

The Creative Power of Leonard Energy Training (LET)

by Charlotte Hatch

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"To Thine Own Self Be True and Thou Canst Not Then Be False to Any Man" - Socrates

I remember the first time I realized the power of Leonard Energy Training (LET) as a physical framework for exploration into deeper motives and feelings. It was 1993, and I was a participant in the 2nd cycle of our weekly ITP group at Aikido of Tamalpais. Each week at our meetings George Leonard led us in some LET. I thought LET was fun, but nothing too special was happening. Luckily for me, in the spring of that year, I had the opportunity to accompany George to Esalen and assist him in one of his workshops.



In the workshop there was a couple in their early 40's, both possessed of a somewhat aggressive and surly manner. They told the group that their marriage was on the rocks. They couldn't summon the energy to split, but they were miserable together. They sat next to each other, looking immobile, like large rocks on their pillows.

During the workshop we did a partner exercise called "Talking and Listening." Couples stand at one side of the room facing each other. The "talker" puts his or her hand on his or her partner's upper chest just below the neck, and walks forward across the room, initiating the energy and flow of the "conversation." The "listener" walks backwards in front of the talker, absorbing the energy and going along with the flow. When they reach the other side of the room, they switch and the listener has the opportunity to "talk" by moving forward, while the former talker moves backward and "listens." When done harmoniously, this exercise becomes reminiscent of one of those great conversations in which each person communicates directly, listens fully and suddenly realizes a couple hours have passed!

The married couple were partners in this exercise. The husband "talked" first. He put his hand on his wife's upper chest and pushed. She dug in, refusing to move at all. He pushed and pushed, to no avail. His wife refused to move. They stood there, frozen, neither one giving an inch, while other couples walked back and forth, fine-tuning their harmonious movements. He pushed some more, until finally she took one step back. The husband looked triumphant. He got her to move! But she had given in reluctantly, her body frozen, her head leaning forward, her legs trembling with the effort required by her refusal to grant her husband any leeway. After that one step, they changed roles and the same scenario occurred. The more she pushed, the more stubbornly did her husband cling to his position.

During the workshop lunch, break George Leonard worked with them privately. He succeeded in persuading them to walk back and forth in harmony together, using their bodies as a metaphor for their inner feeling states. They began to "speak" and "listen" to each other, a miracle, considering the degree of resistance they exhibited at the beginning of the workshop. Watching this couple, I could see how their bodies exactly reflected their interior worlds. When they began to move together, their facial expressions changed and became more open. Tension melted. They looked younger and more supple. They exchanged absolutely no words, however it was evident that communication channels were opened. Energy was flowing!

In a flashing epiphany, I realized that our bodies provide absolutely accurate knowledge about our physical, emotional and spiritual states. They provide a path to the expression of our deepest, truest individuality.

Stay tuned for the release of our LET DVD this spring!