

## Mastery Cycle 7: New Developments

by Max Gaenslen, Senior Mastery Teacher

*“To learn is to change. If you’re not changing you’re not learning.”* -George Leonard

*“[Change] takes some sort of challenge, a challenge within an environment that allows evolution to take place.”*  
-George Leonard



What spark of the divine within you is looking for fertile soil in which to grow? How does the deepest part of your being want to evolve and be expressed in the world? How does your practice, and your community, support and further this expression?

Something that has amazed me in watching the Mastery program evolve through the years is seeing how it succeeds at being both a deeply personal journey and also a profound experience of community. There is something about a group of people that holds its members in a place of recognition of the deeper potential and divine spark, actively seeks to interact in ways that brings forth that spark, allowing it to be seen and thrive, and, most importantly, walks its talk by engaging in practices to facilitate the further unfolding and expression of divinity in the world. As our own personal evolution is nurtured by, and nurtures, the growth and transformation of others, within the microcosm of Mastery we experience a palpable sense of what George Leonard and Michael Murphy meant when they wrote, “It becomes more and more evident that our own-being is indissolubly linked to the health of society and our environment. It is possible, now more than ever before, to see that our own growth is rooted in, and furthers, the whole world’s advance.”

As we prepare to embark on the journey of Mastery Cycle 7, their bar continues to be raised. The advances in the evolution of Mastery introduced in Cycle 7 will include the formation of “Core Practice Groups.” These groups will each focus on a particular ITP core practice such as leadership, integral fitness, contemplative practices, theory and philosophy, staying current, LET, the Kata and affirmations.

The core practice groups will present to the Mastery community not only on their core practice, but they will also explore and present on other core practices and topics related to ITP as seen through the lens of their core practice. This will enable a deepening, by all Mastery members, not only into the core practices themselves, but into the natural synergies that exist among the practices. For example, the ongoing deepening of our understanding of multiple forms of bodily intelligence will be enhanced

by LET exercises that give a somatic experience of leadership, and help us experience integral fitness as a contemplative practice.

Senior Mastery Teachers will work with their Core Practice Groups to develop presentations and material. This will enable Mastery members who would like greater insight into the underlying structure and formation of Mastery weekend workshops (and ITP programs in general) to be involved behind the scenes as well as expand the opportunities for Mastery members to develop their teaching and presentation skills.

Members of Mastery Cycle 7 will be part of a deep, rich learning community in which every member will have extensive opportunities for practice, growth and deepening their understanding of ITP. What is next on your path of growth and transformation?

*As we grow in love and strength, we become vehicles for the world's growth. We bring new sustenance to our families, new joy to our friends, new light to our places of work. We enhance the physical things around us and the earth itself.*

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