

## The Integrated Leader

The following material is foundational to my coaching approach, especially when advancing the consciousness and maturity of a leader and leadership team.

## Introduction to Adulthood

The first thing I invite you to do is notice your relationship to the word: Adulthood. We typically consider adulthood a biological distinction, no different from being a grown-up.

When I talk about adulthood, I mean a state of consciousness that is a lot more than simple, biological aging. This state of consciousness arises when four healthy aspects of self, function together as one. The adult is a synergy of the free child, the curious adolescent, the nurturing parent, and the positive ego.

When you cultivate these healthy aspects within yourself and allow them to function together, you become equipped to meet the challenges of life from a place of connection and empowerment. The heart of adulthood is the willingness to embrace joyous responsibility for consciously creating all of your life as an authentic expression of your gifts, talents, passion and love. For the adult, authoring your life is a privilege and an adventure guided by several fundamental principles:

1. You know you are loved.
2. You know you are creative.
3. You embrace the gift of free will and the responsibility that comes with it.
4. You value and pursue your unique passions, and you have fun exploring and expressing those passions. (Passion is characterized by the experience of boundless love and unbridled enthusiasm, combined with an insatiable longing and never-ending yearning.)
5. You know the fun of responsibility and the value of fun
6. You know you matter and your life has purpose.
7. You seek to remember the love and function from a place of love, connection and belonging in everything you do.

These seven principles can help to ground you in the state of adulthood. They also function beautifully as a process to discover the state of adulthood, and uncover your own stumbling blocks. Unfortunately, many people are living in a state of fear and separation. They don't know they are loved, and they do not feel empowered. They are out of touch with real passion, and they lack a sense of purpose.

Instead, they struggle to cope in an increasingly scary world, seduced by fear-based inner voices. Some of these fear-based voices include the wounded inner child and wounded inner adolescent, a distorted parenting energy (both critical and indulgent), and a destructive wounded ego. From this distorted state, the realm of adulthood lies outside of what can be imagined or even seems possible.

Most of us have never been given the tools to heal the wounded aspects of self and discover the possibility of adulthood. But those on a certain path are seeking this level of understanding and integration. Here are the signposts of a mature adult:

### Signposts of the Adult:

Experiences life as a playground to learn and grow  
Chooses to love self regardless of the circumstances  
Motivated to give, to love, to contribute  
Feels powerful and directs that power  
Always has choice  
Trusts the heart's desire and pursues it with passion  
Knows the freedom of responsibility and seeks to ever increase personal freedom through responsibility  
Feels fully loved and naturally grateful  
Is trustworthy and trusts others with discernment  
Has principles, ideals and lives with character  
Courage to live authentically  
Has fun and seeks to create fun in everything you do  
Emotionally fluent-- experiences and expresses a full range of emotions  
Defines self by the qualities of being, not by what you do or have

### Homework:

1. Take a moment to assess these signposts from two criteria. First, assess them on a yes/no scale of belief, and second, to see how often your behavior is in alignment with the statement. For example, looking at the first one: Do you believe Life is a playground to learn and grow? Perhaps you believe it is meant to be a playground, or perhaps you believe something else. This is the time to dig up your objections to these signposts. You may have a voice that says, "I sure wish it was a playground" and another that says, "It's no playground! Life is a struggle and it's serious!" Jot down your discoveries and admit your operating belief. Then look at your behavior and see how often you engage life as a playground to learn and grow. Give yourself a score from 1-10, 1 being I never behave as if it's a playground and 10 meaning that you live this signpost every day.

As you assess each statement, you will start to get a picture of how wide a gap you have between your current mindset and the mindset of adulthood.

2. Now take a look at the 7 principles of Adulthood and see where you stand. Some of the principles are things to know. For example: Do you know you are loved? Is this an unshakeable belief that you experience in your life? Other principles are actions: For example, do you value and pursue your passions? Take the time to honestly assess these principles and get a snapshot of how fully awake and empowered is the adult in you? (Note: the things to know will give you an indicate of how awake the adult is, the things to do will reveal how much you empower that adult to be in the driver's seat of your life.)

3. Take a bit of time to cultivate a vision of adulthood for yourself. What would be possible for you if you lived in the state of joyous adulthood? Use your imagination to connect with a future self who lives in this state, knows the fun and freedom of adulthood and feels deeply loved. What comes up for you as you begin to reach for this future?
  
4. Expand that vision to a global vision. Take some time to think about a world in which the majority of grownups are actually functioning as conscious adults. What would the world look like? What would be possible from the place of connection and co-creation? Can you hold such a vision? What is vulnerable about holding that vision?