

Transformative Leadership Academy

PROGRAM TIMELINE

- **Virtual Phase (self-paced learning & reflection):**
March–May 2027
- **Residential Program:** Late May, 2027

APPLICATION DEADLINE*

- **Early Application Deadline:** Fall 2026
 - **Final Application Deadline:** Winter 2027*
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Join our distinguished faculty and network of luminaries for a scholarship-based summer program designed to train you in how to live and lead from your spiritual core and advance positive change in the world.

*Applications are reviewed as they are received, and acceptances are made on a rolling basis. Students are encouraged to apply early for priority consideration.



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Introducing the Transformative Leadership Academy

Some individuals make an outsized contribution to advance humanity. In times of rapid change and disruption, they are able to elevate people's character, reform or rebuild institutions, and bring positive lasting change to our world. Their wish is to create not just a prosperous world, but a principled world.

We are living through a moment in history that is laden with possibilities — and peril. Imagine how powerful it would be if we could intentionally develop leaders like Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln and Eleanor Roosevelt, who elevate people across communities and professions to new levels of understanding, empathy, kinship, self-sacrifice, resilience and wisdom, and then amplify their impact in the world.



This is what we are seeking to achieve at the Transformative Leadership Academy — a twelve-day scholarship-based summer residential program offered by the Mentora School for a Higher Age.

TLA brings together an exceptionally talented and committed group of college students and prepares them to be exemplary changemakers in their careers and communities.

We welcome applications from students who are committed to cultivating a strong connection with their spiritual core, growing their character through daily practice, engaging in a healthy pursuit of excellence, and serving and advancing humanity.

The Mentora School for a Higher Age

Through the award-winning research and teachings of Prof. Hitendra Wadhwa at Columbia University, we have developed a practical method for living and leading from one's inner core. We call this *Inner Mastery, Outer Impact*. This method integrates scientific research on human nature, studies of exemplary leaders and movements, and spiritual principles from the world's great truth-seeking traditions.

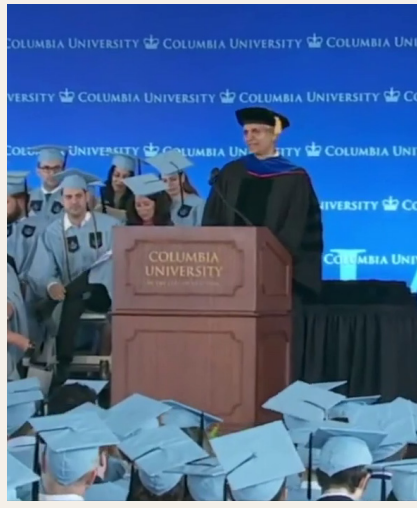
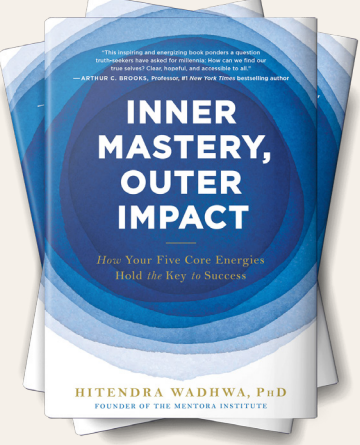
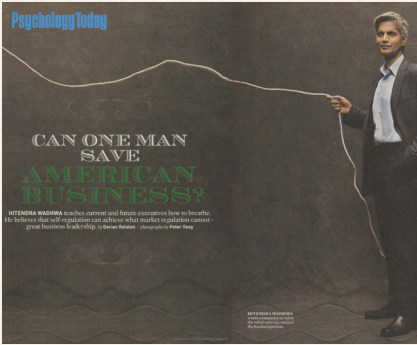
After nearly two decades of sharing this method with diverse audiences — including more than 10,000 executives, lawyers, physicians, educators, MBA students and formerly incarcerated citizens — Mentora is launching the School for a Higher Age.

— MISSION STATEMENT —

The Mentora School for a Higher Age seeks to develop a new generation of changemakers whose leadership arises from their spiritual core, and who are committed to bringing outer transformation in the world by catalyzing inner transformation in people.



BY SHELLY DUBOIS September 14, 2011
The Church of B-School
About an hour into a leadership class at Columbia Business School, all 50-odd students were sitting tall—straight with their eyes closed. A blonde research associate with the slightest hint of a German accent cooed instructions at the front of the class. "Notice the sensation of your shoes," he said.
Those shared experiences can fill an unmet need for community. Americans have become less social, George argues in his recently published book *True North Groups*. He cites the work of fellow



Mentora's 5 Principles of Success *in Life and Leadership*

Our research reveals that exemplary leaders practice five universal principles that are accessible to all of us. Participants in the TLA are trained to both learn and embody these principles.

01 Leadership is an inner choice you make to bring out the best in yourself and the best in others, in pursuit of a noble purpose.

You are being invited to lead in this way in all moments, in all roles. Life moments are leadership moments.

02 We are at our best when we operate from our space of highest potential — our inner core.

When we are at our core, we are beyond ego, attachments, and insecurities. Most of us drift into and then out of our core from time to time.

03 All acts of transformative leadership are based on activating five energies that arise from our core.



Purpose: Committed to a noble purpose.



Wisdom: Calm and receptive to truth.



Growth: Curious and open to new learning.



Love: Connected with your people and those you serve.



Self-Realization: Centered in a joyful spirit.

04 We ascend from ordinary to extraordinary by making the extraordinary, ordinary — by doing ordinary things, extraordinarily well.

There are 25+ simple actions we can use to activate our 5 core energies. Many of these actions are familiar to us — we simply are not accustomed to using them in the moments that matter.

05 Exemplary leaders recognize the presence of a silent, loving, intelligent force in the universe and strive to be attuned to it from their inner core.

The Path to Inner and Outer Transformation

The TLA provides a unique environment for students to pursue deep reflection, strengthen their character, cultivate peer relationships, and hone their core beliefs about life, leadership and the world, with a focus on three areas.



Inner Mastery

- Create clarity for yourself on your values and purpose, how you can express these in the world, and how to harmonize with your external environment when your values conflict with those of others.
- Identify which impulses, desires, emotions, thoughts and beliefs are true to you and which of them are “false friends” that are holding you back. Learn how to step away from them.
- Use adversities to make you better — not bitter.
- Ground your life in the joy that lies at your inner core, and in the form of service to humanity that you are uniquely gifted to manifest in the world.
- Build a connection with your inner voice as a source of clarity and wisdom to guide you on your life path.



Outer Impact

- Understand people at their core — not only who they are, but also who they can be.
- Practice forms of communication and connection that will inspire others to become the best versions of themselves.
- Learn the art of building fulfilling, long-term relationships.
- Acquire skills that will help you build trust, influence others, communicate with impact, give effective feedback, tackle conflicts and build high-performing teams.
- Develop a library of personal journey stories you can use to build your personal brand and to inspire and influence people toward a common purpose.



Changemaking

- Develop a more nuanced, balanced and illuminated understanding of the critical issues facing humanity today, so you can operate with a sincere and open search for truth in all matters.
- See truth in a more integrative light — as a diamond with many facets, all of which need to be discovered and integrated.
- Build a compelling vision for the kinds of change you wish to advance in the world and the audience you wish to serve. Learn how to adapt and express this vision in different roles and contexts you find yourself in as you progress personally and professionally in the years ahead.
- Bridge divides and forge integrative solutions, moving away from the tendency to see situations as either wholly good or wholly bad, and people as either heroes or villains, friends or enemies.
- Forge deep connections with other talented future leaders, forming relationships that are grounded not simply in shared experiences and interests, but shared values and beliefs. Join a growth partner circle where you can share perspectives, gain peer-guidance and create accountability.

Science & Spirituality

At the School for a Higher Age, we approach science and spirituality as intertwined, complementary pathways to truth-seeking. Students in the TLA are guided to cultivate their spiritual core, while also utilizing scientific practices to bring this core into active outer manifestation in their pursuit of excellence and impact in the world.

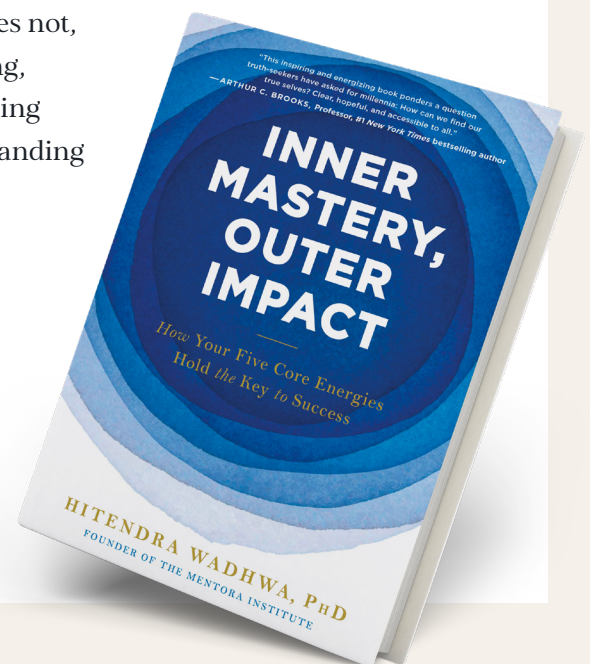


In the purest expression of their purpose, **science** and **spirituality** concern themselves with the same thing: the discovery of truth. Science gathers data from our outer world and spirituality from our inner world. Although the two disciplines may have opposed each other in the past, they are starting to come together.

Science is at its best when pursued with a spiritual temperament—with great appreciation for the vast intelligence in nature, a sense of awe about all that is yet unknown, a spirit of humble inquiry shorn of one's ego, an opening of one's consciousness to new, uplifting experiences, and a pure-hearted devotion to the discovery of truth.

Spirituality, in turn, is at its best when pursued with a scientific temperament; if a spiritual path we are pursuing does not, over time, make us increasingly peaceful, wise, loving, and joyful, well then, scientifically speaking, something isn't right—either the teaching itself, or our understanding of it, or how we are putting it into practice.

Hitendra Wadhwa, in his book
Inner Mastery, Outer Impact



Faculty & Network



Hitendra Wadhwa | Founder & Faculty

Hitendra Wadhwa has been a lifelong student of the world's mystic traditions, and his mission is to discover, codify and teach the laws of success in life and leadership.

With an MBA and PhD from MIT's Sloan School of Management, Hitendra brings a mathematician's rigor and a truth-seeker's spirit to questions about authenticity, success, leadership, and human potential. He has codified these principles in his book, *Inner Mastery, Outer Impact*. An article adaptation of this book was featured on the cover of the *Harvard Business Review's* Jan-Feb 2024 issue.

As Professor of Practice at Columbia Business School and Founder of the Mentora Institute, Hitendra has coached dozens of Fortune 100 C-suite executives and taught more than 10,000 MBAs, executives, doctors, lawyers, social activists, and educators. His "Personal Leadership & Success" class at Columbia has been the most popular leadership elective there for many years, earning him the Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence and the Executive-MBA Commitment to Excellence Award.

Previously, Hitendra worked as a strategy consultant at McKinsey and Company, and was the founder and CEO of a Silicon Valley startup, Paramark. He received his BA from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, where he received the Gold Medal for being the top mathematics student in the University of Delhi.

Dr. Wadhwa will be joined by distinguished partner professors and Mentora faculty. In addition, students at the Transformative Leadership Academy are able to tap the wisdom and mentorship of Mentora's Luminary Network. Among its members are the following:



Charles Sorenson
CEO (retd.), Intermountain Health



Pierre Gentin
Chief Legal Counsel, McKinsey & Co.



Craig Boyan
CEO, H-E-B, 6th largest private company in the US



Candace Lightner
Founder of MADD – Mothers Against Drunk Driving



Vicki Phillips
CEO, National Center for Education and the Economy



Apolo Ohno
Most successful US Winter Olympian

Program Agenda

INNER MASTERY

Beginnings, and Cultivating *Purpose*

- Introduction & Goal Setting
- Living, Leading, and Learning from Your Inner Core
- The Power and Principles of Storytelling
- Exercise in Forging Purpose
- Your Life's Defining Moments

Cultivating *Wisdom*

- Mastering Emotions and Thoughts
- Shifting Mindsets
- Re-scripting Self-Defeating Beliefs

Cultivating *Growth*

- Forming Growth Partners
- Doing a Core Review
- Listening to Quiet Truths

Cultivating *Love*

- Practices to Nurture a Pure Heart
- The Power of Forgiveness
- Blending Strength with Warmth

Cultivating *Self-Realization*

- Cultivating a Meditation Practice
- Integrating Your Inner Life and Outer Life
- Your Most Transcendent Moments

Connecting with *the Universe*

- Being a Mystic in the World
- Creative vs. Spiritual Intuition
- Meet LiFT, Your Mentora Coach On-demand

The Pursuit of *Transformative Leadership*

- Recap: Leading from Your Inner Core
- 5 Principles, 25 Actions
- Your Leadership Aspirations and Challenges
- Core Beliefs that Make Us Win or Lose as Leaders





Program Agenda

OUTER IMPACT

Activating *Purpose* and *Wisdom* in Others

- Why Purpose and Wisdom are Key to a Team, Organization, or Movement
- 4 Actions of Purpose
- 7 Actions of Wisdom
- Role-Play and Real-Play Practice
- Blending Purpose and Wisdom

Activating *Growth* and *Love* in Others

- Why Growth and Love are Key to a Team, Organization, or Movement
- 5 Actions of Growth
- 5 Actions of Love
- Role-Play and Real-Play Practice
- Blending Purpose, Wisdom, Growth, and Love

Activating *Self-Realization* in Others

- Why Self-Realization is Key to a Team, Organization, or Movement
- 4 Self-Realization Actions
- Using the 25 Actions to Reach Your High-Stakes Goals
- Setting Intentions for Your Leadership Journey Going Forward

Sharing *Personal Journeys*

Key 2027 Program Timeline

- Virtual Phase (self-paced learning & reflection): March–May 2027*
- Residential Program: Late May, 2027

**Note: Students who do not complete the virtual phase will not be invited to participate in the in-person residential program.*



Program Agenda

CHANGEMAKING

Introducing the 3-Step Blueprint

- Envision a Better Future
- Build a Winning Pathway from Today to Tomorrow
- Inspire People to Take the Journey

Mastering the 8 Building Blocks

- Frame the Change Program as a Hero's Journey
- Separate the Core of the Change Agenda from Its Tactics
- Appeal to the Heart, Not Just the Mind
- Experiment, Learn, Adapt
- Extract Value from Every Attempt
- Modulate the Pace and Direction
- Take Small Steps
- Build Bridges

Our Campus

For the last two years, the Transformative Leadership Academy has been hosted at the beautiful Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville, Tennessee—an urban hub surrounded by expansive parks, trails and wildlife. Formerly the grounds to a historic college, our serene campus was once host to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who delivered a speech in the on-site chapel on April 25, 1957.



The Scarritt Bennett Center is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and located on Music Row, just a block from Vanderbilt University and a ten-minute drive from Nashville International Airport. Our 2027 location will be confirmed in fall 2026.

Program Details

What we're looking for

Successful applicants for the Transformative Leadership Academy will be:

- 01** Highly invested in their own transformation—growing their connection with their inner core.
- 02** Engaged in the healthy pursuit of excellence in a field of their choosing.
- 03** Committed to bringing inner and outer transformation in the world.
- 04** Ready to invest in a practice-based, whole-person growth journey.

Eligibility: U.S. and Canadian college undergraduates & those within one year of graduation.

What you'll pay

Successful applicants will receive a full scholarship covering tuition, room, and board from the Mentora Foundation. Participants are responsible for travel and incidental expenses.



Testimonials from Founding TLA Participants

"The residential setting has allowed for a very unique opportunity to really get to know the other participants in a very intimate way, to know their stories and what they've overcome... We hang out a lot. We love each other a lot...

How do you disarm others who might disagree? How do you respectfully approach that with love? How do you see both sides and be wise in that situation? ...It's a fine little dance that I feel any changemaker needs to know. Otherwise, you run the risk of having an exceptional purpose but not knowing how to execute."



YOUNESS ROBERT TAHIRI

University of Toronto | 2025 Pilot Participant

"Here at TLA, I realized the impact I have on others and the power in my voice, and that there is something special within me that I can grow and develop so I can be of service to others..."

HBCUs have so many students of color who have so much talent and so [many] questions and want to challenge the world in so many different ways, but they're not being handed resources to do that. They're not being taught to look within themselves and build a deeper relationship with themselves. So, a program like TLA on an HBCU campus can truly make amazing changemakers in the world."



AALIYAH SMITH

Howard University | 2025 Pilot Participant



"Any student who is interested in Mentora TLA should really look at Dr. Wadhwa's work and think, 'Is this the kind of material that I'm already getting in school?' I think their conclusion would be 'probably not.' ...Not only is Dr. Wadhwa's approach unique, but even the questions he's asking are really not being asked in your normal college classroom... My long walks with Dr. Wadhwa talking about life, or faith, or the importance of self-development—those will always stay with me.

One of the things I'm walking away with is new abilities to navigate hard conversations. Even at Columbia, what I've seen is that it can be really hard for people—all of us—to have hard conversations. Mentora has given me a toolkit to be able to do that that I'm really grateful for."



STANLEY WILLIAM DAVIS

Columbia University

2025 Pilot Participant | 2026 Rhodes Scholar

Applications for the 2027 cohort will open in late summer/early fall 2026.

If you'd like to learn more in the meantime, we invite you to:

- ❖ Stay informed with application milestones and inspiration from the Mentora community via email. [Sign up here](#)
- ❖ Get a glimpse of the current cohort journey and join the conversation on Instagram. Join us [@tla.mentora](#)

Deepen your leadership journey.

To further explore our principles and the Mentora community, we invite you to:

- ❖ **Explore the core principles** of our curriculum by reading [Inner Mastery, Outer Impact](#) by our founder, Dr. Hitendra Wadhwa.
- ❖ **Discover the full scope** of our programs and faculty at [mentora.institute](#).
- ❖ **Questions?** We are here to support your path. Reach out to Lauren Decker at lauren.decker@mentora.institute.

We look forward to meeting you!
