

INTEGRAL LEADERSHIP COLLABORATIVE

Interview Notes:

Waking up the Workplace



Interview Notes for Waking Up the Workplace

Jeroen Maes and Ewan Townhead (along with Diedrick Janse who is not present in the interview) are the inspiration and creators of Waking Up the Workplace - a highly successful series of conversations with 14 of the world's leading experts on conscious business. Jeroen and Ewan (and Diedrick) are three friends and colleagues who share an Amsterdam life and dreams of a new kind of business.

Many of you are familiar with Waking Up the Workplace. Bring us up to speed on what it is and what your goals are.

- We wanted to put together an inquiry on the leading edge of conscious business. We didn't have a business model. The question at the heart of the series is: What would happen if we saw the business of work not just as a means of trade and profit but as a vehicle of our deepest human potentials and conscious creative transformation. We blasted out a list of awesome and cool people we would love to interview and explore the question with. We managed to line them up and create the series.*
- Diedrick is also a partner - he is celebrating his 30th birthday. Diedrick and Jeroen had been working with various integral tools. We felt there were many tools available. We wanted to*

open the field and space and highlight a couple of innovative thinkers and demonstrate that they are working in the same field and making a difference. Who are these people? How are they making a difference?

One of your main intentions was to create a conversation and make it available on-line so people worldwide could listen to it. Beyond the inquiry, what was your hope or desire? Where does it lead? Assuming the conversation continues, what are your goals?

- The series was born last February with an enthusiastic idea about doing something on-line with the subject of conscious business. We were passionate about integral ideas and conscious development. We asked: How do we get this out there? What about application? When Ewan met Jeroen and Diedrick - they had been very engaged in studying Ken Wilber but then they stopped reading the books and started doing it. They weren't paying attention to the "leading edge." How do we take initiative to bring these ideas which are complex and by definition "not that interesting at all" to a practical and enthusiasm driving context. There are people who may not read a book on it but they could be intrinsically motivated and come together and experience what is possible.*
- The series provided the inspiration for people to just jump in. Go for it! I (Jeroen) finished university and handed in my thesis the 25th of August and started our company on the*

26th. We had no experience doing consulting but we tried stuff. We recommended to a client that they should use Holocracy (Brian Robertson's work) and then I needed to learn about it. I went to a training with Brian and then immediately implemented it with the client. From experience, I know that this stuff works! I'm less interested in reading books about it; I want to try it out and apply it.

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I find that very inspiring. I'm not sure how to do it but it needs to be done. This is something that the world needs and I'm going to go for it. An early teacher of mine defined a leader as "the leader is the one who goes first." The one out in front! I appreciate your initiative. If we look back at the history of human race, there are people who wanted to make life better, transform their tribe. It takes more than awareness and understanding - it takes courage. Do you care enough? Your use of the web is innovative - what is your perspective of leading from an integrally informed place? Do you resonate with the idea of going first?

- I don't really care about being first or being a leader in the integral community. What I care about is that there are so many problems in the world and people have no clue how to deal with it. I see a big mismatch. I have tried to explain integral and it didn't work. You can bring a horse to water but you can't make it drink. My philosophy is to put water everywhere! If we use the internet and provide interviews, the knowledge is freely available. People can create their own

master's degree. Hopefully, people will make an impact from wherever they live.

- *Leveraging the power of an on-line business. An on-line vehicle does not have big overhead. The structure behind it was scalability and sustainability. Scalability is as far as you want to go - people are not restricted. This offering was free but we are considering business models that may take the training deeper and it wouldn't be free. It's not the only cutting edge of business but it's the easiest way to start from scratch.*
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- *I've never consider myself a leader. We're not experts - we read up on it - then we had a go. This was an experiment. The courage part is not being afraid of failure. I am inspired by a Winston Chruchill quote (paraphrase): The definition of leadership is going from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm. Keep trying until it works. Fall down and get up. IT IS SO NEEDED in the integral community.*
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What do you care about? If you really care about something and it means a lot to you, share it. If other people could understand, try it, use a tool - it's not enough to just think about it. If you care about something, share the wealth, share the love. Leadership is moving the tribe forward.

In terms of content from the series, what did you learn? How did you change or transform? A big insight?

- *It transformed our consciousness. We received transmission. It seriously kicked my butt being with people who are deeply principled in their work and life. It shined a light on where I haven't done that. A concrete example - I just quit a job with an internet company. I couldn't do it anymore - being out of alignment with my deeper principles.*
- *There were two conversations that stood out. First was Rand Stagen and hearing the driving principle behind the company. It's a bold business model - they only work with clients in a way that is sustainable for long-term success and they don't do "entertainment" work. The other was Fred Kaufman. His precision and ability to nail things with a big open heart. He's a seriously realized mystic but he's applying this stuff to business. I'm in awe of him.*
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- *Fred was the last call and it was difficult to get this line up. He's a busy guy. We had to be patient. Once we had the call, we asked if we could meet him and we went down to Majorca. It was awesome. These are people who are living it. There is so much behind it. It gives me hope. There is so much more greatness beyond the interview.*
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I'm inspired by the idea that it's not just being on the phone and interview - you form a relationship with them and their work. There's an intangible connection even over the ocean, on the

telephone or the internet. I appreciate you using the term "transmission." Many of us have teachers and you tend to absorb through osmosis and you felt that through the phone. That gives me hope as well. If we as folks who are integrally informed and want to share it - what are the methods? We've had folks from 82 countries visit our ILC site and listen to interviews.

What are your hopes for the conference?

- *(Jereon) I hope that people will gain the confidence to know that they can use it. I hope that people don't feel they need to wait - just get out there and apply it. It will go quicker than you think. Waking Up the Workplace was just a thought. We were crazy enough to take it seriously. It starts with one thought. Tune in. What do you really want to manifest? Just try it! Go for it! Doors will open that you never thought possible.*
- *(Ewan) First, inspired by Brian Johnson - the word "integral" is about completeness and it also means integrity. It asks: how big is the gap between what you espouse and how you show up in the world? Ken's work on completeness is transformative. Second, we have the maps, we have the completeness now how do we show up with the integrity to roll it out in the world? I hope this conference helps facilitate that for people.*

I see why you pulled off Waking Up the Workplace! You are both inspiring! Thank you so much for your leadership. And your beautiful intentions. I'm looking forward to a deeper dive in a panel discussion in the conference.

Jeroen Maes

Jeroen Maes is one of the co-creators of the highly successful on-line seminar *Waking Up the Workplace*. A series of conversations with fourteen global visionaries at the forefront of the “Conscious Business” movement.



Driven to create a meaningful impact in peoples lives and dedicated to the exploration of the cutting edge of human potential, Jeroen is passionate about challenging conventional wisdom and co-creating a society able to adapt to the challenges of our time.

Jeroen is co-founder of *Realize!*, a highly successful consulting firm based in the Netherlands that has worked with clients such as Shell and IBM.

Ewan Townhead

Ewan Townhead is one of the co-creators of the highly successful on-line seminar *Waking Up the Workplace*. A series of conversations with fourteen global visionaries at the forefront of the “Conscious Business” movement.



Endlessly fascinated with the big picture and ultimate potential of what business *could be*, Ewan’s soul searching after university moved him away from his training in the performing arts and into the field of “Conscious Business” where he works to bring the gritty, often-times brutal truth of the workplace to light in a way that allows for the manifestation of true passion to emerge.

Ewan is the co-founder of Integral Europe, was recently honored with managing an international MBA program at a business school in Holland, and is currently working in Training & Development for Booking.com.

Brett Thomas

Brett Thomas is the co-founder of Stagen, a Texas-based organizational consulting firm that specializes in Integral Leadership. He is the author and architect of the Stagen Leadership Academy's 52-week intensive Integral Leadership Program (now in its 10th year). Brett is a 20-year veteran in the field of human performance and organizational development having designed and facilitated hundreds of workshops and corporate training programs. Brett has logged over 10,000 hours coaching CEOs. He has published hundreds of pages of applied integral theory and has co-designed and co-delivered numerous international conferences and seminars on applied integral theory. Brett served many years as the Managing Director of the Integral Institute Business and Leadership Center and on the Editorial Board for the Journal of Integral Theory and Practice. Brett currently serves on the boards of both Integral Leadership Review and Integral Publishers. He is writing a book with Russ Volckmann on the subject of Integral Leadership.

