

Introduction

What is Leonard Energy Training (LET)?

Leonard Energy Training (LET) can be described as a comprehensive body of work that teaches practical, alternative ways of dealing with everyday life situations while enhancing the flow of vital energy.

LET is not a martial art, although it was originally inspired by a martial art. It is not sport, although it can be readily applied to athletics. It is not therapy, although many people have used it to solve personal problems and realize a greater sense of personal power and well-being. It is not physically demanding and yet it leads to physical balance, centeredness, and grace. It does not aim for emotional catharsis but is sometimes psychologically intense.

LET is educational. It increases awareness and deepens sensitivity. It opens the way to new worlds of perception, feeling and being while adding to the richness of life's most ordinary moments. In fact, although its purpose is extremely practical and down to earth, it often brings about results that seem extraordinary and even paranormal.

LET relies, first and foremost, on the body. Learning is from the inside out. You, the learner, are in control. You are responsible for perceiving, acknowledging and, if you so choose, using the information the body provides.

The body serves as teacher. Simple yet specific instructions lead participants through a particular Leonard Energy Training activity. Throughout the exercise, you are encouraged to be aware of and continually pay attention to the resulting bodily reactions. Thus, you gain insights that can readily be applied to your own personal, professional and social life.

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The body is used as the main source of teaching and learning for several reasons.

Surpassing the best of computers, the body is fully instrumented, with millions of feedback circuits that provide instantaneous, abundant and diversified information. You don't have to wait to get a written analysis or printout. Everything happens in the immediate moment. And by taking note of how you act and respond in a bodily sense, you can see how you act and respond mentally and emotionally as well.

The body both reflects and influences the way you live your life. By paying attention to your physical experience, you learn about who and what you are. Your character or way of being in the world becomes self-evident through the very practice of paying attention. Using the body as the main source of teaching and learning, for example, enables you to discover tendencies of "getting ahead of yourself" or "holding back" or maintaining a sense of being balanced and centered.

Another reason for using the body as the basic source of teaching and learning is that it moves you away from thinking about how you should be and allows you to experience how you actually are.

Frequently, rather than permitting ourselves to be who we are, we carry some abstract notion of how we think we should look, feel, or be. Then we try to fit a particular mold when we are simply not that way.

Because of this abstract self-image, many of us push ourselves physically and emotionally beyond our current limits. In our headlong quest to excel, we break the laws of our own physical and emotional nature, causing undue stress and strain. However, by focusing on the body and allowing it to help determine how far to go, we can play the fine edge between self-improvement and self-destruction. Occasionally, participants who have just experienced a new and important insight about themselves as a result of performing a particular LET activity report that the understanding they got from a five- minute exercise might have taken months to discover on the analyst's couch.

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LET uses the body in three ways: (1) in a static mode, (2) in a dynamic, moving mode, and (3) in movement with others.

Users of this manual will discover that some exercises ask you to be still and tune into the natural rhythms of your being while the body is at rest. For example, in the first exercise, Basic Balancing and Centering, you are asked to focus on the distribution of weight between the heels and balls of the feet. You are instructed to sense any tension in your shoulders and across the forehead. In this case, the body is used as a solo instrument. Through directed instructions and questions, you tune in to your body while it's barely moving or not moving at all.

Other exercises call for using the dynamic, moving body. Instructions tell you to move in prescribed, intentional ways. For example, you might be asked to experience three different ways of being in the world. First, you are instructed to walk about the room assuming a rigid posture. You tune in to your moving body as it takes on the qualities of being tense, firm and very tight.

Next, you are instructed to assume a limp, weak posture as you continue to move about the room. Again, you use your body as the source of information about how you feel and what you experience with this way of being.

The final instructions are to walk about the room taking a balanced and centered posture, being neither too far forward nor too far back, neither rigid nor limp. Again, the learning and insights originate from the inside. You provide your own expertise. The body itself dramatizes principles for personal, interpersonal, organizational and, perhaps, even international well being.

The third way in which LET uses the body is in interaction with others. There are a number of ways in which this occurs. In the example above, you gain insights about your own way of being as you assume three different postures. By looking around the room and observing the posture, gait, facial expressions, and life energy of others, you gain

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insights. In this third, interactive, mode, you learn alternative ways to deal with surprise, pressure, and pain, as well as attacks, stress, expectations, and a variety of other interpersonal and social conditions.

The importance of the body is evident by its common reference in our day-to-day affairs. Newspapers refer to a visiting “head of state.” A newscaster talks about the “body politic.” We explain our behavior to a friend by saying, “I had no stomach for that job.”

In LET, the body is considered a small, handy model of the universe. It contains useful information about how each individual, as well as the universe itself, works. For these reasons, the body is combined with mind and spirit to create the heart of Leonard Energy Training.

PRINCIPLES OF LEONARD ENERGY TRAINING

Several principles have emerged from this work. Among them are the following:

1. **You are the authority.** Anything you experience is valid for you. You are responsible for who you are and for what you do, perceive, and feel.
2. **The capacity of the human being and of human society is largely untapped.**
3. **We use only a small portion of the incredible potential available to us.** It is possible to experience life in all of its dimensions—physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and social—more deeply, creatively, and meaningfully than we typically do, or are expected by society to do.
4. **The body is a highly effective learning facility.** It is fully instrumented, with millions of feedback circuits, and the feedback is practically instantaneous. Once you’ve tuned in to your body, you’ve tapped an almost limitless source of learning.
5. **A centered body leads to a centered life.** Your bodily stance goes a long way toward indicating your stance in life. The human body can be taken as a metaphor for everything else in existence.

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6. **Expect nothing, be ready for anything.** Readiness, of course, is a good thing. But expectations get in the way of readiness.
7. **Put it on the mat.** In other words, develop your talents, make them public, and be willing to be a fool. Take appropriate risks. Don't hoard yourself.
8. **Take the hit as a gift.** Challenges can be energizing. Don't deny the existence of negative happenings. Use them! Even some of the shocks and blows that people experience can help you achieve your potential if you know how to handle them.
9. **Personal intention carries great power.** Intention is what you consciously or unconsciously aim for or establish as purpose. Your intention, if strong enough, has an almost unbelievable power to create your reality.
10. **A change of context makes transformation possible and, indeed, likely.** The word "context" comes from the Latin terms "con" and "texere," meaning "to weave together." How you weave your world together, how you see things, has a lot to do with how you deal with life's situations and what happens to you. To change perception is often to change experience. Most LET exercises involve a change of context.

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Requests for permission should be addressed to:
Integral Transformative Practice International
P.O. Box 544
Corte Madera, CA 94976
info@ITP-International.org
www.ITP-International.org