

# INTEGRAL LEADERSHIP COLLABORATIVE

## Interview Notes: **Bill Joiner**



## Bill Joiner Interview Notes

*Bill Joiner is the co-author of the book Leadership Agility which recently received an award from Integral Leadership Review. He is president of ChangeWise and has worked with leaders in organizations for over 30 years. I've notice that he keeps popping up in the U.S. and Europe doing programs in Leadership Agility.*

*Bill, what are you currently interested in and excited about? Are there things that you are researching, or teaching, or working on, or applying that you could update us on?*

- There's been a lot of development since the book came out. The book is about stages of personal development as described by people such as Ken Wilber, Jane Loevinger, Bill Torbert, Susanne Cook-Greuter, Bob Kegan and others. We specifically looked at the action of Leaders at different stages. We wanted to create a very practical map of Leadership behaviors that co-relate with each of these stages. For example, in leading organization change, leading teams and pivotal conversations. Everything that has happened since the*

*launch book has been a way of building on, or apply, or doing more research on that framework.*

*What might be an example of one of the major upgrades or shifts since you wrote the book?*

- One big area has been in assessments. We discovered that this research would really work well in a 360 feedback format, but it required the development of a non-traditional 360. We created that, in collaboration with Cambria Consulting, who have been leaders in the field of 360s for a long time. We have learned some interesting things in doing this work. That's one key area.*
- We received strong interest from Leadership Coaches, wanting to know to use the framework in coaching. So we developed a training process for coaches. We wanted to focus on leadership behavior as well as the meaning making process, and how this shifts underlining the behavior. This became a new piece of work for us as well as 360 certification.*
- And then there's the work with managers and organizations. We have developed some training programs for regular managers, for example: Leading Organizational*

*Change. How do you shift to a higher stage, in the way that you are leading change? We call these behavioral dimensions of leading change, Leadership Agility Levels. The participants bring actual change projects and they work on them - through an action learning approach - so that they approach the project from a higher level of agility than they would typically approach it.*

- We provide programs in pivotal conversations that apply these stages in terms of challenging business conversations.*
- One of the concepts I am working with now, is Leadership Culture. It's the part of the organizational culture that sets the norms for what leadership looks like, and is really the biggest determinant of the organization's culture.*
- Leadership culture has levels just like individual development has levels. So we help organization assess where their level of leadership agility is and support a shift to a higher level.*
- The faster the organization is changing and the more independencies that need to be dealt with, the higher the leadership agility needs to be. Business is interested*

*when there is awareness of the need for organizational and team agility, as well as individual leadership agility.*

*I'm aware that James O'Toole published some research that showed the effectiveness of leaders was also dependent on the degree to which systems, processes, technologies and structures and so on, supported the effective performance of these individual leaders or people in leader roles.*

*Looking at the relationship of Leadership Agility and the Integral Leadership Model, you've touched on 3 of the quadrants and implied the 4<sup>th</sup> - the internal contribution of the individual to their own agility, the behaviors and competencies that they demonstrate, the culture of the organization and by implication the degree to which the systems are aligned.*

- If you look at it through that lens, the Holon you are really looking at is an organization not an individual. Then in the bottom quadrants you will have the organization. The work we are doing on Leadership Culture is predominately a LL kind of work. The LR is something of a frontier in our work. We are approaching that in a*

*couple of ways. We have methodologies that help people utilize a higher stage approach to leadership to redesign those structures and systems.*

*Are there particular practices that you associate with Integral Leadership that you see as important?*

- I think Integral Leadership is something that evolves by stages, so I wouldn't say this is integral and that's not integral, it's more like this is less integral and this is more integral.*
- I use the term 'agility' because it is action orientated and because it implies the same kind of thinking and meaning making that the word Integral does.*
- What we did in the book was define what sort of leadership practices tend to emerge at each stage. We will be exploring this more at the conference.*
- It's interesting to me, not only are there correlations between the stage the person is at, as leader, and the way they do certain kinds of leadership things - for example: the way they run meetings. These become distinctly different at different stages. The meetings become increasingly open, trusting, participative, and dialogical.*

- *The book lays out a huge number of practices at each level. Each practice emerges from and builds on the ones before it.*

*We are going to learn a lot from you at the conference. We are calling this conference the Integral Leadership Collaborative, because we are trying to spread the word about Integral Leadership. We want people to have a better handle on the scope of ideas - Integral Leadership, the potential for application and to help move the word out into the world. Looking at the future, is there a particular outcome you would like to see?*

- *I think it's really wonderful that you are doing this. It's a chance for people around the world to tune in and to listen to a diversity of voices. Having a look at the list of presenters, there's both a clear common thread, that makes it Integral Leadership and there's a lot of diversity, which I think is really great. The last thing we need is some new dogma about leadership.*
- *Events like this keep the exploration alive. I hope it allows people to see that diversity and commonality about Integral Leadership and that it stimulates further*

*exploration by more people. And that it engages people on a more global level.*

*I'm particularly impressed that we have been able to bring presenters together from India, Germany, Iceland, Mexico and a variety of other countries. I'm really grateful for the opportunity to bring these voices to as many people as possible, because I am aware of the extraordinary exciting work, that people like you, are doing out there. We are so glad you are going to be with us.*

- The focus on application that runs through most of the presentations is really important. This is inspiring theory and maybe many people have experienced personal development within this kind of context. The big question is "What does this look like in a really pragmatic sense?" I'm pleased to see the emphasis on application in these presentations.*

## Bill Joiner

Bill Joiner is co-author of *Leadership Agility*, which won the Integral Leadership Review's Reader's Choice Award for best Integral leadership book of the year. This is a practical, research-based book that documents the stages through which a leader's consciousness can develop, and details how the depth and breadth of a leader's actions change in concert with this evolution of consciousness. Among other things, leaders who act congruently from the later stages create organizations that embody conscious business ideals.



Bill Joiner is a seasoned leadership expert and organizational change consultant, with 30 years of experience completing successful engagements with companies based in the US, Canada, and Europe. He is co-author of the book *Leadership Agility*, and co-developer, with Cambria Consulting, of the *Leadership Agility 360*, the only online feedback instrument that assesses research-based levels of leadership agility. Bill speaks about leadership agility, partners with senior leaders in developing high performing teams, creating breakthrough strategies, leading organizational change, and redesigning business processes. He also provides leadership workshops and custom-designs and implements action learning programs. He is also the designer or co-designer of most ChangeWise consulting and training services. For nine years, Bill served as an adjunct faculty member for the Leadership for Change program at Boston College. He has a BA and MBA from Southern Methodist University and earned his Doctorate in Organization Development at Harvard University.

## Russ Volckmann

Russ Volckmann, Ph.D., has worked for over thirty years as an organization development consultant and executive coach. He is the publisher and editor of *The Integral Leadership Review* and *LeadingDigest* and the founder of Integral Publishers (having published nine books by integral authors). As an educator he has taught at U.C., Berkeley; the University of Arizona; the United States Army Intelligence School at Ft. Juachuca, Arizona; Sonoma State University; Golden Gate University; John F. Kennedy University; Leadership University; and the Institute for Transpersonal Psychology.

He has served on dissertation committees for the Fielding Graduate Institute and the Institute for Transpersonal Psychology and mentor for Antioch University. As a writer and editor, he was the founding editor of a professional journal, *Vision/Action*, for five years. He is currently on the Editorial Board of *Integral Review* which is published by ARINA, Inc. He has authored two books and is currently working on his third with coauthor Brett Thomas on the topic of Integral Leadership.

