

# ESSENTIAL MODULES OF AN ITP

*Adapted by Vivian Baruch from Integral Naked video clips of Ken Wilber*

Ken talks about focusing on two or three of these seven essential aspects of ITP as a way of doing “spiritual cross-training”. This develops the multiple intelligences within us. He cautions to hold this practice lightly so that we don’t make ITP an obsession or something else to add to the “should” list.

1. A spiritual or meditative component: such as Big Mind, Centering Prayer, Prayer of the Heart, TM, Vipassana, Zen etc. This is a way to express ever-present Buddha Mind, not a way to gain it. The best spiritual practice is the one that works for you.
2. A physical component: such as nutrition, vitamins and exercise, especially weightlifting, which Ken says is the “gold standard” of physical practices. Research has shown that 30 minutes of weights, 3 times weekly for 6 months can turn back the biological markers of aging by an average of 10 years.
3. Psychodynamic component: some form of therapy/counselling (like Gestalt) to work on the shadow components of our psyche. This work is not achieved via the spiritual traditions & unless we access & integrate these aspects (like our sub-personalities, or repressed anger, sexual or power drives), they’ll run us unconsciously.
4. Ethical component: Ken calls this “intersubjective yoga”, which is the right orientation of respecting others, via compassion or charity. This is not done in a sentimental or maudlin way, but usually is developed slowly via the practice of a spiritual discipline and its theoretical basis.
5. Affective/emotional component: This is the feelingful dimension of how we touch other human beings. It’s the development of compassion or loving kindness, via practices such as Tonglen, Prayer of the Heart etc, which eventually lead us to experience that there are no others to save, as we are all One.
6. Karma yoga component: This is the integration of a spiritual practice into our work in the world, our profession or daily activities.
7. Cognitive component: This is so we have a framework within which to hold all of what we’re doing, a philosophy or understanding of our purpose here & how/why ITP fits into this. Ken says that cognitive development is necessary but not sufficient for interpersonal development, which is necessary but not sufficient for moral development.

Each of these seven essential components has up to a dozen choices within them. Ken suggests picking one aspect from two to three, perhaps four (this is if we include the cognitive component by learning about Integral theory).