

Integral Life Practice

How to Design Your Own Training Program
for Body, Mind, and Spirit

By Ken Wilber, Terry Patten, Adam Leonard, and Marco Morelli

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Prologue

“The Great Experiment”

For thousands of years, in almost all parts of the globe, human beings have engaged in **practices** to transform and balance their lives. From the magical rituals of ancient shamans, to the contemplative science of the mystical traditions, to the latest breakthroughs in health, nutrition, and physical exercise—we humans have always sought ways to connect with deeper truths, to achieve well-being and harmony, and to realize our highest potentials.

Now, in the information age, this incredible wealth of knowledge, teachings, and techniques—our evolutionary human legacy—is available to us like never before. The question is, how can we best use it? How can we put it all together? How can we make sense of the myriad of approaches, from such diverse places and times, in a way that’s relevant to our individual and collective lives?

Our answer to these questions amounts to an experiment in the deepest sense—an amazing and humbling and life-long adventure in consciousness itself, in humanity (and divinity) itself—a trek into the future of our own bodies, minds, and spirit. That’s not to say this book presents an unproven approach—far from it. Rather, it means that in order to see the “data” (and taste the fruits) of practice, you must be willing to try the

experiment on yourself. This is, we believe, one of the most exciting and rewarding of all possible endeavors.

Integral Life Practice is a way of organizing the many practices handed down through the centuries—along with those developed at the cutting edge of psychology, consciousness studies, and other leading fields—using a framework optimized for life in the 21st century. It is, at once, ancient and modern, Eastern and Western, speculative and scientific, and yet also something beyond those dichotomies. Integral Life Practice (or ILP) is *integral*—which means “comprehensive, whole, and balanced.” It’s a synthesis of the “best of the best” that our traditions have to offer, combined with the most state-of-the-art transformational techniques. ILP is a free and fearless exploration of the terrain of your own being and awareness.

At **Integral Institute**, and in the worldwide Integral community, we’ve been developing ILP for over 30 years, researching the most essential keys to human growth. We’re proud to present the results in this book. To get started, all you need is the willingness to give it a try—to carry on the Great Experiment in your own life.

Whether you’re a beginner or a more advanced practitioner exploring an integral approach to practice, we hope this book will be exceptionally useful to you. We look forward to helping you reach your highest aspirations, as we grow together toward a brighter here and now.

Chapter 1

Why Practice?

Integral Life Practice starts where all practice starts—with inspiration, a yearning to grow, to become “all that you can be.”

Sometimes the choice to practice comes after you’ve been touched, opened, or maybe even awakened by something or someone profoundly *true*. Sometimes it’s the heartbreaking lessons of life—the experience of intense suffering, meaninglessness, or pain.

Maybe it’s the inspiring example of someone living an uncompromised life; or reading a book full of mind-blowing insights; or the extraordinary presence of a saint, sage, or teacher. Maybe it’s the death of a friend or loved-one. Or maybe your conventional life is simply undone, because you suddenly see through your own game.

Somehow you get a glimpse of a freer, clearer, more authentic, loving, and true existence—and you want to live it.

People have been inspired like this for thousands of years. Those who got bit by the bug often became monks, nuns, shamans, or yogis—surrendering their lives to a mystical spiritual path. Others did it in alternative forms, becoming samurai or martial

artists—giving themselves over with great intensity to a transformational discipline.

Serious, traditional stuff, eh?

But it ain't necessarily so. Even though there's a lot of wisdom and beauty in the traditions, practice by nature is *extremely alive*. It continually reinvents itself. It breaks free of all bonds. It doesn't have to be a certain way—and certainly not *only* the way of the traditions.

In truth, the traditions have always depended on innovation and improvisation. And so we continue the tradition of... breaking with tradition (while still drinking deeply from the wisdom of the past). Why? Because the world keeps changing. *We* keep changing. Human life has evolved—and so has practice.

An individual Integral Life Practice has many layers and dimensions. It goes as deep as you do, and flexes to fit your unique life. It can (and will) go through countless cycles and mutations. But the *essence* of ILP is simple, and it embodies the intention of authentic practice in every context, ancient or modern: to be *true*, *real*, and *whole*—to *wake up* in all directions and dimensions of your being.

Integral Life Practice means living for real. It's "getting real" with life—perhaps like never before. Or it's taking the real-ness you already have to a higher, more integrated level. ILP expresses your impulse to be as fully aware as possible—now and now and *now*—and to grow in that awareness over time.

It's also founded in deep care—care for ourselves, for others, and for this mysterious existence. This care inspires us to want to make a difference, to give more,

to cut through the bullshit of narrow and fragmented views, and to magnify the freedom, love, openness, and depth in us, in others, and in this beautiful, terrible world.

And, from a certain perspective, practice is simply *what is*—it's a personal choice and an authentic lifestyle—not really something to make a big fuss about....

Here are a few more possible reasons for engaging an ILP:

- Embracing and working with pain and suffering
- Becoming a better person—on all levels, in all areas
- Living with integrity and excellence
- Getting over yourself
- Waking up!
- Living according to your highest ideals
- Finding and/or living your deepest purpose
- Loving and caring for others more fully
- Communing with life, the universe, and Spirit
- Participating in the evolution of consciousness
- Because you're in love with the Mystery
- No specific reason—it's just what you're drawn to do

Many people come to ILP after an experience with a specific type of practice, which, at a certain point, no longer seems full or inclusive enough. ILP makes room for you to bring everything to the path:

- You may have experience training for physical excellence or competitive sports.
- Maybe you've disciplined your mind and emotions for peak performance in business.
- Perhaps you've practiced yoga or meditation, maybe even for years.
- You may have undergone deep psychological work, facing your shadow and exploring your past.
- You might have come to practice out of your deeply felt devotion to God or a beloved teacher or guide.
- Maybe your interest in ILP comes through your scholarship and thirst for understanding.

Some radical teachers and teachings point out the limitations buried within many of our motivations for practice. Most of us at least begin practice as “spiritual materialists,” motivated to perfect or fulfill our separate self-sense. But our exclusive commitment to self-centered motives tends to loosen and relax as we mature. The most fundamental paradox is that of *seeking*. Everyone begins the path as a seeker, and yet, the seeker must outgrow the notion that “something’s missing”—and thus give up seeking—for the path to be fulfilled. So our motives do naturally evolve.

But none of them are wrong. We don't need to wait until our motives are perfectly pure. People find countless reasons for practice—and every motivation for practice *is valid... and partial*. The beauty of practice is that it transforms us so that we outgrow our

original intentions—and keep going! Our motivations for practicing evolve as we mature. Each of our motivations for practice contributes something to our path, even if we eventually leave it behind.

Ultimately, all our motivations and intentions converge in the present moment:
What is our practice *right now*?

There's no single best or right way to practice, but there are plenty of less than optimal ways. ILP drops the baggage and cuts to the essentials, so you can easily find a practice that works for you, with a minimum of wasted time.

Shall we begin?

About the Practices in this Book

Peppered throughout this book are experiential practices. These are provided to help you convert theory into action. Some practices are explicitly “integral” and custom-designed for ILP—these are called Gold Star Practices. Others are taken from different sources, but are adapted to an integral context. Some Gold Star Practices also come in an ultra-condensed form called a **1-Minute Module**. You can use one of these anytime as a virtually effortless way to bring practice into your daily life—instantly!

When we say “experiential,” we mean this in the broadest sense. At a minimum, there are *bodily* experiences, *mental* experiences, and *spiritual* experiences. When you see a Gold Star Practice or 1-Minute Module, try to open yourself to whatever form of experience is involved: bodily, mental, spiritual, or any combination of the above.

1-Minute Module:

What's Your Deepest Motivation?



It's important to connect with what practice means for *you*. Here's a way to check in with your motivation. You can try this now, but really, it's a great thing to do regularly, at the beginning of any practice session—and it takes less than a minute!

Place both hands over your heart, and take a few deep breaths. Feel any activity in your mind, heart, and gut. Now, thoughtfully feel into your deepest motivation for

practice. What is your real desire? What's behind the "pushes" or "pulls" that you're experiencing right now? What's arising in your self-awareness?

It need not be only one thing, or anything in particular. You might be seeking something extraordinary; you might just be curious about what will happen; or you might feel something that you can't really describe. Simply feel what motivates you most deeply in this moment, and be aware of it.

Finally, feel or be aware of the *witness* of your experience. Who is the experiencer behind this and every experience? Who is it that's aware of (and therefore not) your motivations?

Breathe and relax into this awareness for a few moments....

Then let it go, and move on.

Chapter 2

What Is Integral Life Practice?

Whatever your motivation, the intention to begin, renew, or deepen a practice is a wonderful first step. But once you've made that choice, how do you follow through with it? Thirty years of experience have shown us that your practice will turn to mush without a framework for organizing it—preferably an *integral* framework, one that's inclusive and flexible enough to make your intention a reality.

A Radically Inclusive Approach

The Integral Life Practice framework allows for maximum flexibility. It's not a program you must follow uncritically, humorlessly, and perhaps even with a sense of superiority, until you're enlightened, more successful, better-looking, and hopefully perfect, someday. It gives you a set of tools for designing your own unique and personalized practice, in whatever form works best for you right now, with the understanding that “what works best” will change over time.

The “Integral” part of ILP is that it is **radically inclusive**. To do this, it draws on a conceptual map called AQAL (which stands for “All Quadrants, All Levels”—we'll get deeper into this in a moment). AQAL is a *theory of everything*, a way of comprehending

life and reality in very broad yet precise terms. AQAL (pronounced *ah-qwul*) is a map of consciousness, the Kosmos*, and human development, at every level and in every dimension that presents itself.

Technically speaking, AQAL is a map of maps, or a *meta-theory* that incorporates the core truths from hundreds of other theories. It organizes the profound insights of the spiritual traditions, philosophy, modern science, developmental psychology, and many other disciplines, into one, coherent whole. AQAL accounts for the many perspectives that great thinkers, teachers, and researchers have brought to our understanding of self and world.

But it doesn't stop there, because AQAL is also immediately intuitive—it describes the *terrain of your own awareness*. In Chapters 3 and 5, we focus on how AQAL can help you see deeper into yourself, your relationships, and the world at large.

Integral Life Practice is “Powered by AQAL”

Because AQAL attempts to map the entire known Kosmos, ILP engages nearly every aspect of our lives. As you embark on an Integral Life Practice you will learn to hold more perspectives, and to do so more freely and flexibly, exercising every dimension of your being. This inclusiveness is why we regard practice as a matter of whole-person *feeling-intelligence*—body, mind, and spirit. Integral Life Practice is AQAL applied to life—a life of conscious evolution in all parts of your being.

In creating Integral Life Practice we asked some key questions:

* **Kosmos** with a 'K' is the word the ancient Greeks used to denote a universe that includes, not just stars and planets and black holes, i.e., physical reality (which is what “Cosmos” usually means), but also the realms of mind, soul, society, art, Spirit, i.e., *everything*.

- What are the most effective and essential practices of the ancient traditions?
- What new insights into practice are offered by the most current discoveries?
- How can we find the “patterns that connect” the most diverse insights and methodologies?
- How can we use this knowledge to promote a lifetime of growth and awakening?

As grand as this may sound, the results are not particularly complex or difficult to grasp. Integral Life Practice is designed for and by people living within the pressurized schedules of the 21st century. You can't afford to waste your time any more than we can. That's why, if a practice isn't high-leverage, you won't find it here. But we haven't cut corners either. If you want to go truly *deep* in your practice, ILP can help you do that quickly and directly.

How does ILP work? First, we suggest a **modular** approach to practice. An ILP *module* is a category of practice that relates to a specific part of your being. Identifying your practice modules will give you an overview of your practice life, allowing you to determine which areas you're exercising and which you're leaving out.

One of the benefits of a modular approach is that with just a handful of modules you can engage all the key areas of your life—while maintaining full choice of exactly *how* you do so. ILP does not dictate the specific practices you should do. Rather, it

suggests a few general areas—i.e., modules—that are essential, and others that are also important but optional, and then allows you to decide exactly how you want to engage those areas. This makes it easier to choose the practices that are right for you, while still covering all the bases.

Second, ILP is **scalable**, which means you can simplify and shorten your practice to mesh with your time availability. Do you sometimes (or usually!) find yourself too busy for practice? You can do a basic form of Integral Life Practice in as little as ten minutes a day. Thus, *anyone*, no matter how busy, can have an Integral Life Practice.

Are you interested in deep and rapid transformation? You can also use the ILP principles to engage a committed life of practice at the deepest level—even if you're as committed as a traditional monastic or an Olympic athlete. Your practices can stretch from as little as ten minutes, to several hours each day, to doing practice retreats or living in a dedicated practice community.

Do you have a wide or very specific range of practice interests? ILP is **customizable**, letting you bring your unique interests, passions, and needs into play. It doesn't impose rigid structures on you, but rather creates a flexible, open space in which you can creatively engage the many dimensions of your being.

When we do suggest particular practices, such as the Gold Star Practices, these are **condensed** and **distilled**—keeping what's essential, and discarding what isn't—in order to give you the “most bang for your buck.” You can be sure you won't be wasting your time.

Finally, ILP is Integral, by which we specifically mean, “powered by AQAL.” AQAL is the most comprehensive map of consciousness available at this time, and

Integral Life Practice puts it to use to create a cutting-edge form of practice for the 21st Century. The AQAL structure of Integral Life Practice makes room not only for higher growth and self-actualization, but also and especially for awakening to, or simply recognizing, the Suchness or ever-present *is*-ness of this moment, and this one, and this....

Integral Life Practice is . . .



The Ultimate in Cross-Training,

working synergistically on body, mind, and spirit in self, culture, and nature.



Modular, allowing you to mix and match practices in specific areas or “modules.”



Scalable, adjusting to however much—or little—time you have, down to the **1-Minute Modules**.



Customizable to your individual lifestyle—you design a program that works for you, and adapt it on an as needed basis.



Distilled, boiling down the essence of traditional practices—without the cultural or religious baggage—to provide a highly concentrated and effective form of practice for post-postmodern life.



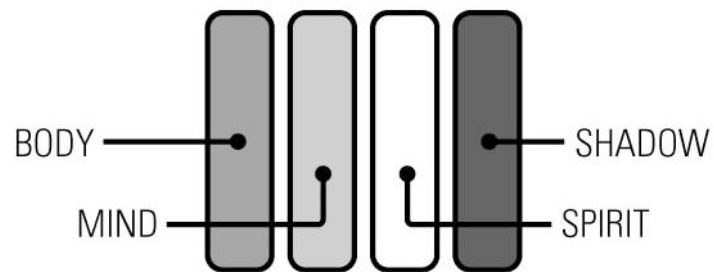
Integral, based on AQAL™ technology, an “All Quadrant, All Level” framework for mapping the many capacities inherent in human beings.

Taken together, ILP is the smartest way to wake up!

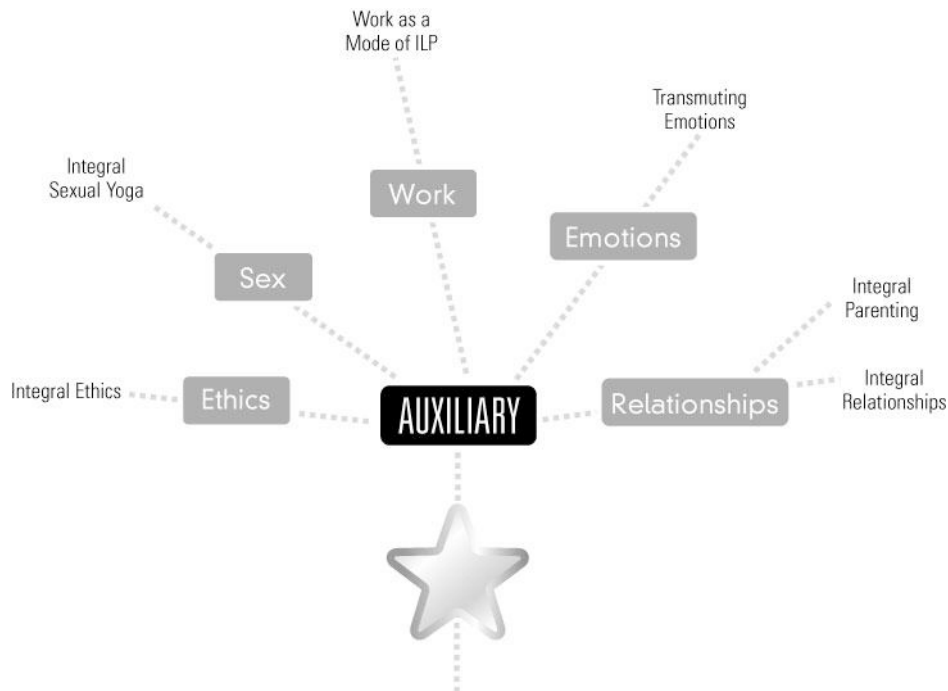
Launch Pad: Four Core Modules

Integral Life Practice has **4 core modules**:

- Body
- Mind
- Spirit
- Shadow



Additional important modules include:



The universal starting point for ILP is the **Four Core Modules**. That's because they relate to four primary dimensions of your *individual* being: **body**, **mind**, **spirit**, and **shadow**. They don't require anything or anyone else but *you*. So you can, if you wish, work on them alone. If you consistently engage practices in each of these four areas, you'll empower and turbo-charge your overall development. You will be better able to engage inwardly and outwardly, through multiple perspectives, with greater clarity, presence, and vitality in practically any area of your life.

Traditional spiritual paths have usually emphasized only two or three of these modules—they almost never included the shadow module. Modern and postmodern paths of self-development often do include shadow work, but some jettison the mind module, and most usually lack the depth and rigor of the meditative traditions in the spirit module.

If you only take on one practice in each of the 4 core modules, you'll be doing ILP. That's all it takes. And if you do it wisely, you'll avoid the common pitfalls that can otherwise hold back meaningful transformation.

Some people ask, "Well, what if I really need to focus on something else besides the Four Core Modules?" No problem: *any* module could be your focus at any given time. *All* the modules—core and additional—are important. If you're in a phase where you're looking to align your career with your life's purpose or your heart's passion, then you probably want to focus on the **work** module, and on unfolding your **Unique Self**. If you've just fallen in love (or are looking for love), or are working on issues with your intimate partner, then you probably want to focus on the **relationships** module. If you're starting a new family, well then, you guessed it, the **parenting** module.

The Four Core Modules are a recommended foundation, not a rigid, dogmatic structure. The journey of your life will have many chapters, and the emphasis of your practice can shift accordingly. The ILP modules are simply a way of accounting for some of the most central dimensions of your life.

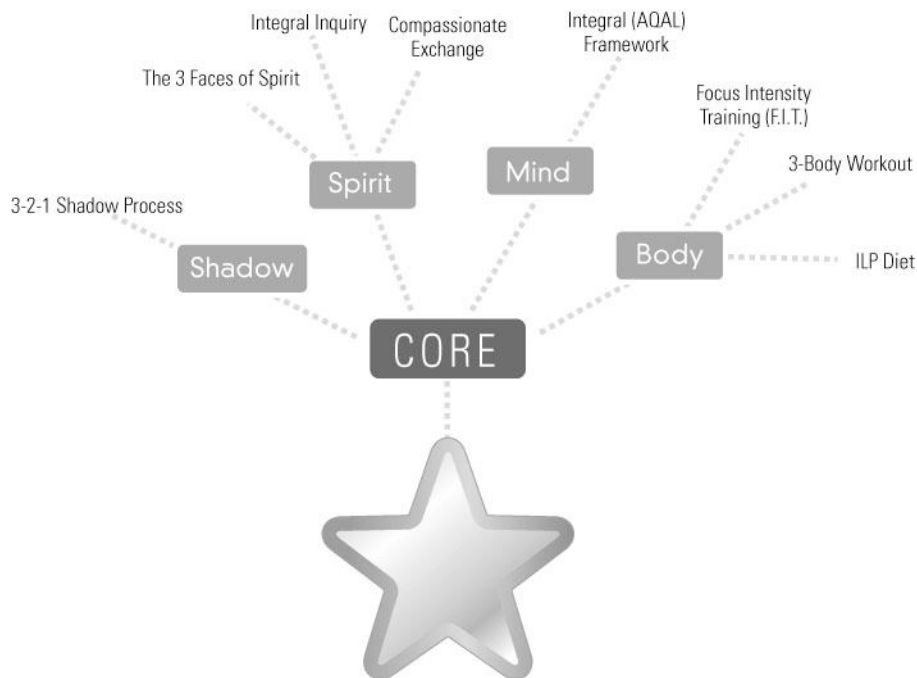
Gold Star Practices

Each module contains any number of *practices* that you may choose from. For example, the **body** module includes practices such as weightlifting, aerobics, sports, swimming, diet, yoga, and nutrition. *Any* practice that focuses on the embodied aspect of your life can be considered a body module practice. Likewise, practices such as prayer, meditation, and service belong to the **spirit** module, because they relate to the spiritual dimension of your being.

We've developed a number of *recommended practices* in each of the four core modules. These are called **Gold Star Practices** and they're original, AQAL-based, and especially appropriate for 21st century life—integrating the best of traditional, modern, and postmodern approaches. Many Gold Star practices are **distillations** of traditional practices—minus the religious and cultural baggage. In some cases, we invented a practice from scratch, to address a newly perceived need. *All* Gold Star practices are streamlined and condensed, covering the most relevant aspects of practice.

Listed below are some Gold Star practices in the Four Core Modules. All are described in more detail later in the book:

Gold Star Practices



Body Module

The 3-Body Workout

Focus Intensity Training (F.I.T.)

Strength & Aerobics 1-Minute Modules

Mind Module

The Integral (AQAL) Framework

Spirit Module

The 3 Faces of Spirit

Integral Inquiry

Compassionate Exchange

Shadow Module

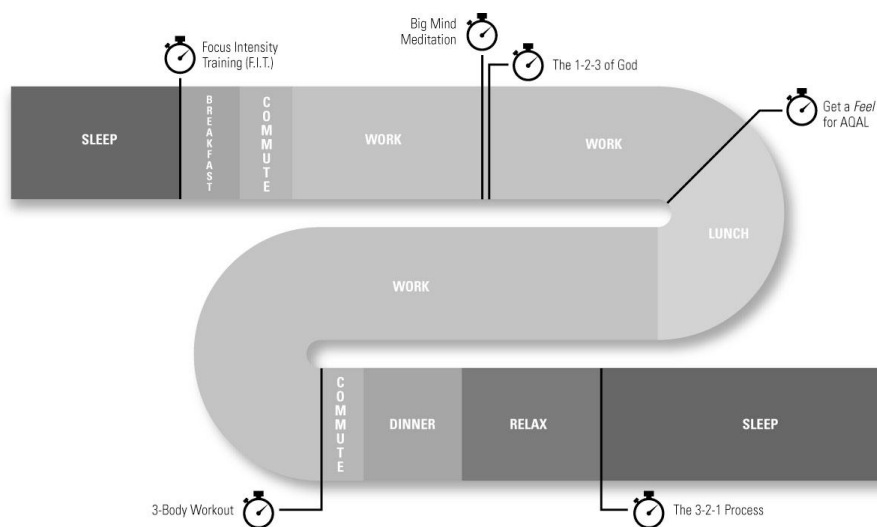
The 3-2-1 Process

The best way to find out if you like any of these practices, or if they really work for you, is, of course, to try them!

Pressed for Time? Try a 1-Minute Module

Your ILP can be as rich and expansive as you want it to be. However, if you're in a hurry, we've created quick versions of the Gold Star Practices that are called **1-Minute Modules**. A 1-Minute Module is simply a Gold Star practice, but condensed into

a remarkably efficient and authentic exercise that takes almost no time to complete. It's a Gold Star *mini-practice*, which you can do almost anytime or anywhere—at work, on the subway, after lunch, between classes, just before bed... whenever.



The 1-Minute Modules are not a *replacement* for more intensive practices—ideally, you might have an hour or two each day to deeply engage your practices; and sometimes, you would have even more (e.g., for an extended meditation retreat—but they will help you keep in touch with the *essence* of your practices, which is often exactly what you need).

By utilizing the 1-Minute Modules, you can do a full ILP, realistically, in about *10 minutes a day*. This makes it easy to keep up with your practice—and it also eliminates the main excuse for not practicing! *Anyone* can make the time to practice ILP regularly.

Time to devote yourself deeply? The principles of ILP still apply.

There is no end to practice. After years of dedication, experienced practitioners often work with the same modules in subtler, more nuanced ways. Once your whole life is practice, you tend to work more deeply with your states of mind and emotions. Your practice deepens in your relationships, work, and other additional modules. And, of course, you continue to return to body, mind, spirit, and shadow.

The principles of ILP will help you to design an overall practice that's effective, balanced, and high-leverage. You won't leave out any of the essentials, or neglect major dimensions of your development, even during periods when you concentrate on particular kinds of growth, such as an intensive phase of meditation practice or a period of focused training for an athletic event.

Practicing for 3 Kinds of Health

Regular practice changes us, in both dramatic and subtle ways. One way of looking at the effects of practice is on our **3 kinds of health**:

1. ***Horizontal Health***: Our dynamic fulfillment of the awareness, aliveness, and care available to us at our current wave of development.
2. ***Vertical Health***: Our continued growth into greater consciousness and complexity—thus outgrowing old ways of being, and moving into new waves of development.

3. **Essential Health:** At any wave of development, our contact with, attunement to, and realization of Spirit—the Mystery, Suchness, or Is-ness of this and every moment.

ILP includes and integrates all 3!

Principles of Practice

No Quick Fix

The reason we are talking about Integral *Life Practice* is because there's *no quick fix*. If there were, we'd be recommending it here. One of the primary hard-won lessons of the last half-century and the human potential movement is that weekend intensives wear off! The same is true for weeklong or month-long intensives. A lasting, committed, daily practice is the only way to produce sustained transformation.

The quickest, shortest path to lasting change is a lifestyle that embraces some kind of ILP, including at least the Four Core Modules. Although this might seem to require a lot of time (and sometimes even a minute seems like too much!), it pays huge dividends by unleashing our potentials, freeing up our energy and attention, and increasing our effectiveness and enjoyment in the rest of life. We've found that we don't have time NOT to engage an ILP!

Integral Cross-Training

Typical cross-training is *flat*. You do some aerobics, some weightlifting, maybe some yoga—but it's all at the *physical* level. What if we applied the same cross-training

principle—which holds that gains in one area will accelerate gains in others—across *all levels of our being*? Well, that’s the idea here. And we’ve found, for instance, that a meditator who also lifts weights will progress faster in meditation than one who doesn’t—and *vice versa*.¹ You might call this phenomenon *integral cross-training synergy*. The Four Core Modules simultaneously activate several powerful synergies, between body and mind, spirit and body, unconscious (shadow) and spirit. Additional modules can further intensify this process.

Though some practices seem to focus on one module more than others, there’s a ripple effect. By engaging a module in one area of life, you increase the effectiveness of every other module and every other area of life! That’s the power of cross-training. The Shadow module, for instance, primarily addresses your interior, psychological dynamics. But realize how many aspects of life the shadow influences. Becoming aware of and owning your shadow material will bring greater intimacy and honesty to your relationships, free up repressed energy in your body, add clarity and effectiveness to your work, increase your capacity for authentic and ethical behavior, and may even help you improve your finances—if, for example, you have some unresolved, unconscious fears of money and power, and are able to face your fears and overcome them.

Customize and Evolve Your Own Individual Life Practice

Custom-design your ILP with practices in all the core modules. Add practices in additional modules if you wish. Then refine the design. Make sure you’re *scaling* your ILP appropriately—so it’s neither too demanding nor too facile. Make a real commitment

¹ Murphy, *The Future of the Body*

to try each practice you choose for at least one month (and usually 90 days is best). Try to keep your initial commitments. Then revise them as you develop competence and gain insight into your growth dynamics. Keep your ILP fresh, and evolve it as you evolve. In Chapter 10, we teach a practice design process that you can use for this purpose.

A Post-Metaphysical Approach

This principal is a bit more theoretical... but it's important. What "post-metaphysical" means, particularly in the context of AQAL, is that no perspective on reality is merely *given* to consciousness. Every perspective is *enacted*. In other words, you have to *do* something to *see* something. You have to *look* to know that it's raining. You have to learn to use a microscope to observe an amoeba. You have to meditate to understand what Zen masters are really talking about.

Old-fashioned metaphysics assumes that reality is simply provided to awareness, unmediated by the contexts and actions of the subject. A post-metaphysical, integral approach claims that you must actually *do* an integral practice to *experience* an integral reality. Nothing presented in this book should be taken merely as a proclamation of truth. In all cases, you have to follow the practice injunction to determine for yourself whether or not the "truth" is really true.

If you want to know if the planet Jupiter really exists, you must actually *learn* some of the principles of astronomy and then *look* through a telescope. Likewise, if you want to know whether the Zen state of *satori* really exists, you must learn something about Zen and then *meditate*, looking into the nature of your mind. Instead of naïve

belief or skeptical disbelief, a post-metaphysical approach requires an open, inquisitive attitude. In a sense, post-metaphysics is simply an expression of the scientific impulse—i.e., of empirical experimentation and experiential validation—but expanded to all levels and dimensions of our being, instead of only the material plane.

Awareness, Care, and Presence

At its core, Integral Life Practice is not encapsulated by specific practices. It's a sincere, inherent commitment to bring **awareness** and **care** to every moment of life—and thereby to increase one's awareness and care. An ILP practitioner naturally strives for a healthy body, a clear mind, an open heart, and a commitment to a higher purpose. This will then show up in how you breathe and feel as you go through your day, in how you do your job, how you treat your lover, how you respond to stress—it touches every aspect, every moment of life.

It's a profound thing to really be conscious, to really love—it means you're *seeing, feeling, being* in the moment—and yet you're not stuck in any one perspective, but free to evolve with life itself.

Your Integral Life Practice will keep evolving and deepening for the rest of your life, becoming more and more intimate and real. How do you practice with frustration, disappointment, and pain? How do you respond when someone attacks you? What do you do—what *can* you do—when someone you love dies? How do you face the stark reality of your own inevitable sickness, aging, and death?

This is when practice matters most. If you've illuminated your shadow issues, if you can metabolize pain and restore energetic equilibrium to your body, if you can see multiple perspectives, if your body can release tension, if you can open into contact with more life and truth—all of these factors will determine your immediate experience, how present and loving you can be with whatever is arising, and whether—and how wisely—you can use it to grow.

But it's not just the hard stuff that practice can help with—it's the beautiful stuff too. Life is infinitely wonderful and awesome. Falling in love... the birth of a baby... having a brilliant new idea... serving a higher cause... starting a new business... traveling and experiencing another culture... having an insight into the nature of reality... creating or enjoying a beautiful work of art.... We're stretched by all of it, whether it's delicious or not.

Spirit's light can blind you like a billion suns. The beauty of a single teardrop can liquefy your heart. True love can crush you like a crumbling mountain.

Then your intimate partner says something that hurts or infuriates you, and you forget the beauty and the love.

And then you remember—or rediscover—it again. Balance. Freedom. Happiness. Sanity. Oneness. Ordinariness. And again. And that's what practice is for....

The Smart Way to Wake Up

The best thing is to just get started! Whether you're a beginner or a veteran practitioner, make use of this book to bring the most intelligent and practical form to your own life.

Once you have the basics down, it's easy to begin your own ILP. Here is a summary of how you can do so:

- ILP has **Four Core Modules**: Body, Mind, Spirit, and Shadow. It works via the principle of *cross-training*.
- All you need to start an ILP is **one practice** in each of the core modules. See the **ILP Matrix** for examples on page 00.
- **Design** your ILP, and **scale** it to fit the realities (large or small) of your schedule, level of commitment, and state of inspiration.
- **Mix and match**. Include practices from additional modules as appropriate; focus on what's most relevant and needed in your life.
- **Gold Star** practices are optimized for ILP—they're particularly distilled, concentrated, and effective, but not obligatory. Try a **1-Minute Module** if you're busy.
- **The hard part is the school of life itself**. But practice helps us be radically more present, alive, and capable of embracing both the difficulties and the pleasures of everyday life.

Links:

Integral Life Practice Starter Kit – www.myilp.com
Integral Institute – www.integralinstitute.org