

From ITP Integral Leadership to Recovery Transportation Systems

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www.recoverytransportationsystems.org

When ITP took the big step to begin the Integral Leadership Program in the fall of 2018, I was excited. Fortunately, I had completed six ITP Mastery cycles prior to the start of the Leadership Training Program, so I felt I was well prepared. However, previous training in Mastery is not a requisite since the content of the leadership program represents the fundamental teachings of Michael Murphy and George Leonard in a well-balanced format.



My leadership goal in 2018 came to me as an epiphany one afternoon with my daughter. The notion of tapping into the ride-share industry for more than just transportation from point A to point B seemed so clear, positive, and resourceful. I saw that harnessing the ride-share industry to provide “free” transportation to individuals in addiction recovery would overcome a huge obstacle that stood in the way of their success and ultimately

change their lives. Free rides would be used to court appointments, job interviews, NA and AA meetings and a variety of court appointed destinations mandated to stay in treatment. We have taken transportation for granted in the modern era, yet most people in treatment do not have transportation. I realized it was a major obstacle and one that creates stress and anxiety often leading to recidivism and a downward spiral.

It was like uncovering a vast reserve of energy that only needed tapping into, refined and channeled in a way that brings aid to a vulnerable population in addiction and homelessness. The subjects of addiction and homelessness are in the top tier of challenges we have in our modern society. Of the two, addiction may be the most difficult. However, the idea had its

own momentum. The thought that I could make a difference in the lives of those suffering from addiction by giving them free transportation to the services they need to be successful in their recovery was energizing!

It was with this energizing purpose of making a change and contribution to the vulnerable segment of our society that I entered the ITP Leadership Training Program in 2018.

William James argued in 1880 that individual human beings can make a difference in the course of history. Whether through self-leadership, communal leadership, passive leadership or the leadership of greatness, the ITP program allowed us to take a deep dive into all the aspects of leadership. We each found the best path to create, sustain and implement our visions through the principles of ITP and founders Michael Murphy and George Leonard. Practicing staying current and learning to stay connected with our feelings are vehicles that gave us purpose and validated our visions of leadership. Creating and practicing affirmations helped us to make the subtle changes needed to manifest our visions of change, the essence of integral transformation.

I greatly appreciated Emanuel Kuntzelman's visit one day to our program. We each were asked to announce our leadership vision while summarizing our goals. I announced my vision of creating a non-profit that provides free transportation for individuals in addiction recovery programs in partnership with a ride-share company, such as Lyft or Uber. He responded, "That's a worthy goal. Do not do it alone. Find people to support your vision." That opened new pathways for me to see hope in accomplishing my goal. I've always "flown solo." I have created businesses and saw them to fruition, bootstrapping, on my own initiative. Suddenly, I felt I could be supported by community.

After the ITP Leadership Training cycle ended, I began to reach out to other Integral Leadership members like Sally Mahé. I reached out in my home community and found an ally in an old friend who has also experienced a child in addiction. After an annual retreat to the desert, we returned to launch *Recovery Transportation System* (RTS). RTS is now a California corporation with a fiscal sponsor, Social Good Fund. Our mission is to provide free transportation for individuals in bona fide addiction recovery programs. We have an office in Petaluma and a website:



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Our vision includes advocacy for change in the judicial system to influence how addiction is adjudicated and to reduce stigma. Our board of directors includes people with experience in creating non-profits for change.

We have launched a successful pilot program in Sonoma County for six residential recovery homes. We have successfully gained the support of county senators, assembly people and a variety of stakeholders in the addiction recovery system in Sonoma County through personal visits and Zoom gatherings. We have the support of drug court judges in both Massachusetts and Sonoma County. Currently, we are designing a program that will be implemented in the Sonoma County Superior Courts. This program will be scalable to other counties throughout California. We have an active partnership with Lyft's corporate office in NYC. We are proud to have their active support. They have a national vision for our non-profit, and we are creating the foundation that will support that vision.

I am proud to be a part of the ITP Integral Leadership Training. Like any path there will be plateaus, high and low. All the above spans 20 months from the day RTS was born as an epiphany through today. It has been an organic and seamless discovery. Removing obstacles to recovery is transforming lives. I have been in the architectural restoration business for 47 years. Now we are restoring one soul at a time.

George Leonard quotes a wonderful verse in his book *Mastery* by Chinese Zen master Layman P'ang. I would love to share it here in conclusion about what I feel is the essence of true leadership:

My daily affairs are quite ordinary;
but I'm in total harmony with them.
I don't hold on to anything,
don't reject any-thing;
nowhere an obstacle or conflict.
Who cares about wealth and honor?
Even the poorest thing shines.
My miraculous power and spiritual activity:
drawing water and carrying wood.