

ITP International

Online Global Dojo – Journey of Practice

Integral Leadership - Defined

Definition of Leadership from Dictionary.com: to go before or with to show the way; to guide in direction, course, action, opinion, etc.; to conduct or bring in a particular course; to serve to bring (a person) to a place; to act as a guide; show the way; to afford passage to a place; to go first; be in advance.

Historically Leadership has been thought of as an act of guiding or showing others the way, through a particular course, so as to arrive at a place, result, or outcome. The leader is often seen as the one out front and going first, while others follow. Very often the leader is considered the one most informed and therefore most capable of telling others what to do.

Over recent decades there has been much study of the practice of leadership. Generally speaking, the 1980's focused on "What is leadership?" The 1990's focused more on "How does one lead?" And the current exploration is "From where does one lead?" This current question of "from where" is particularly relevant for distinguishing how Integral Leadership is different from leadership as it has been known in the past.

Integral Leadership both transcends and includes the definition and activities of leadership, as it has been historically defined. As an Integral Leader one does guide, show the way, influence, and afford passage to a place or result. And the Integral Leader does in fact go first and be in advance. What's new for the Integral Leader is three things: 1) where they are leading from, and 2) how they are leading (leadership practices), and 3) their purpose for leading and being a leader. Let's look at each of these in turn:

I) From Where

Integral Leaders are intimately connected to an energy and intelligence that is both in the world and beyond it. Joseph Jaworski states this clearly in his article *The Advent of Stage IV Leadership*, where he says "They hold the conviction that there is an underlying intelligence within the universe that is capable of guiding us and preparing us for the futures we must create. They combine their cognitive understanding of the world around them with a strong personal sense of possibility – the possibility of actualizing hidden potentials lying dormant in the universe, a view that carries with it the power to change the world as we know it."

Sri Aurobindo put it this way "The individual does not owe his ultimate allegiance either to the State which is a machine or to the community which is a part of life and not the whole of life: his allegiance must be to the Truth, the Self, the Spirit, the Divine which is in him and in all; not to subordinate or lose himself in the mass, but to find and express that truth of being in himself and help the community and humanity in its seeking for its own truth and fullness of being must be his real object of existence."

In his presentations, Michael Murphy has often called this place “the white space” as he pointed to the spaces between things, behind things, holding and connecting things on a chart pad he was working with. Morihei Ueshiba simply said, “I am the Universe.” In all their actions, Integral Leaders are informed by and come from this deep place of knowing and guidance within themselves.

2) How

As the term implies, Integral Leaders honor all parts of themselves and those they lead: Body, Mind, Heart, and Soul. Each of these four integral parts has a place and a role within their Integral Leadership practice. True to ITP, they know how to tap into the “body as teacher” and are listening carefully for these messages and guidance from within.

Distinct from the command and control hierarchical leadership styles of the past, Integral Leaders work with and through others; more in the form of a circle as an integral part vs. as a pyramid placed at the top. Rather than telling others what to do, they facilitate authentic inquiry; co-creating, co-discovering and co-inspiring the best path forward in each unique moment and situation.

An Integral Leader is a powerful force for positive transformation and creation on the planet. This capacity for positive transformation and creation, for Integral Leadership, is realized through developing the following skills and capacities:

- They can connect, and re-connect, to Source, to the white space of life, to the place from which life is emerging
- They can discern and distinguish ego-based drives and needs from soul-based insights and guidance (and can follow the latter)
- They ensure the root cause of their actions is love based vs. fear based; they continually ask “Am I coming from fear or love?” and seek to choose and come from love
- They have the capacity to surrender; to trust the process, outcome and larger forces at work; they understand and practice focused surrender; they can balance doing and being
- They are patient and embrace divine right timing, never forcing an outcome or result
- They have the ability to change the context; taking the hit as a gift
- They are pathfinders; they can see a bigger and better vision and help others to see it too
- They are clear on their own path, passions and work in the world; they know what brings them joy and they follow that impulse of expression
- They have the capacity to hear, encourage, and elicit the highest and best in others; they can see and speak to the soul’s path in others; they can listen others into their own authentic power
- They are masters at creating spaces for others to contribute their best; to be and contribute their own unique inner genius

It's important to note that the most important skill and practice is connecting to Source, to the white space, to God or Universal Intelligence, however you want to say it. If this is done, the rest will naturally flow. If this is not done, the rest may never come. In other words, the most important distinction and skill of an Integral Leader is where they are coming from.

3) A Higher Purpose

Regardless of what their short term, immediate intention or desired outcome might be, Integral Leaders are aligned with the evolutionary intention and destiny of the Universe and the realization of every citizen's positive potential. As George Leonard and Michael Murphy have written in *The Life We Are Given* "We believe that society could find no better primary intention, no more appropriate compass course for its programs and policies, than the realization of every citizen's positive potential. We mean the potential inherent in every aspect of our lives, from the most commonplace to the most extraordinary, the hidden capabilities that wait to be summoned forth, not just in the mind but also in the body, heart, and soul. Such a compass course might create clarity where there is now confusion and bring the human psyche into harmony with nature and the cosmos. At best, it could open the way to the ultimate adventure, during which much of what has been metamormal would become normal, and some who read these pages would be privileged to share the next stage in the world's unfolding splendor."

ITPI VISION AND MISSION

Vision: Awaken the world to its fullest potential.

Mission: Advance the adventure of Integral Transformative Practice.