



ITP Group Leader Musings – November 2017

San Rafael

The ITP San Rafael group held open sessions during the month of October. Roger Marsh was a guest presenter offering a special session on an introductory workshop entitled "A Taste of ITP." The newly released ITP video was shown as part of his presentation. Pam Kramer presented on mining the gold during transitions in life at another open session. We welcomed in three new members to our group and look forward to a strong new cycle of practice with our warm, openhearted community. YeHo!

Thousand Oaks

ITP Thousand Oaks Group has evolved into a very close and dedicated spiritual community. Our group affirmation, written in 2012, has come to fruition and we are all filled up by our Saturday morning time together. Here is our affirmation: "IToPians are deeply committed to each other and to our collective and individual spiritual growth through loving, caring support and authentic, clear, non-judgmental, uplifting communication."

Recently, we decided on two group projects that brought us closer together and benefit others on the spiritual path. We created a centerpiece blanket that has each member of our group doing the Kata. Nicole Pate, who is an artist, worked with Nathalie Gosset, our talented group member to choose colors and design. Then Nathalie photographed each one of us posing in Kata moves using a special technique to create beautiful silhouettes. The blanket makes us feel connected to each other and also serves to remind Kata veterans and newbies of their Kata moves.

Our other long-term group project is a self-awareness game. When Sunil Mehrotra had difficulty understanding the ITP staying current practice, our group came together. Sunil and Sheri led the group in producing a card game to help people create more self-awareness of emotions, feelings and body / mind states. We call the game Witness Cards. Many of the ITP larger community have contributed and given us feedback on how much the game has positively impacted them. We have professionally produced the cards and sell them at a reasonable price to Mental Health practitioners, clients and community members. Additionally, Focusband, a neurofeedback company, is currently testing our cards in app form.

2017 has also been a year of transitions for our group. We lost Sheri's mom, Mary, and founding member of ITP TO to Acute Myeloid Leukemia in February. And in May, several group members announced that they were buying a home out of the area, at least part time, for retirement and family reasons...grandchildren and children! This year will be a year of leaning deeply into our spiritual practice and supporting one another. We are grateful for one another and for ITP!

Tulsa

Technology: A New Adventure

In *The Life We Are Given*, George and Michael devote a whole chapter to the “Magic of Community.” Those of us fortunate enough to have an ITP group close know of that magic. However, we also know people who are not that fortunate, and in Tulsa we wanted to expand the opportunities for them.

Aaron participated in Mastery in the Heartland for two years. He lives in Arkansas—much too far to drive to Tulsa for ITP sessions. During the Mastery Course, he talked about wanting to start a group where he lives, but didn’t know how to do it. He’d never, after all, been to a group meeting.

For the past few months, Aaron has been Skyping into our Thursday meetings. At first, it was a bit awkward, but with time, we’ve gotten more comfortable. We position the device so he can see a couple of participants during the Kata and he does it with us. Members in the room remember to make sure he can see who is speaking and he shares his thoughts and practice. We feel he is a part of our group and believe he feels the same way. The Magic of Community expanded through the magic of technology.

Bordeaux

The Spirit of Adventure and Wonder

Our ITP Bordeaux Saturday group started in January 2016. A few months later, more people wanted to join the group and couldn't do it on Saturdays. So, we opened a Monday morning group on September 2016. For the first few months, we studied the Kata. Exploring that practice we realized that we had forgotten the spirit of adventure and wonder – now reclaimed!

Translating the book *The Life We Are Given*, I had to study it. And when I went to California, I studied more about LET. I also started to give feedback to my group members about the GLEE calls, so we were led to talk about exploring the unknown and extraordinary capacities of the human being.

So we decided to go further. We took time to experiment LET exercises.

We always do work on Balancing and Centering, and on the Kata. But these last meetings, we tried the LET exercise, Energy Arm, and some meditations on affirmations.

Our three sessions on affirmations included the following: on the first meditation, you visualize the movie of your last year and name it, on the second meditation, you visualize yourself with a large suitcase in each hand, in front of the door opening to the future. You can't step through the door with both suitcases. What do you leave to go on? How is it on the other side of the door? And on the third session, you share with the group and write your affirmation. Very important, you may ask if you want a special person to help with your affirmation, like a brother or sister in affirmation.

People had such nice visions. One member saw herself walking in her dreams, and it was full of colors. Members had the feeling to make a dangerous choice in dropping a suitcase, but they all did. In the end, we all could leave the group for the summer with a new affirmation.

It was not only thinking and writing, it was a real adventure in the body that we could experience with with wonder and awe.