

Exploring Integral Leadership

A Capacity Available to All

By Kim Kristenson-Lee, ITP Mastery Teacher & ITP Houston Co-leader

How do you define *Integral Leadership*? Who is a great role model of *Integral Leadership*? How can your integral practice reflect the essential needs of your family, team or even our entire society?

Take ten minutes now to journal on these most important questions. Then read on!

Those of us committed to Integral Transformative Practice are very familiar with cultivating our capacities as individuals—mind, body, heart and soul. When we focus on our individual development, we unlock our fullest potential. We find a more joyful and peaceful existence. Our positive internal conditions create a more positive environment for those around us.

However, focusing on our evolution as an individual, is qualitatively different than focusing on creating a better future “*with, for and through others.*” There is a distinction with realizing our own personal path to wellness and self-evolution versus building capacity to change the world for the better.

That said, as George and Michael wrote in *The Life We Given*, “personal and social transformation are indissolubly linked.” Integral leadership, an evolving aspect of ITP, is a distinct blend of both positive personal growth and social change.

How do you define Integral Leadership?

Let’s break down the words “Integral” and “Leadership”.

Google the word Leadership, and it produces half a million definitions. After twenty-five years in talent management, I define Leadership as the ability to achieve outcomes with and through others.

Peter Block, perhaps the greatest living American management consultant, writes that leadership “is not a capacity reserved for just the few, it is a capacity that can be learned by all of us, with a small amount of teaching and an agreement to practice.” A leader is any person “willing to do those things that...initiate something new in the world.”

We often hear the term Leadership closely associated with Management. Leadership in an organizational context is distinctive from Management. The picture below is a good example of this



distinction:

Now, how do we define Integral? Luckily, *The Life We Are Given* includes a definition we can turn to.

Leadership Produces change and movement	Management Produces order and consistency
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establishes direction<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Creates a vision▪ Clarifies the big picture▪ Sets strategies2. Aligns people<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Communicates goals▪ Seeks commitment▪ Builds teams, coalitions and alliances3. Motivates and inspires<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Energizes▪ Empowers subordinates & colleagues▪ Satisfies unmet needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Planning and budgeting<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Establishes agendas▪ Sets timetable▪ Allocates resources2. Organizing and staffing<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide structure▪ Make job placements▪ Establish rules and procedures3. Controlling and problem solving<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop incentives▪ Generate creative solutions▪ Take corrective action

Integral incorporates “the body (diet, exercise, yoga), mind (reading and discussions of articles and book excerpts on relevant subjects), heart (group process, community activities) and soul (meditation, imaging, yoga)”. (*The Life We are Given*, pp. 15.) In sum, integral is a way of incorporating all our modes of development and evolution to support progress.

In my experience, *Integral Leadership* means leading and learning from a place of wholeness. Integral leaders operate at a level of consciousness that integrates:

- “what we do” (acting)
- “from where we lead” (clear intentions for positive impact now and for future generations)

Integral leaders develop all aspects of the self – mind, body, heart, and soul – as windows to an underlying wholeness in their being and perspective. They recognize that their interior conditions have a powerful impact on success and sustainability of family, team and community aspirations, as well as on the health and wholeness of the people around them. And they use their integral development to advance their positive impact on someone or something outside themselves.

My original question remains. **How do you define Integral Leadership?** I invite you to continue this exploration with me as an evolving branch of our practice. If you are ready to discover your practice of Integral Leadership, you can sign up for the new **Integral Leadership Program** launching on November 30th in Mill Valley, CA. I invite you to send your thoughts and reflections on integral leadership to me at katalyst@comcast.net, and we can continue the reflection together.