is holding us back. It is just that not everyone is willing to acknowledge these weaknesses and to improve upon them. Knowledge of our weaknesses, of what we should and should not do, comes to us through intuition. You need to listen to your intuition and follow it.

The people I have known to be truly successful have listened to their intuition. Listening to our intuition is not easy and it often takes effort; however, when you listen to that intuition, you will take actions in your career and in your life that are to your benefit. People all over the world can rise higher and become the people they want to become. All they need to do is pay the price--which is usually a determined and focused effort. Each success or benefit that we seek out of life will only come to us if we pay the price. Acting on our intuition often requires us to pay a price; however, acting contradictory to our intuition is often far more dangerous and costly than doing nothing at all.

Most people do not realize the importance of listening to their intuition, and therefore, these people remain in the same place and never move forward. Whether it is their intuition about their career and a change they need to make, their intuition about a relationship, or an intuition about something even more important, they do not listen.

I remember meeting a very beautiful girl whom I became involved with a short time later; we were involved for several years. After knowing her for around 15 minutes, I thought to myself: "This woman will cheat and cheat again on any man she is ever involved with." This was just something I knew and understood instinctively. I had never had this thought about someone before, but it was just something I sensed. I have no idea what it was that made me figure this out. However, I completely forgot about this major intuition and went full steam ahead with the relationship.

I ended up falling in love with the woman, and at one point, I proposed to her. On the night I proposed to her and she accepted, we had gone out for dinner. When we returned from dinner, she started crying. I asked her what was wrong.

"I have been seeing someone else behind your back!" she told me.

This was one of the most upsetting and devastating moments of my life. I was so upset that I actually punched a hole in a wall and almost broke my knuckles. This announcement had come out of nowhere, and apparently her affair had been going on for months without my realizing it. It took me some time, but I eventually got over it and forgave her.

Then it happened again.

Then it happened again.

Then it finally ended our relationship forever.

She had done the same thing before with other boyfriends, and I am sure she continued with the same pattern of behavior after we split. It was just her nature, and I picked up on it within moments of first meeting her. That relationship was something that I should have avoided. Had I followed my intuition, I would not have spent a good portion of my life as unhappy and confused as I was during my time with this woman. At times, not following our intuition can ruin our lives.

Intuition has also been incredibly good to me. Several years ago, I had been practicing law with a large law firm and no longer wanted to. I decided I would be much better off if I formed my own law practice. Instead of diving headfirst into my own law practice, my law firm suggested that, since I was so unhappy in their law firm, I should talk with recruiters to see if I might be happier in another law firm--before starting my own practice. This is exactly what I did. By the time I left my law firm, I had many clients lined up and more than enough work to keep me busy. Looking at what recruiters did, however, I realized that I would be far better off doing recruiting work than practicing law. It felt more natural to me, and I understood instinctively what the job entailed.

I ended up turning down several [law firm job](#) offers and gave away all of my legal cases. To the astonishment of everyone who knew me, I started legal recruiting. I loved it, did very well at it, and was incredibly happy. The decision to become a [legal recruiter](#) changed my life and enabled me to start a business in the career industry--which I love. None of this would have happened had I not followed my intuition.

- You may have intuition about friends. You may believe that certain people are good and that you could benefit from associating with them. You may believe that other people are bad and that associating with them could hurt you. In most cases, your intuition will prove correct.
- You may sense that you would be good at a certain job. You may sense that you will be bad at a certain job. In these cases, your intuition will also usually be right.

When you trust your intuition in your career and life, you will always come out far more ahead than if you do not.

THE LESSON

Many people have intuitions about areas in which they would like to improve or things that they would like to avoid. Your intuition is usually correct, and trusting it can help you avoid bad things that might befall others who ignore their intuition. People are all aware, on some level, of the things holding them back, but few people are willing to acknowledge and address these things. Knowledge of your weaknesses and what you should do about them comes from your intuition.

<https://www.harrisonbarnes.com/>