

Third Reflection on Integral Life Practice

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Integral Life Practice (ILP) points out that "learning more about yourself in typological terms will help you design an ILP that works for your unique orientation to life" (Wilber & Patten & Leonard & Morelli, 2008, p. 110). It has been well researched that identification with your own personality "Type" can bring a deeper understanding and help with the tricky navigation through the river of life. It would be expected then that ILP would try to appeal to all "Types", but it is leaving me beached and struggling to reconnect to my intuitive flow.

ILP lets me know I have three bodies and four dimensions of being, along with a shadow that needs to be solicited into the light. The Shadow module took me to some murky waters where I scrambled to recognize my authentic emotions, and tried to distinguish my ego reflections from my hidden personalities. My four "all arising, all the time", beings, three bodies and multiple personalities then found out that the stage of my world view, wavy level of consciousness and temporary state influence my interdependent thought. My journey down the ILP river of life has been a constantly changing, meandering one that still leaves many rivers invisible and everything true in partial. It communicates a complicated nautical map of quadrants, lines, levels, stages and states all criss-crossed and interwoven into both/and unfathomable pattern, not much help if you are a fish out of water.

As an "Intuitive" type who perceives the big picture first, it is easier for me to see ILP in the context of Wilber's Great Nest of Being and Knowing, "where spirit is both the highest level (causal) and the nondual Ground of all levels" (Wilber, 2000, p. 6). His use of metaphor gives me the imagery needed to capture the intuitive nature ILP claims to hold. "AQAL is also intuitive

- it describes the terrain of your own awareness" (Wilber & Patten & Leonard & Morelli, 2008, p. 10). ILP links types to our horizontal health and stages of growth to vertical health. It aligns Spirit with essential health; essential to any stage of development. The aim is to integrate all three health areas to create a well balanced practice. ILP is to be applauded for giving the need of a spiritual practice its necessary recognition. It is great to finally see acknowledgement and evidence of "underlying spiritual patterns at work in the universe" (Wilber & Patten & Leonard & Morelli, 2008, p. 199). An integral spirituality is founded on similarities occurring in numerous spiritual traditions, casting aside any doubt of an innate spiritual need. Science is also revealing proof of a hard wired reason for "God not going away". Our desire for spiritual connection and that mystical meditative feeling of boundless unity has a biological backup in a blinded "posterior superior parietal lobe" (Newberg & D'Aquili). In Wilber's Great Nest it is easy for me to see Spirit as the golden thread that holds everything together. On review for this paper, ILP also places Spirit as an essential ingredient, but it was not clear to me at first. When I first read about the "Stages of Devotion" (Wilber & Patten & Leonard & Morelli, 2008, p. 226) listing no. 1, Ignorance through to no.7, Unification it captured my own myth that had just been created during an art therapy process. For me it mirrors the evolution of individual and collective consciousness from pre-conventional to post-postconventional, the world view's from Archaic to Integral. ILP has me breaking a "oneness" up to the point of confusion. Wilber is able to weave it all together intuitively for me in his beautiful image of an intricate, integral Great Nest built one stage at a time, held together with golden thread of spirit.

ILP has been designed as a step by step (sensing type) individualized daily practice. I believe our task is not follow or imitate, but to find our own source, our innermost core on our

own with no guide, no guiding scriptures. ILP does not give us the answers it encourages us to find our own which is great. However, while it has encouraged me to re-engage in some meditation, finally set up the Wii fit and reduce my alcohol intake, its style confuses the information for me. As a "Perceiving" spontaneous type, I believe all we need is the intense fire of inquiry and present moment awareness to dive into the river of life. The River will then carry us forward, create ripples in the waters around us, push us through the dark waters, reveal our buried treasure and finally integrate us into the great ocean of unity and non-judgment. ILP encourages inquiry and awareness and will hopefully be a useful tool for many, but it is my own inquiry that has re-awakened my intuitive guide. Maybe ILP is not for all types and therefore only integral in partial!

References

- Newberg, A., & D'Aquili, E. (n.d.). *Why God Won't Go Away. Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* .
- Wilber & Patten & Leonard & Morelli, (2008). *Integral Life Practice*. Boston: Integral Books.
- Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral Psychology*. Boston: Shambhala.