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Coach to Inspirational Leaders

INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP SERIES

Integrity: What is It?

Integrity is at the center of being an Inspirational Leader. At first glance, this ongoing journey may seem simple, yet to be “in integrity” is an every day and every action *choice* that invites you to be on a path of personal and professional evolution... to emerge your best self. Hmm... not so simple.

To define what integrity is, and what it is not, is often difficult. Some say it is “*doing what you say you will do,*” and “*not doing what you say you won’t do.*” This is only part of the story.

Others think of integrity as a set of moral standards, knowing right from wrong, or what is right for you (and what is not) and aligning with that. While it is good to know your preferences, values, and moral standards, they fall short of a real sense of integrity.

Also we need to ask, “*Where does the sense of ‘knowing’ right from wrong come from?*” How do you, as an Inspirational Leader, ‘know’ what decisions keep you on the high road, and what decisions create an integrity breach inside of you? Does your ‘knowing’ come from the core of who you are, your *Essential Self*, which is loving in nature and makes decisions from an open and expansive place? Or does your ‘knowing’ come from your false self (your *Persona*) which comes from the contracted energy of fear? Seeking to protect and withdraw, *Persona*-based decisions are often founded on limiting beliefs or distorted thinking.

The lesson here is that moral standards are an important part of the integrity

story, especially *when they are aligned with your Essential Self*. And as a leader your team is watching you and your choices very closely. They notice more than you may think they do and often see more than you can see. After all, each of us have our blind spots.

Beyond the two views of integrity we just discussed, there are many other common ideas worth exploring. I offer you a view that goes beyond common definition. *Integrity is about the actions that you take to align with your wholeness... align with your Essential Self, who you are at your core*. In this aligned state, you feel light and easy. You have a keen sense of being solidly behind yourself (doing the right thing for yourself), full of good intention, and clean and clear in interactions with yourself, others, and situations.

I am honored to be mentored by Drs. Gay and Kathlyn Hendricks, foremost experts the field of conscious relationship and mind-body integration. Their model of the *Four Pillars of Integrity* is simple, yet a deeply profound view of what it means to be in full integrity. In a nutshell, the *Four Pillars of Integrity* focus on taking 100% responsibility for all aspects of your life in alignment with your *Essential Self*. Let’s explore the *Four Pillars of Integrity* in the context of Inspirational Leaders vs. Common Leaders.

Healthy Responsibility: Inspirational Leaders take powerful steps into integrity by claiming 100% percent responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions.



Four Pillars of Integrity

Healthy Responsibility

Impeccable Agreements

Authentic Speaking and Resonant Listening

Emotional Literacy



Common leaders spend a great amount of time fiercely protecting their opinions, limiting beliefs, agendas, structures, ways of being, and ways of doing business. These defensive postures impede their evolution and the evolution and potential of their team. Suffice it to say, defensiveness keeps us from seeing truth about self, others, and situations, and closes down possibility. The skill is to shift from defensiveness into curiosity, and from there to step into 100% healthy responsibility.

Impeccable Agreements: Making and keeping good agreements increases vitality and aliveness. Inspirational Leaders make Impeccable Agreements partially because they know how to access their “authentic yes” and their “authentic no”. From this ‘knowing’, agreements (or a decision not to make an agreement) supports the leader in creating the team, the business, and the life they desire.

Common leaders often make fuzzy agreements, forced agreements where there is really no buy-in, or they avoid agreements altogether. This path leads to disharmony and sabotage because the agreement is not a good one.

Authentic Speaking and Resonant Listening: Inspirational Leaders demonstrate a willingness to be open and vulnerable with their authentic truth. They also master the skill of being in the present moment, instead of distracted by their “to do” list or what happened ten minutes ago. This allows them to fully listen, relate, and explore the topic at hand. Inspirational Leaders take their 100% responsibility for the process and outcome of all communication in which they engage. From this empowered place their thoughts become transparent and they create a deeper, harmonious connection with their team.

Conversely, the common leader is likely to use listening filters such as “*listening to judge, listening to advise, listening*

to get approval, etc.” Their speaking is often designed to protect their image or their agendas.

Emotional Literacy: At the moment of our birth, and the moment of our death, we experience emotion. And every moment in between is laced with emotion, whether we are aware of it nor not. Inspirational leaders know that their emotions are constantly influencing their thoughts, behaviors and communication. They know how to direct their emotional energy in a masterful way that best serves themselves and all concerned. They can fluently release emotion and listen to the wisdom that emotion offers. Inspirational leaders can be present for the emotions of others and know how to support the healthy expression of emotion in their team.

Conversely, the common leader is unaware that all this is occurring. They often make fear-based decisions that result in some sort of sabotage. Instead of using emotion for the good of the team, they react out of emotion which causes team members to go into a “fight or flight” response, often withdrawing to protect themselves. In this withdrawn state, skill and creativity are inhibited.

The *Four Pillars of Integrity*. Are they simple? Yes. Easy? No. Worth doing? Absolutely!

I invite you into the journey of mastering the art of Inspirational Leadership centered in deep integrity.

See the *Products* page of my website to download the entire model of the *Four Pillars of Integrity*. Includes some of the behaviors associated with each pillar. www.chrislucerne.com



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“Integrity is not a set of moral standards; rather, actions you take to align with your wholeness.”

~Kathlyn Hendricks,

