

# GEORGE LEONARD

*Visionary*



LETTERS TO GEORGE *FOR THE LOVE OF ITP 2018*

# LETTERS TO GEORGE

“Aware of it or not, each of us is involved in the grand enterprise of evolution. The new information being generated in each of our lives contributes inevitably to the ever-increasing complexity and richness of the universe. Our key choice is whether to become aware of and take responsibility for the power of our intentionality.”

-George Leonard, *The Silent Pulse*

IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER, WE PRESENT THIS BOOKLET OF LETTERS FROM SOME MEMBERS OF THE ITP COMMUNITY ON THE IMPACT GEORGE HAD ON THEIR LIVES.

WITH BLESSINGS AND HEARTFELT APPRECIATION,  
MEMBERS OF THE ITP COMMUNITY



Dear George-

Ever since we met on that wondrous February evening long ago, the great adventure we share has taken many turns. And it changed dramatically when you left for the larger earth where you now reside. But your presence, your guidance, and your inspirations are right here, as always, for me and countless others. Your books, your sayings, your disciplines live vibrantly now, and through them runs a still-developing light, a silent pulse that is yours alone. It challenges us now to comprehend what you see from your ever-adventurous, wide-ranging vantage point.

It fills us with energy.

It calls us to arms.

You are a comrade for the ages.

Michael Murphy

Dear George,

It has been quite a ride since I met you, first through your works, and later, in person at Esalen. Your simple request to the attendees at an Esalen fundraiser led to the formation of ITP International in 2005, and here we are, thirteen years later. For better or worse, I am still the board chair and we continue to work to unpack and put into practice the many gifts you gave us. You'd be amazed by the dedication of the management team of ITPI, and that of the practitioners of ITP, which as Michael has reminded us many times, was your idea. You started something here and so far, it seems to have legs.

I can't tell you how many times I have quoted you, or gone to your books to remember and deepen my understanding of an idea or phrase that stuck in my mind. How vast was your thinking, how deep was your empathy, how passionately you gave of yourself to fight the injustices in the world. And generous! When I first connected with you via email, you sent me your phone number. I was completely unknown to you. When, after a few days, I gathered up my courage to call you, you were so warm. We spoke for 45 minutes! And kept speaking, for many years.

My own practice of ITP continues to deepen, and I follow the breadcrumb trail that I am led to notice... don't know where it will lead, but I know it will be someplace interesting! ITP is "the launching pad for places yet unknown." An explorer I will always be.

With love,  
Christina Grote

A MAN  
WHO...

## Inspired Profound Change

It is with intense gratitude that I am taking this opportunity to look back and honor your work in this world, as well as your incredible influence on my personal path. As we prepare for the celebration *For the Love of ITP, Honoring the Spirit of George Leonard*, we were requested to write a letter about our experience and work with you. It is with a sense of awe that I am able to see how the work that you did during your life created profound changes in my life and that of so many people.

There is a paragraph from the preface of your book *The Silent Pulse* that encapsulates so much of what I have experienced through your teachings and my practice and participation in the ITP community. This is the quote "At the heart of each of us, whatever our imperfections, there exists a silent pulse of perfect rhythm, made up of waveforms and resonances, which is absolutely individual and unique, and yet which connects us to everything in the universe. The act of getting in touch with this pulse can transform our personal experience and in some way alter the world around us."

Although it was years ago, I vividly remember your presentations, discussions and LET sessions with our CITP group as well as the special presentation evenings, and the sessions at the Aikido of Tamalpais. All of these activities allowed me to get in touch and experience my deep personal pulse as well as that of our community and world. Your kindness and generosity of spirit opened paths and doorways to places that I had never known or experienced before. Thank you so much for the Kata, which allows me to come back to my center and balance on a daily basis. Thank you for your emphasis on Mastery and the importance of practice that I feel is now a part of my being. Thank you for the LET principles and practice, which remind me to use my body as my guide for being in the world. Thank you especially for creating a community where opening up to the world of spirit and where exploration of the divine is supported and encouraged.

I have become part of the community that you and Michael started. I feel privileged to be able to continue to grow with and participate in this community. We are striving to continue your work and share the practice of ITP through the Mastery program, creating more ITP groups, continuing to offer retreats, conferences and workshops, and in our own way, further evolutionary love in our world and universe.

Your influence continues to be with me and so many people on a daily basis and ultimately may be what will help save our world...

With love and gratitude,  
Donita

"Perhaps we'll never know how far the path can go, how much a human being can truly achieve, until we realize that the ultimate reward is not a gold medal but the path itself."

- George Leonard, *Mastery*

## Had Pioneering Insights

There's not a day that goes by without your showing up in one form or another. How do you manage to do that? Having you so close at hand means I'm reminded to routinely balance and center, listen and soak up the lesson of the moment. I often feel your hand placed firmly on my back and grateful for your loving support. And when I call you in for advice, I'm amazed how quickly you appear to offer wisdom.

I'll never forget the meeting in your home when you asked me to take over the role of ITP president. With jaw opened wide, I hastily responded with a resounding Yes! I learned over the years of friendship with you that it is, indeed, hard (virtually impossible) to say no to George. Thank you for believing in my ability to fill your very large shoes. I continue to be awed, inspired and duly stretched by the honor!

My gratitude and love for you, George, know no bounds. The world holds greater promise because of your pioneering insights about how we can grow, transform and enrich our lives, while supporting others to do the same. Your many practices, shared widely around the globe, lift spirits in faraway places and right here in your own backyard.

Our ITP community, like the practice you and Michael created, grows surely and steadily. We continue to build strength from our core and powerfully share our learning and gifts, as you envisioned, with our families, communities and the world. Like your model for transformation, we practice, stay the course and learn to love the long plateau of the learning curve. And, we affirm a marked growth spurt with the path we are on. Perhaps that day is near. Your message to me is Yes!

Thank you for the opportunity to honor you with your daughters and dear friends present. Thank you for guiding me and all of us to live more fully the life we are given - with vigor, joy and love. It's working!

Until we meet again soon...squeeze my pal Annie for me. How I miss you both!

All my love,  
Pam



“Of what is the body made? It is made of emptiness and rhythm. At the ultimate heart of the body, at the heart of the world, there is no solidity... there is only the dance.”

-George Leonard, *The Silent Pulse*

Dear George,

Thank you for magnetically funneling into the back of my neck; warm and fluid like yet also a laser of intense love, wisdom and joy. Thank you for sparking evolutionary love in the center of my heart. Thank you for grounding me, in the heart behind the heart.

We never had the opportunity to meet in the flesh and that makes me sad. And because of you, I have learned to be ok feeling sad, and take the hit as a gift. For that you may have saved my life and my family is grateful. For that I am deeply grateful. For that I can function more pragmatically as a human being.

Thank you for stimulating the seed of education and ecstasy, and my desire to be with the youth and make a difference.

Thank you for inspiring ITP! We are going to do amazing things, just watch. You were a good friend to many of my good friends and

I love our connection.

Much love your way,

Dusty

Pam and I had the good fortune to be friends with George and Annie Leonard in the final five or six years of their lives. We miss them a great deal. We also learned a lot from them, and, since this is about George, I'll focus on him.

My first observations of George "in action" were at his dojo in Mill Valley. It was impressive enough to watch George, all 6'4" of him, tossing Aikido students around on the mats, and even more impressive to listen to his summary of the day's lesson, which always tied in the physical movements with philosophy. That approach of using the body as a method to create thoughts and feelings, was novel to me, and remains an important part of ITP.

While George could seem intimidating to his audience when giving a talk or demonstration, in informal groups he was fun and inquisitive.

When he asked how you were, he wanted the deepest answer.

Lastly, often when I went to George and Annie's house, I'd listen from 30 or so feet away outside to see if he was playing the piano. If he was, I'd keep listening from outside, since he usually stopped when visitors came. He played beautifully, improvising on jazz standards on a fine piano. I loved listening to him playing music.

George's spirit was an inspiration. He was endlessly creative, and he never gave up.

Rich

**"RELAXATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE FULL EXPRESSION OF POWER."  
GEORGE LEONARD, MASTERY: THE KEYS TO SUCCESS AND LONG-TERM FULFILLMENT**

## Knew the Path

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George Leonard changed my whole life! He had way more faith in me than I had in myself. He told me he thought I was very smart and that I could do anything I wanted to do. Now, I didn't get carried away with this information because I didn't totally believe him. But his encouragement meant so much!

Once he invited my husband and me on a hike on Mt. Tamalpais with his group of regular hikers. He bragged that he had hiked on every trail on the Mt. and showed me the map he had with all the trails outlined in red. Off we went. We hiked along a trail, I had no idea where it led, until it split in two and we had to decide which way to go. George said I should choose the path. I objected, but, once George made up his mind, there was no question about what would happen. He was quite bossy! I took one of the trails, but I could hear rumblings from the other hikers behind me. George told them to be quiet. I had a sinking feeling that I'd make the wrong choice, and that feeling increased when the trail ran out and we were bivouacking through the brush, going who knows where, up and down. The other hikers were grumbling. George said he was having more fun than he ever had on a hike. We eventually came out of the brush onto some trail, which he recognized immediately. The experience of that hike has stayed with me. I led, and, although I didn't know where I was going and got lost along the way, it still came out ok. It was a life lesson.

At the point in my life when I met George, although I had a lot to be grateful for, I felt separated from others. I thought that, if people really knew me, they would reject me, and so I kept my authentic self hidden. George saw through my attempts at obfuscation. He asked me for details about my upbringing, my family of origin, and my adult relationships. Sometimes he was downright nosey! Although his questions occasionally annoyed me, as I told him my story, I felt as though a rope was loosening within me. I began to relax inside, a process that is still continuing today, 25 years later.

I'm so grateful to him for his friendship, his humor, his belief in me, and his Aikido classes. He was truly a wonderful, imaginative Sensei. He holds a special place within my heart and I wish he were still alive today so I could tell him so.

Love,  
Charlotte

## Was a Renaissance Man

George has been one of my most profound mentors, teachers, colleagues and friends.

We met when I first joined the 5th cycle of ITP, and I was honored to be in his presence. With his booming, Southern patrician voice and commanding stature, George filled up the room wherever he went. His worldviews and ideas were so thought-provoking that he made all of us think deeply about what he was not only sharing, but practicing as well.

I learned about centering and somatic, life-long learning through this incredible soul. George was typically understated, and as I learned more about him, I developed a deep appreciation as to how much influence George has had on the world, including his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, his extraordinary time at *Look* magazine, his involvement in Esalen, the creation of ITP and much more.

George was ITP's champion and leading voice, and was over-the-top generous in whatever was asked of him in order to spread this revolutionary work.

One of my favorite memories occurred during an ITP workshop that he had invited me to co-lead at Esalen. George asked Greg Owens to launch a surprise Aikido attack on George at the beginning of one of the sessions, holding nothing back. The practitioners at the workshop were spellbound, watching George throw Greg 360 degrees, and their moves were nothing less than gravity-defying. Many of the seminarians were left wondering if they really saw what just happened right in front of their eyes.

He was incredibly creative, having developed the Samurai Game over a weekend, involved in New Games with Stewart Brand and of course, bringing forth *Leonard Energy Training*, a visionary, cutting-edge practice that trains students into subtle energy.

Of all of the wonderful traits that George had, he was an integral spirit. His energy was transmitted to all, a strong persona that emitted an energetic field of empowerment and strength. Yet, what is most memorable was his big heart, his love and compassion. George always took an interest in what you were doing, how you felt and what mattered. You felt his genuine caring. He was the master blender and made others feel understood, supported, encouraged and appreciated.

And most of all, you felt his love for his daughters, Annie and his family. He cared about being in service and leaving the world a better place. He has left his mark on humanity. Thanks for the opportunity to go down memory lane and re-live George's impact on all of our lives, making us so much the better for knowing him.

Barry Robbins

“What a pity it is that war, with its terrible suffering and devastation, should often be more vivid than peace. In war, your comrades mean everything to you, life is unsure and thus precious, and you know that the sword is raised above you. Now it is peace. Your friends still mean everything, life is still precious, and look--why didn't you notice it?--there's the sword, still raised above you.

-George Leonard,  
*The Way of Aikido*

## Joined the Flow of the Universe

In August of last year, my mother passed away at the age of 96. After her death, my older brother and I went through her cluttered home and found a few cherished items, long forgotten. Among those treasures, I found a paper that I wrote as a student at UC Santa Barbara in 1978 on a book that had a significant impact on me. That book was *The Ultimate Athlete*, and was my first introduction to you.

In that paper I wrote:

“Leonard declares that perfect movement already exists and as we perceive an event, it is already happening. Body and being in action join the flow of the universe. As an example, Leonard describes a ball thrown between a thrower and a catcher where the connectedness of the line already existed and the movement completed the inevitable energy flow. The action is a dance that is born from the back of the mind, not from entire forgetfulness, and is completed in the perfect, almost sacred, act. At times I have moved with this energy flow and found perception, balance and relaxation to be heightened so that every movement becomes harmonious with the energy force.”

In many ways, you have influenced my life, George. Finding this paper allowed me to see that, at the age of 21, I was aware of the power of movement and energy in the universe. You gave me words for what I had experienced.

By age 23 I had begun on the path of my life's work, my daimon, to transform education and to lead with love. While at Stanford, I came across your book *Education and Ecstasy*. You beautifully put into words so many of the things I believed, and opened my mind to other things I had not yet considered. I approached one of my professors about joining me in creating a school using the ideas in your book. He re-read your book and considered my proposition for a few weeks. When he was offered a tenure track position, he declined my offer, but I kept in the back of my mind that I wanted to start a school with a new approach to learning.

After finishing my master's degree, I worked at a girls' boarding school in Monterey Bay for one long year. One of the other resident faculty members found out about the natural hot springs at Esalen Institute, and we plotted to sneak away from campus in the middle of the night for an adventure in Big Sur. It was indeed an adventure, as we ran out of gas on the way home, and were caught by the nuns who ran the

school, arriving late for our morning assembly. But, while at Esalen, I picked up a catalog of workshops, and noted that you were teaching a workshop in June of 1982 with Annie. I very much wanted to meet you, and I signed up, despite my discomfort with the name of the workshop (Creative Sexuality). In June found myself traveling south on Highway 1 to attend this workshop.

In the meantime, I had read your book *The Silent Pulse* and it resonated with me and inspired me. I still have my original copy of the book where I underlined salient points and wrote “fascinating!” in a margin. I underlined one section where you listed books that you recommended, and I later read them. When we finally met in person, I had you sign that book at the end of the workshop. You wrote “For Barbara, Thanks for your radiance, George Leonard, June 13, 1982.” It is one of my most treasured possessions.

During the workshop I remember learning about basic balancing and centering, soft eyes, doing the tuiso, and the energy arm from you and Annie. But what I remember the most was an energy exercise that used a concept from Aikido. You asked us to work with a partner, and instructed one person to “attack” the other person with a movement of their arm. You instructed the person “being attacked” to move with the energy instead of responding with a defensive or aggressive stance, to move with their energy. I learned that moving with the energy dissipates it. This lesson has been useful to me throughout my life, on both a personal and professional level.

Over the coming decades I visited Esalen dozens of times. It became my way of retreating and reinvigorating myself as I worked diligently in the field of education.

Later, in 1996, I did have a chance to start a school in Greenville, North Carolina, with a dedicated group of parents. As Founding Head of School, I used many of your ideas to create best practices there. Many of the same employees still work there, more than 20 years later! I cannot thank you enough.

Since that time I have “turned around” several struggling schools, again, using many of the principles you suggested in *Education and Ecstasy*. But there are even more ways that you influenced my life, even though we only met once...

On New Year’s Eve in 2016, I attended an event where I met Tim Cleary who was a Mastery teacher for ITP. He encouraged me to learn

more about it. I read *The Life We are Given* and attended a weekend at Esalen with Pam Kramer and Barry Robbins. I realized that ITP would fill a hole in my life. I realized I needed something with more staying power than a transformative interlude at Esalen. I needed more consistent support for my life-long practices. I embraced ITP, and was embraced by the amazing community. After my first year in ITP I also joined Mastery. I read your book *Mastery* and wrote about it in my school’s newsletter.

I think of you every time Mastery meets in Aikido of Tamalpais. It is a beautiful space and we can feel you with us as we do the kata, share, and do our practices. I can almost hear your voice saying, “Be your own authority” when I face various situations.

What I want to say, George, is that you have changed my life in a positive way. You have given me a community, a path, guidelines to live by, and the encouragement to make a difference in the field of education. And we only met once. Yet I know you through your writings and through the many people whose lives you have touched. It is a great honor to be able to thank you for what you have done for me and for many, many others.

With deepest gratitude,  
Barbara J. Brown





Dear George,

First and foremost I'd like to thank you for providing me with a community of people who are interested in evolving and in reaching our highest potential. I joined the San Francisco ITP group in 2003 when I was new to the area and wanted to meet people. I then joined Community ITP in Mill Valley in 2005 because it was closer to my home. I'm now in Mastery and have enjoyed membership a total of fifteen years. For me the built-in access to a high caliber of individuals has been the most valuable aspect of being an ITP member. Through ITP I've met like-minded people and have created long-lasting friendships. This is a wonderful gift. It's my sincere hope that ITP will continue to thrive around the world and will continue to provide for others the important support and rich friendships that have been so valuable to me.

Both you and Michael have often discussed what becomes of the weekend warrior and have expressed the need for a long-term practice. This is spot on. It can take years to move through the spiritual dimensions of the extraordinary with trust and genuine realization, even when we're supported on that journey. You've provided something quite precious and rare when you created ITP in this regard. At the same time, as so many spiritual communities do, you did not leave out the need to provide conscious attention to the heart, the mind, or the body, recognizing that these dimensions of our life also include deeply held habits and that opening our hearts, creating an exercise routine, or expanding our intellectual understanding of the world around us are important aspects to a balanced, healthy lifestyle.

Having said that, I do want to express my deepest appreciation for the spiritual dimension of the ITP protocol. My personal experience of evolving toward the realization of spiritual identity has sometimes been a tumultuous, circuitous journey. Having a community of people available to me who are not only interested in this transition but are also passionate about sharing, exploring, and realizing this hero's journey for themselves has been priceless to me.

Thank you for creating and supporting a vision that is designed to hold so many so beautifully for so long. My life has been forever changed for the better in numerous ways, thank you.

In love and light,

Michelle Fontaine

Dear George,

This is a heartfelt letter of thanks for your amazing contributions to me and to the world. Your life continues to radiate and positively impact so many in the world today.

**Thank you** for your courageous and persistent stand for what is possible for being human and human being. I believe this is the most inspiring aspect of your life for me. We need this so much in our times.

**Thank you** for being the light and shining brightly for all to see. It's easy to be cynical, resigned, and even depressed given the state of the world at this time. It can be hard to see the light in a field of darkness and sad news. You were, and are the light, shining brightly for all to see.

**Thank you** for encouraging us to stay on the path, watch out for pitfalls, stay alert, take the hit as a gift, and have fun - all these messages from you are more important today than ever before.

**Thank you** for bringing the body alive, honoring its wisdom, and helping us access its amazing insights and guidance. In an over-intellectualized western world, the body as teacher is so often dismissed, mistrusted, and lost.

**Thank you** for writing your books so we can continue to learn from you. Something new is available each time I return to them.

**Thank you** for reinventing yourself time and time again, showing us anything is possible at any stage of life if we're willing to passionately pursue it.

**Thank you** for creating some of your greatest work in the later stages of your life. Again, showing us that life is full of possibilities, perhaps even more so as we grow in wisdom and years.

**Thank you** for loving all beings and taking your courageous stand for human rights of all races, colors and creeds.

Thank you for being a profound and potent example for living life fully as a truly integral human, with a head, a heart, a body, and a soul.

**May we live into your example, moving beyond our current condition, and become the integral humans we are destined to be.**

**Thank you George.**

With love, appreciation, and great respect,

Roger Marsh

Dear George,

Know that your spirit and teachings are alive and well and transforming lives in our fair city, Tulsa, and in the Heartland. As you know, ITP Tulsa began in 2005, so we are well into our 13th year with two groups and over 40 members. Your inspiration has led to eight Tulsa graduates of Mastery in the Bay Area, and we have hosted two Mastery in the Heartland experiences.

I find poetry to be helpful in my teaching of ITP. The Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa, speaks to me of your passion for the lives we have been given in his poem: “To be Great, be Entire”

*To be great, be entire,  
Exclude nothing, exaggerate nothing that is not you.  
Be whole in everything. Put all that you are  
Into the least thing you do.  
So, in each lake, the moon shines with splendor  
Because it blooms up above.*

You continue to transform my life and countless other lives, so “For the LOVE of ITP,” George, know that I LOVE you, and Tulsa ITP LOVES you, and the Heartland LOVES you. You continue to shine in splendor in our hearts and bloom up above.

Our Thursday night ITP group Is toasting you right now with glasses held high as your celebration begins at Falkirk.

Love and gratitude,  
Bob Doenges

## This Kind of Love is Possible

I often look at the photo of you at the Corte Madera dojo when I am there with ITP Mastery. Your light shines fresh for me each time. I smile and am glad to be in your ITP lineage. In the Kata CD you recorded, I hear your warm, assuring voice guide each movement. I am grateful to you. I especially appreciate how you invite us, as we open within the quiet of ourselves in Deep Relaxation, to feel the springs of joy within that are always present. I feel your effervescence spilling out of eternity and touching me. I enjoy the photo of you and Annie, your beloved – the passionate love you both shared also spills beyond time to reassure me this kind of love is possible. Sometimes when I feel sad or off track, I reach for *The Silent Pulse* or *The Life We Are Given*, or *Mastery* ...and open to any page and am back, again feeling desire for my own evolutionary adventure in my mind, body, heart and soul. You put into words the feelings, beliefs, convictions that I hold close and that burn inside of me. I feel your faith in the evolutionary power of Love... your faith in the Divine potential of humanity, your faith that we all find our way and grow through transformation. Your convictions, adventuresome spirit, pure excitement for life build me up. I want to carry so many quotes of yours in my hip pocket but my soul soars each time I read the words that open *The Life We Are Given*: “Like the human heart, the world points to beyond itself to something greater and more beautiful than its present condition. That something attracts us all in different ways and leads many of us to seek transformation.”

Thank you with all my heart.  
Sally Mahé, 6th year Mastery student

GEORGE  
KNEW...

## George Leonard Changed my Life!

In the mid 1970's, I was fortunate enough to attend one of George's *Leonard Energy* Training weekends at Esalen. That weekend workshop changed my life - and through the impact it had on me, positively impacted the lives of countless others in the U.S. and beyond.

What I learned from George that weekend, I immediately put to good use in my work. At that time, I was Vice President and Treasurer of The Sears Roebuck Foundation in Chicago, and had been researching the newly emerging field of continuing and adult education. I had already convened a conference of leaders in that field, identified the major needs, and published the results. At that time, colleges did not offer classes at night or weekends - things we now consider normal. And faculty were not thrilled to have adults in their classrooms.

The next step was to get approval to design and fund a program to assist colleges and universities develop and run programs that would serve the needs of adult learners.

On the Monday immediately following that weekend with George, I was scheduled to face a committee of 5 men (regional VP's) to present my request for that funding. While on my red-eye flight back to Chicago and to that meeting, I rethought my approach, integrating what I had just learned from George.

Before George's workshop, I would have gone into that meeting ready to fight - ready to fight back against all the arguments I knew I would be facing. But instead, I applied the invaluable wisdom I had just learned from him. He taught me that when you resist an attack, both the attacker and the one attacked get harmed. He also taught the importance of welcoming an attack, and how to take the attack to the mat so neither the one attacking or the one being attacked is harmed. He also taught me how to ground and center, so I could apply what he was teaching to my everyday life and work.

So, prepared with that wisdom, I arrived at the meeting, I grounded and centered myself, then started my presentation. As I began to speak, the arguments/attacks began. I continued to ground and center. I offered no resistance, verbally welcomed each attack, and dissipated each attack as I blended with it and "took it to the mat." Eventually, having no resistance from me, the guys ran out of things to say, seemed totally bewildered, and approved my proposal! They had no

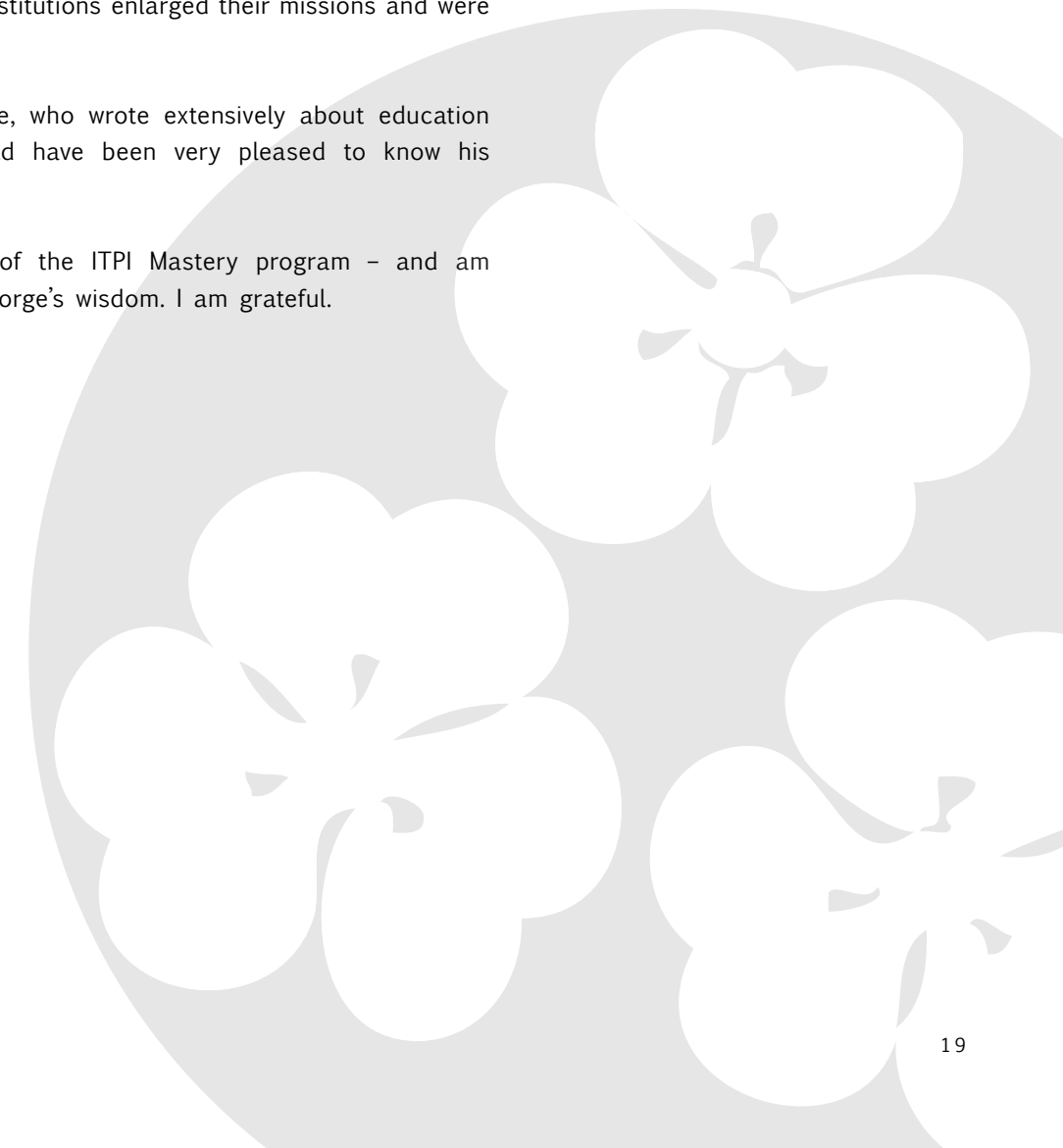
idea what had just happened to them!

Now here's the end result of what that wisdom and work of George helped make possible. Because of gaining that approval, I was eventually able to get the full Foundation board to approve a \$200,000 grant to the Harvard Graduate School of Education to establish the Institute for the Management of Life Long Education, and help support its first two years. Known as MLE, the institute was a yearly, two-week, summer residential program for 75 college faculty and administrators. The grant also assured that the College Board office of Adult Learning services would be involved in the planning of the institute. MLE ran continuously for 20 years until its mission was fully complete. In those 20 years, 1,500 college presidents, provosts, faculty and administrators participated, from the U.S. and beyond. There is no way to estimate how many millions of adult students benefitted - and continue to benefit - from this program designed to support their life-long learning. Or how many educational institutions enlarged their missions and were strengthened as a result.

I'd like to think that George, who wrote extensively about education and human potential, would have been very pleased to know his invaluable part in all this....

I'm now in my 5th cycle of the ITPI Mastery program - and am continuing to learn from George's wisdom. I am grateful.

Sarah Q. Hargrave





Dear Emily, Burr and Mimi,

Thank you so much for sharing your father with us. I so wish he could still be here today! It is hard to fathom the far-reaching impact he has had. He had such a commanding presence and energy of genius. I said to him more than once, “George you are the real deal, the honest truth, in the practice of human transformation,” which usually brought a smile. In addition to being approachable, he also commanded respect and had high standards. I remember his booming voice: “Come on people, we have work to do!” I would never dare be late for anything George was teaching, even if he claimed I could be my own authority!

I remember meeting George in June of 2002. He and Annie were doing a retreat on Integral Transformative Practice at Esalen on (of all weekends) Father’s Day weekend. Two things struck me right away:

His generous sharing of time with the class participants. He joined us for lunches and dinners. He had a deep curiosity as he met each person.

His depth of intellect. He was one of the few people who quickly demonstrated deep book smarts, musical smarts martial art smarts, and street smarts, all in the first hour of knowing him!

As a result of that first ITP workshop, there were many more ITP workshops and ultimately a journey of practice that is still going strong 16 years later. I am extremely grateful for his thought work on long-term practice. It truly changed my life or the better.

I could go on and on. There are very few people who can hope to compare to George Leonard in capacity and impact. He was an amazing person, an integral rock star, a person loved by many, and an inspiration to us all.

Kim Kristenson-Lee

Hi George,

Our ITP Mastery 2018 group is called to write letters from each of us to you and I am honored. I am especially honored since I have not had the opportunity to meet you in the flesh. However, I was invited by my friend to join you in the early nineties for study and exploration.

Life had other plans for me so I feel we are meeting now sans flesh and bones. Perhaps this is what was meant to be in that I have come to know you in that pure essential energetic way that is really who we are and what I consider to be that real place in the universe that is both human and fully divine. In that place of grace and wonder that allows us to feel our connection with the universe and in the hearts of all sentient beings. In this way I have come to know you and I am grateful. I am grateful for the depth of your understanding and wisdom and the gifts we continue to receive from you that embellish and enrich my life. As I continue on the path of Mastery and all the passions of my life, I feel your essential energy along the way as gentle guidance and example.

Thank you, George. I am blessed to know you, to find all that is needed for this journey at hand and within reach on the rise of my full potential. Somehow I sense your finer essence along with O'Sensei and can only imagine the joy you must feel there. O'Sensei has said "since all things function according to love, all things are in effect one body, one universal mind." Your love continues to breathe life into our hearts and grace into our bodies. I am filled with much gratitude and love for the Life I've Been Given.

In Love, Gratitude and Friendship,

Tom Lewis

## Felt a Vast Darkness

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Today is the spring equinox in 2018, where the sunrise and sunset across the earth's northern plane is balanced and centered! I am happy to think of you today, as well as the times in the grand upstairs Mill Valley dojo with you 16 years ago. Your voice and towering directions in the Kata remain with me to this day. So too, does a deeply meaningful experience from your instructions of a "random walk, stop and center, and sense what is behind you." I thought it was a bit strange at first, as you told us to bring our attention to the back of our body, to imagine eyes in the back or knees and just feel/see what is there.

*Don't Look! You said. Just see if you can sense something. What is there behind you?*

Well, I felt a strange but familiar sensation, kind of a warmth, as if there was a vastness, an infinite black space, at my back. Although it was a surprise to feel this vast darkness as I stood in the brightly lit dojo room, it also felt like a "friendly Universe." You told us to imagine or visualize what is there, perhaps a person, or the wall of the dojo or beyond, but I could not.

Then you had us all turn around to look at what we felt behind us. When I turned around, my eyes were startled to see the large framed photo of O'Sensei, just 4 or 5 feet away! As the surprise wore off, I took in that unique posture of O'Sensei, his big dark eyebrows and serene but focused visage. Although I did not know exactly what to make of it at the time, I'd had an inquiry going on for a while, where I sensed a something like a big mystery, a something vast and unknown, but very interesting, at my back, behind my heart and body. Your "LET" exercise was a brilliant experience of this unspoken sense, and eventually brought me into a deep appreciation of O'Sensei's teachings of AIKI, and especially for a community with others who also were curious and exploring these realms.

Now I can say THANK YOU, GEORGE, as your class led me into time in that dojo with Wendy Palmer's classes, and then into the Mill Valley community and Pam Kramer's salon and the meditation group with Michael Murphy. Eventually I was fortunate enough to find the special ITP community that I have been in joyful connection with, as we explore your Leonard Energy Training and Kata, with the ITP foundation in the treasure book *The Life We Are Given*.



Mostly I am grateful to you for the recognition and teaching of practices to a Western audience for balance, vitality and state of 'egoless not-doing that is the very essence of creation and grace,' as you say in *The Life We Are Given* - and just as importantly for the folks in the ITP community who enjoy ITP practice into the 'further territories' of human potential. My heartfelt thanks for the lasting friendships that are continually birthed in the shared journeys and collaborations in the ITP path of evolutionary Love. There is much joy here!!!

George, I know that you are very proud of the core ITP team, as they are rowing the boat ever further upstream to the source, with the occasional furutama to shake things up! (Furutama, The shake up, to stir, with a sense of polish, the soul itself.)

Julie Ann Perkins

## An Enormous Field of Love

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To Ellen, Mimi, and Emily,

Of all your dad's essays and books, *The End of Sex* published in 1983 is my favorite. The front cover describes this book as the "Erotic Love After the Sexual Revolution...A call to loving arms, a demand for a revival of true eroticism." George distinguishes between erotic love and sexual love. This two hundred twenty-page book written thirty years ago is filled with profound wisdom that continues to be relevant to this day.

Jeffrey Kripal's great book, *Esalen, America and the Religion of No Religion* is an amazing history of Esalen and a wonderful tribute to all the different people who helped to create Esalen as the consciousness raising center it continues to be today. Speaking of George, Kripal suggests that the nature and spirit of his writing style, meta-physical sensibilities, and moral message - in other words, George's work was totally focused on learning about 'who we are' and how to actualize the human potential movement.

Kripal says that George is very much present in the subjects he writes about. "Once one has met him in person one quickly realizes that the

pages and the person express the same presence... A hint of jazz... An occasional war story...

A method of argument that resembles the 'blending' of an aikido throw... An ecstatic quality to his writing that turns to the body for its deepest intuitions and creative impulses, and a fearless condemnation of social injustice in all its forms and a careful suspicion of all things religious or dogmatic. These are the rhythms of George Leonard as text, as body, and as personal presence," Jeff says.

"When working for Look Magazine, George won a total of eleven awards on education reporting that led to his first published book 'Education and Ecstasy' in 1968. "Ecstasy - Ananda, the ultimate delight George insisted was needed for real human flourishing was a more integral understanding of cultural accomplishment that could move beyond the limited visions of both the Western and the Eastern traditions...There is a place where the successful control of practical matters and the attainment of ecstasy can safely coexist; where each reinforces the other; and quite possible, where neither can long exist without the other and that the times demand that we choose delight."

Jeff says George was not writing about personal emotions. "He was convinced rather that ontological delight had real social pay-offs, that it could offer humanity a positive vision of what cultures could be in the future rather than what they have been in the past. For Leonard, the cultivation of joy as the deepest secret of human nature was the only long-term solution to the engrossing interests and horrors of war that he understood firsthand. He suspected, moreover, that any serious pursuit of a technology of ecstasy would eventually lead individuals to the human potential, that is, to what has traditionally been labeled the 'psychic,' the 'mystical,' even the 'fantastic.' Noting the human ability to harness through technology what were previously undreamed of electromagnetic energies, he insists that education can now dream of harnessing the invisible energies of that vast, unknown realm that we call the 'mystical.' There is, in other words, a future science of mysticism, a technology of ecstasy, that lies at the heart of the evolving human potential, and Leonard was out to propose it as the very heart of the future of American education."

Here and now thirty-five years later, the subjects George wrote about in his early books are bombarding us daily. We all know in our hearts



that George truly knew what he so desperately shared. Jeff says that it was the experience of unimaginable racial injustice that left the most indelible mark on George Leonard's soul, and that this realization made it impossible for him to look upon society or religion innocently. He knew how both subtle and gross the prejudice could be and how deep it ran through every social and religious institution of the land. We are blessed that George had the courage to speak out. Of all I have learned and continue to learn each day, I am so thankful for this life I have been given and the amazing gift of George and Michael's work.

Marjorie Weingrow, creator of the SAGE program at UCB introduced me to George in San Francisco where he was being interviewed at the Commonwealth Club. Kripal's so beautifully chosen words perfectly describe George's excellent essence. That evening in George's presence I felt as if we had known each other for a long time and that we were connected in an enormous field of love; a field of unconditional urgent love of ourselves and this beautiful Earth we call our home. Integral Transformative Practice offers opportunities for us to grow stronger in our love and in our actions of connection with the Divine.

I have been engaged in George and Michael's work about twelve years or so; this year is my ninth cycle with the Mastery Group. I am thankful for the opportunity to love so many people and to participate with this incredibly adventurous community that George and Michael created. Thank you, George's daughters for all the joy you provided to George that continues today through his books and workshops. Your Dad continues to make a difference for so many people.

Marlene Frothinger

"Perhaps we'll never know how far the path can go, how much a human being can truly achieve, until we realize that the ultimate reward is not a gold medal but the path itself."

-George Leonard, *Mastery*

## Pivotal in our Lives

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We would like to write a quick note to thank you for embarking of a life of courage -- the courage to follow your flow and give us a road map of practice and creativity. We only hope we can stand on your shoulders and continue the expansion with the grounding of practice you set.

We feel the work you've done, including your work with Michael Murphy has been pivotal in our lives. I (Stan) especially want to thank you both for having the courage to include the suggestion of setting a meta-normal goal. I set a goal to become an energy healer through qigong which has lead to a very interesting life path.

We continue to practice and study and grow and share. You continue to be an inspiration! Thank you. With deep gratitude,

Stan and LoAnne Olson - Tokyo, Japan

Dear George,

Whenever I came to an ITP event, George would always take the time to chat with me. Check in on how I was doing... talk a bit of fashion and art or whatever was going on in my life. He always made me feel included....and I was very appreciative of this.

I'm happy I got to know him and I will always have a fond memory of him. George was a prince of a man.

Christine Robbins

## Tradition of Generosity

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Emily, Burr & Mimi,

George Leonard was a Renaissance man.

My wife Linda and I think about your dad George Leonard often. He had a profound impact on our lives. We will never be the same. We first met George and Annie at an Esalen ITP Workshop. I was immediately awe struck with his presence, resonant voice, wisdom, open heart, generosity, presentation skill, talented writing and the Kata practice that he created.

ITP and the Kata have become a daily part of my life. On a practical level my physical strength, endurance, vitality and health are quite remarkable. My mind is keen and curious. My heart embraces love and compassion for all beings. My soul is vibrant. I must honestly give a large measure of credit to George for this gift.

I have many George Leonard quotes that inspire me. My favorite is, "You are the Universe." There is deep wisdom in that proclamation. I recall in 2005 when George called me with unbridled excitement and announced, "Jerry, We are taking ITP to the world!" Jim and Christina Grote had agreed to engage attorneys to create the ITP International non-profit corporation and provide five years of operating funds. He could not contain his delight and enthusiasm. It was a memorable and magical moment for me.

George's favorite word was "generous". Thank you for carrying on your dad's tradition of generosity and giving ITPI the rights to the publication of your dad's and Michael's marvelous guidebook for ITP practice, *The Life We Are Given*. How generous!

With love & appreciation,

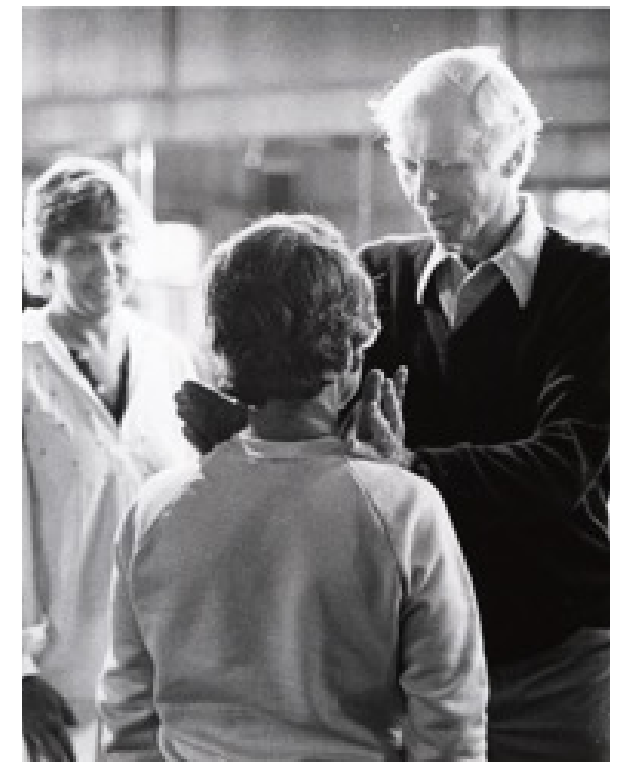
Jerry & Linda Patchen






"PERHAPS THE SAFEST PREDICTION WE  
CAN MAKE ABOUT THE FUTURE IS THAT  
IT WILL SURPRISE US."

- GEORGE LEONARD, *THE SILENT PULSE*





“There is a human striving for self-transcendence. It’s part of what makes us human. With all of our flaws we want to go a little bit further than we’ve gone before and maybe even further than anyone else has gone before.”

-George Leonard, *Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-term Fulfillment*



THANKS TO OUR ITP COMMUNITY FOR CARRYING FORWARD THE VISION AND PRACTICE OF INTEGRAL TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICE. YE HO!