

## Spotlight on Lucy Piper

Mastery 5 Graduate and ITP Tulsa Group Leader

For years, I read whatever George Leonard wrote. In fact, reading *Education and Ecstasy* was what led me to become a teacher—a career I have been passionate about for 30 years. When *The Life We Are Given* came out, I read it, thought it was brilliant, and began practicing by myself for a little over a year. I simply did not sustain the practice without any community support.

Several years later, my daughter met Bob Doenges who brought ITP to Tulsa. She joined a group. After a couple of years, she told me she thought I would love it and that Bob was thinking of starting a new group. I was thrilled to join the new group and have been in a Tulsa group for the past four years.



Having a community whose members are on the path has made all the difference in my ability to practice faithfully. Paying attention to the richness in my life when I am practicing keeps me in the practice, practice, practice.

When I first began with the group, I had a fair amount of resistance to practice. Homeostasis called me to stay exactly as I was. Unsurprisingly, I had many excellent reasons for why “today” I simply wasn’t going to have enough time for the Kata or some other practice. I developed a reply to my mind and homeostasis when they offered resistance. I would say, “Thank you for sharing,” and go ahead with the practice. Over the years that resistance has lessened considerably because I just kept at it. The practice became more and more of who I am.

The nine commitments have become a structure for my life. They are perhaps the most valuable things I have learned in ITP, providing a touchstone for checking the level of my balance, vitality and health. Each year I delve into two or three in more depth. I find there is no end to the development possible in each of them.

Affirmations have been one of the most rewarding commitments of ITP practice for me. One of my most powerful affirmations was in my second year in the ITP group. I affirmed, “I find the Divine in the people I am with.” After using that affirmation for a while, I had a weekend with my sisters with whom I had a history of significant conflict. On the second day, one of them said (and the other agreed), “You are so much nicer than you used to be. What are you doing?” I did not seem any different to myself, but I appeared quite differently to them.