

# COULD YOU BE PSYCHIC?

As many as one in ten people has some kind of paranormal experience during their lifetime. Does this mean we all have psychic potential? Sue Wheeler investigates.

**W**hether you believe them or not, there are people who profess to contact spirits or look into the future and, however cynical we may be, most of us can't deny being ever-so-slightly curious.

Basically, being psychic (or "sensitive", "clairvoyant" or a "medium") means being able to go beyond the purely physical, and make contact with the *spiritual* world: that of the soul and mind.

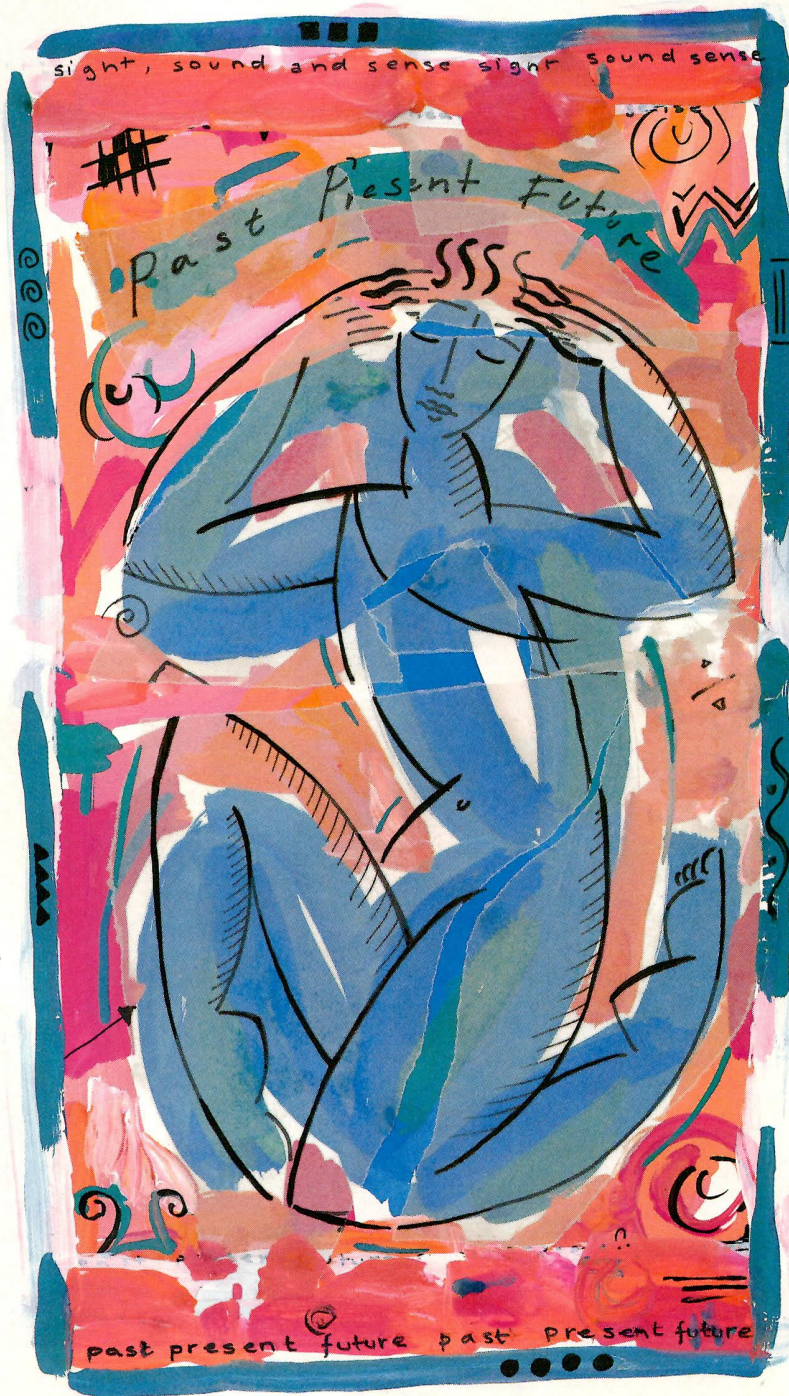
## HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU'RE PSYCHIC?

**Y**ou can't really *become* a psychic; you're either born that way or you're not. However, famous medium Doris Collins believes that *everyone* has a certain "sensitivity", but they won't necessarily be able to develop it: "Just because you play the piano," she explains, "doesn't mean you'll become a great concert pianist."

So, what does it mean if you have an experience that strikes you as uncanny? For instance, you "know" who's on the phone before picking it up; you think of someone and then get a letter from them, or you sense a presence in an empty room. Are these mere coincidences?

Not according to Doris, who doesn't believe in coincidence. She reckons these experiences are the work of your sensitivity, though that doesn't mean you're in any way a fully fledged psychic.

Intuition is also a form of psychic sense — something women are often credited with. Julie Cryer, a "gifted medium" from Leeds, feels that, in general, men and women should trust their intuition much more. She maintains: "A simple gut feeling is a kind of psychic



experience. These days we're too practical, making decisions because something's convenient or seems the correct thing to do. Deep down, we often prefer one thing and yet do another, but you shouldn't go against what you really feel is right for *you*."

Doris, meanwhile, is convinced that children are often more psychic than adults, but their sensitivity is usually quashed by convention — parents probably put it down to a vivid imagination. She remembers of her own childhood: "I used to know if my brothers were up to anything they shouldn't be. I'd question them about it and they'd wonder how on earth I knew. They weren't very happy about it and they thought I was a bit nutty!"

## HOW PSYCHICS GET THEIR MESSAGES

**T**here is no single answer to the question of *how* psychics work — some hear voices, some "see" images, some sense things, and some use more than one of these methods. If this has ever happened to you, you'll know all about it!

Asked about what it feels like when she's receiving messages, Doris describes the sensation as being "high". She goes on to explain: "That's because you elevate your consciousness. It's beyond the normal reaction of the physical."

She claims that people on the "other side" don't literally *tell* her about themselves but she *feels* or picks up information from their minds. She talks about the mind as a computer and, in simple terms, information from their computer

automatically transfers to hers. It's not always dead people sending messages either. Using her psychic ability she's able to diagnose illnesses and can also help heal people.

## USING A PSYCHIC GIFT

**P**sychics might well be able to pick out the winner of the Grand National, but most feel their talents should be used for something more beneficial to others. Doris emphasises, "A genuine psychic is instinctively aware of the importance of working for good... There's only one way for me... and that's about caring for other people and being interested in them."

Doris can point individuals in the right direction, because she's able to see what's happening in their lives. She also gives people comforting messages from spirits who she believes are alive and kicking

on the other side. But she doesn't see herself as special; she says, "I just happen to be the channel and God works through me."

She's quite adamant, however, that she isn't a pillar for people to lean on, and discourages anyone from rushing to a psychic every five minutes to ask them exactly what they should or shouldn't do with their lives.

Although Doris was born psychic, like any other talent, she had to work at it. She studied under proficient mediums for years and advises anyone who thinks they're psychic to go to a spiritualist church or find a medium who's willing to help them. "But people don't become proficient psychics in five minutes," she warns. "I'm still developing after 60-odd years! And I still make mistakes, because nobody's perfect."

• Doris Collins' latest book, *Positive Forces*, is published by Grafton Books at £12.95.



## ONE PSYCHIC'S STORY

**Ever since she was two years old, Julie Cryer has chatted to people at the end of her bed.**

**Nothing peculiar about that... except they're dead! Julie is 31 and lives in Leeds.**

"At first my parents shrugged off the people I saw as imaginary friends. But by the time I was six, so many people were coming to me that they moved me into their bedroom. I remember describing an old lady to them, who turned out to be a grandmother I'd never met, and once a dead neighbour reappeared and told me what heaven was like. Also, my grandfather came to me a few days after he died to say he was OK and I told my grandma — I got into terrible trouble because she was so upset!

"By the time I reached adolescence I thought something was wrong with me. I didn't talk to friends about it because I didn't want to be different. In the end I was frightened to go to bed because

**“I constantly get messages about friends and family but I have to switch off.”**

so many spirits were coming through. The more it happened the more I tried to block it out.

"At 16, I visited a famous medium who told me I was very gifted and things would take their natural course. She told me I had a spirit guide called Red Rook who was there to help me, and I remember being absolutely terrified. It wasn't

until I was 19 and started going out with someone (who I eventually married) that I had the confidence to talk about it.

"People come to see me as a medium and clairvoyant in my spare time, but I don't charge for sittings. The people I work with accept that I'm psychic — thankfully they don't think I'm mad! But it's a way of life; I don't have any choice because information about people comes to me all the time.

**“There's nothing mystical about being psychic and people shouldn't be frightened.”**

"Even last year on holiday I bumped into a man whose daughter was being treated for cancer and he was terrified she was going to die. I knew she was on the mend and was able to tell him that.

"There are things you have to cope with if you're psychic. Life could turn into one huge counselling session if I let it. I constantly get messages about friends and family, but to have a normal relationship with them I have to switch off, and if they're having problems I usually wait for them to come to me. Obviously I help them if they want me to.

"There's nothing mystical about being psychic and people shouldn't be frightened by it. If anything, I go out of my way to look as down-to-earth as possible. When I do readings at charity events I prefer to turn up in my Doc Martens and Levi's. The problem lies in other people really, because they expect you to look like *their* idea of a medium.

"It's strange, but I feel as though there isn't anything I can't do. I can give readings over the phone but obviously it's better in the flesh. I also practise by communicating with people in photographs, whether they're still alive or dead.

"You'd be surprised about the kind of people who consult psychics — everyone from 'Mrs Smith' down the road to extremely wealthy businessmen.

"Personally I think that having a sitting with a medium is a wonderful experience — it's like someone going deep inside you and putting everything back in the right place."



## TEST YOUR PSYCHIC SENSITIVITY

★ **Draw a triangle, circle and square, each on a separate sheet of paper. Hold up one of the sheets, making sure the shape isn't visible, and ask another person to guess which shape is on it.**

★ **Choose a time to concentrate on a friend and then ask them if they felt any communication between you.**

★ **Ask a friend to think of a colour or a number, and see if you can "pick up" what she's thinking.**

★ **Julie Cryer tested herself on a TV game show called *Lifelines*. The idea is that contestants guess someone's job by asking pertinent questions which get yes or no answers — but Julie would guess the person's job the minute she saw them. And she was always right... Try it, and see if you are too.**

★ **Keep a note of the times you instinctively know who's on the phone before picking it up.**

★ **Write down your dreams and see if they come true.**