

Practice Guide





Practice Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Step on the Path

“To begin any strong practice is to turn the pages of your life to a new chapter.”

- George Leonard and Michael Murphy from *The Life We Are Given*

Congratulations! You’re stepping on a path of practice designed to create positive changes in you and your life. Integral Transformative Practice® (ITP) is a framework for creating healthy transformation of body, mind, heart and soul, a means for co-evolving all dimensions of your being.

This practice supports a balanced approach to life through clear intentions about the transformation you are seeking and diligent, daily practice to get there. As you are the steward of your practice, allow the path to unfold at a pace that nourishes you. ITP was designed to be a lifelong journey of learning, growth and personal transformation. We encourage you to meet the adventure with a spirit of curiosity, relaxation and joy.

Enjoy ITP for its own rich rewards. When you look back after practicing for some time, chances are, you’ll be surprised and delighted by your progress.

Consider your Intentions

“Ultimately, human intentionality is the most powerful evolutionary force on this planet.”

- George Leonard

Something brought you here. What was it? What transformation are you seeking in body, mind, heart and soul?

You don’t have to answer these questions to get started. Allow the inquiry to simply motivate you to take the next steps with your practice.

The Practice Guide

The *Practice Guide* exercises are created to help you:

1. Identify the transformation you are seeking
2. Assess growth opportunities in your body, mind, heart and soul
3. Begin practicing ITP to help you realize your potential

For best results, we recommend that you work on the *Practice Guide* exercises in tandem with reading *The Life We Are Given* by George Leonard and Michael Murphy and watching *The Tao of Practice* DVD. Please note that you can begin practicing on your own, but you may find greater support and enjoyment by practicing with a friend, family member or a group. Do what works best for you. Are you ready? Let’s get started!

INSTRUCTIONS

The *Practice Guide* consists of 3 sections with accompanying exercises:

1. Personal Review
 - Personal Review
 - Sample Personal Review
2. Integral Assessment
 - Integral Assessment
 - Sample Integral Assessment
 - Body, Mind, Heart and Soul Descriptive Terms
3. Creating Your Practice
 - Creating Your Practice
 - Sample Creating Your Practice

Part 1: Personal Review

Take a moment to read the questions listed in the *Personal Review* followed by a brief period of silence or meditation.

The questions in the *Personal Review* are designed to help you get a current snapshot of your life: what's working well, the challenges you are facing and the positive changes you wish to make at this time. A *Sample Personal Review* document is filled in to give you some ideas and help get you started.

Take as much time as you need to complete this exercise. You may find yourself writing more or creating your own form of inquiry about you and your life through drawing, painting or other creative forms of expression.

After completing the exercise, ask yourself:

- What have I learned about me and my life right now?
- What are my next personal evolutionary steps?
- How can practice support my growth?

Part 2: Integral Assessment

In the next exercise, *Integral Assessment*, you have the opportunity to assess your current level of growth and development in each dimension of your being: body, mind, heart and soul. You will also identify your ideal state in each dimension. This exercise helps to further clarify the transformation you are seeking and is a precursor to creating affirmations (see Chapters 4 and 5 in *The Life We Are Given*).

Before filling out the *Integral Assessment*, take a few moments in quiet reflection or meditation. Follow the rise and fall of your breath and then scan your body for tension. Send your breath to areas where you'd like to bring in relaxation and ease. Now place your attention on each dimension of your being, one at a time - body, mind, heart and soul - and ask yourself:

“What is my current condition in this dimension? What is my current level of functioning and satisfaction in this dimension?”

Take a look at *Body, Mind, Heart and Soul Descriptive Terms* to see descriptions associated with each of these dimensions. Use this sheet to help clarify your current condition in body, mind, heart and soul. Also refer to the *Sample Integral Assessment* to guide you in completing yours.

Now turn to the *Integral Assessment* and jot down your current conditions for *Where I Am Now* in body, mind heart and soul. Next consider *Where I Want To Be* or *Ideal State of Being*. By visualizing yourself in the future, you begin to set intentions to move in the direction of your transformed state.

For *Questions and Challenges, Assumptions and Feelings*, write down your comments about the difference between your current and future state of being so you can reflect more fully on the positive changes you are seeking at this time of your life.

Consider where you are “in balance” related to body, mind, heart and soul and where you are out of balance. Consider “imbalances” as opportunities for growth. Be patient and compassionate with yourself. Transformation results from clear self-reflection, intentionality and practice.

After completing the *Integral Assessment*, ask yourself:

- Which dimensions of my being are ripe for transformation?
- Which dimensions are functioning well for me?
- What transformation am I affirming in body, mind, heart and soul?

Part 3: Creating Your Practice

You are now ready to see how ITP can support your positive growth. *Creating Your Practice* is intended to engage you in practice at your own pace and serves as a means to realize your transformation, the objective of the ITP program!

Creating Your Practice spells out the ITP program in a modified way by listing a simplified version of the 9 ITP commitments (listed in the left column of the document). To review the 9 commitments in more detail, read *Chapter 3, Stepping on the Path*. (The 9th commitment, which focuses on service and helping others, was added recently and is not included in *The Life We Are Given*.) As with the other exercises, we recommend a quiet period of reflection or mediation before beginning.

After your period of reflection, review the *Sample Creating Your Practice* to clarify and guide you in the exercise.

In *Where I Am Now*, describe your current relationship to each commitment. In *Where I Want to Be*, describe the growth you want for yourself in each of the commitments. Finally, in *Steps I'll Take to Get There*, list the kinds of actions that will move you forward on your path of practice.

After completing this exercise, ask yourself:

- Which of the commitments am I ready to engage in?
- What are my next steps?
- How can I get support and reinforcement from others on my path of practice?

What's Next?

The *Practice Guide* exercises set the stage for creating your affirmations, an essential component of the ITP program and the 8th commitment. Read *Chapter 4* to learn about the powerful nature of affirmations. In *Chapter 5*, you can find instruction on creating your affirmations.

If you would like further support with affirmations or any other aspect of ITP, our trainers and coaches are available to assist you. We want to see you get great benefit from your practice, so don't hesitate to call on us. The ITPI Team is here to serve you. Enjoy your practice!

Personal Review
Brief Snapshot of Where I am in my Life Now

Please take a few moments to respond to the following questions:

What's working well for me in my life now? What do I feel pleased about?
(Give yourself permission to pat yourself on the back about your accomplishments.)

What's not working well? What are the obstacles I'm now facing?

What changes do I want to make at this time? What positive shifts are ready to take place?

Personal Review

Brief Snapshot of Where I am in my Life Now

Please take a few moments to respond to the following questions:

What's working well for me in my life now? What do I feel pleased about?
(Give yourself permission to pat yourself on the back about your accomplishments.)

- Happy with my home life
- Enjoying my work
- My garden
- Learning to speak Spanish
- Meeting new people I like
- My Yoga practice

What's not working well? What are the obstacles I'm now facing?

- My home office is cluttered
- Behind in correspondence
- Experiencing chronic pain in my lower back
- Funding my travel plans
- Supporting my aging parents

What changes do I want to make at this time? What positive shifts are ready to take place?

- Want to be more organized and on top of my projects
- Want to be stronger and more flexible
- Want to feel more compassion for others
- Want to be more creative with problem-solving

Integral Assessment

Body	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	

Mind	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	

Integral Assessment

Heart	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	

Soul	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	

Integral Assessment

Body	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Somewhat overweight - Sore back - Tension in my shoulders - Generally feel vital and healthy
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lean and fit - Relaxed and at ease - Positive sense of well-being - Stronger and more flexible
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hard to visualize these changes - How can I shift old patterns?

Mind	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focused on work projects - Sharp memory - Ability to multi-task effectively - Planful
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organized and efficient - Managing time effectively - Improved decision making - Stimulated by new learning
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not sure about what to learn next - How can I change my decision making style?

Integral Assessment

Heart	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impatient at times - Giving a lot to others - Open and loving - Receptive and trusting
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compassionate to myself and others - More empathetic - Feeling more supported - Connected and joyful
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not sure how I get more support - How can I experience more joy?

Soul	Where I am now <i>Overview of current conditions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fearful about the future - Blessed with my life and family - Feel a sense of wonder - Confused about my spiritual life
	Where I want to be <i>Ideal state of being</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aware of the interconnection of all beings - Safe and secure - Focused on the here and now - Clear on why I'm here
	Questions, Challenges, Assumptions, Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I need practice focusing on the present moment - Not sure what I'm here to do

Body, Mind, Heart & Soul Descriptive Terms

Mind

alertness
intellectual stimulation
memory
clarity
analytical ability
problem solving
planning
decision making
learning
concentration
focus

Heart

relationships
giving and receiving
expression of feelings
empathy
compassion
lovingkindness
forgiveness (of self and others)
community
communications
active listening

Body

general health
vitality
endurance
strength
flexibility
ease
stamina
relaxation
stability
fitness
immune system

Soul

spiritual connection
meditation
prayer
affirmations
faith
trust
hope
interconnectedness
awareness of the web of life
intuition

Creating Your Practice

I am the final authority	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	
Connection to community	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	
Kata and meditation practice	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	

Creating Your Practice

Aerobic exercise & strength training	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	
Development of my intellectual powers	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	
Conscious eating	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	

Creating Your Practice

Staying Current	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	
Affirmations	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	
Service	Where I am now	
	Where I want to be	
	Steps to get there	

Creating Your Practice

I am the final authority	Where I am now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes hold myself back from asserting - Often overextend myself to others
	Where I want to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear on what's right for me and following through on it - Aware and respectful of my boundaries
	Steps to get there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep a journal of when I hold myself back and explore what occurred - Find a practice partner to support my taking good care of myself
Connection to community	Where I am now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involved in supporting others, particularly my parents - Overextend myself on occasions
	Where I want to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feel connected, loving and mutually supported - Clear on who to support and when
	Steps to get there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use my practice partner for mutual support - Identify relationships to cultivate
Kata and meditation practice	Where I am now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Just beginning my Kata practice - Have meditated almost daily for 3 years
	Where I want to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice the Kata 3 times per week on a steady basis - Increase my meditation time by 10 minutes per days
	Steps to get there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep a journal to track my practice - Invite someone to do the Kata with me weekly

Creating Your Practice

Aerobic exercise & strength training	Where I am now	- Bike 2 times per week for 30 minutes and walk or hike once per week - Strength training at the gym every 2 weeks
	Where I want to be	- Increase my aerobic practice to 4 times per week - Go to the gym for strength training once per week
	Steps to get there	- Get someone to go to the gym with me - Create and track fitness goals with a trainer
Development of my intellectual powers	Where I am now	- Involved in a book group - Frequently go to lectures and attend presentations
	Where I want to be	- More on top of current events - Stretched intellectually
	Steps to get there	- Take time to read the newspaper and periodicals - Sign up for history class at local college
Conscious eating	Where I am now	- Not always aware of when and how much I'm eating - Eating more volume than I'd like
	Where I want to be	- Eating at regular meal times and occasional snacks - Eat when I'm hungry and then eat slowly
	Steps to get there	- Keep a food journal - Prepare meals ahead of time and have snacks ready in advance

Creating Your Practice

Staying Current	Where I am now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Often keep difficult feelings to myself - Work with a therapist to become more assertive
	Where I want to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able to access my feelings to myself - Feel more confident to express my feelings
	Steps to get there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to work with my therapist to understand my feelings - Keep a log of situations, feelings and thoughts to better understand myself
Affirmations	Where I am now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have worked with affirmations in the past and starting to again - Feel overwhelmed by areas of myself I want to transform
	Where I want to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarity on the most important areas I want to change - Working with 3 or 4 affirmations that aren't too big of a stretch for me
	Steps to get there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read about affirmations in <i>The Life We Are Given</i> and other books - Work with my therapist to focus on getting clear and writing new affirmations
Service	Where I am now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally consider others in small and big ways - Assist my aging parents with their medical and home care
	Where I want to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a better picture about service in daily life - Involved in supporting a cause that has significant impact
	Steps to get there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pick an organization based on my interests where I can donate time - Read inspirational books about lovingkindness, compassion and service