

How do I know who's talking in there?

(APPENDIX ONE - From Paul Hawker's "Soul Quest")

In tuning in to my inner voice I didn't audibly hear "voices," rather I just monitored the random unconnected images, notions, and thoughts that floated through my head. Becoming aware of them I'd check them out using the following criteria. It's by no means a complete list, but for me it was an essential tool for discernment.

I considered my random unconnected thoughts from God if they were;
*** Peaceful * Consistent * Loving * Patient * Uplifting * Instructive *
Comforting * Clear * Kind * Welcoming of scrutiny * Seldom needing to be
responded to in a hurry.**

I put them down as coming from myself rather than the spiritual realms if they;
*** Were in a logical processed outcome of things I'd learned or deduced
* Appealed to my ego
* Varied all the time depending on the information I'd received
* Would eventually make me look good in front of others**

However, if the spontaneous thoughts were along these lines;
*** An accusation, Confusing, Promoted fear and panic
* Rejected scrutiny, Produced guilt
* Created anxiety and generally unsettled me
* Were pushy, urgent, wanting to be done in a hurry - a driving compulsion
to "do it now,"** I ascribed them to the spiritual realms, but not the heavenly ones.

I'm human. I often get it wrong, but this was part of the exercise: to better discern where the messages were coming from before I acted on them. They didn't only occur when I was still. I could be walking, half asleep, deeply engrossed in something, or quite distracted and then slowly or suddenly become aware of a picture, phrase, scene, song lyric, snatch of conversation that seemed lodged uppermost in my consciousness.

Back in civilization, the spiritual realm sometimes becomes clear to me through "coincidences," remarkable synchronicity, the same thought or idea coming from a variety of unrelated sources. Occasionally I simply get a deep intuitive sense that a particular course of action is right, though on the surface it might appear quite illogical. It was such a perception that took me to the mountains.

I didn't do this alone. I constantly asked for help and guidance so that I could clearly discern The Voice. I also tried to judge my spiritual progress not by how I felt, but by how I acted.