

When We Ask for a Sign

Have you ever asked for guidance when you were facing a difficult decision? Maybe you prayed, talked to God, asked the universe for help, or simply said, “I need a sign.” Then, sometime later, something happened that seemed to answer your question.



Perhaps you unexpectedly heard from an old friend, heard a song with just the right words, came across a book or article that spoke directly to your situation, or had a chance meeting that seemed almost too perfect to be coincidence.

The idea of receiving a sign is not new. For thousands of years, people have looked to God, nature, dreams, visions, and unexpected events for guidance. Many religious traditions contain stories of people asking for signs or receiving messages when they needed direction.

There is also a psychological explanation. Our brains are constantly looking for patterns and connections. When something is important to us, we are more likely to notice things that relate to it. Sometimes what feels like a sign may simply be a remarkable coincidence.

Psychologist Carl Jung called some of these experiences “**synchronicity**”—events that may not have a clear

cause-and-effect connection but seem to have special meaning to the person experiencing them.

So, are these experiences really signs?

Science has not demonstrated that God, the universe, or another supernatural force sends people personal messages through coincidences. At the same time, science cannot easily measure the personal meaning someone finds in such an experience.

Perhaps there is another possibility. Maybe a “sign” doesn't have to be supernatural to be valuable. An unexpected event may cause us to stop, think differently, and recognize something we already knew deep inside.

The interesting question may not be **“Was it really a sign?”** but **“Why did it feel like a sign to me?”**

As we grow older, we collect decades of experiences, relationships, successes, disappointments, and lessons. Perhaps that experience gives us a special ability to recognize meaning when it appears.