

**BOOK REVIEW****LAWYERS AS CHANGEMAKERS – THE GLOBAL INTEGRATIVE LAW MOVEMENT, J. KIM WRIGHT (CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, ABA PUBLISHING, 2016)****Rhiannon Thomas, Integrative Lawyer**

*Lawyers as Changemakers* is J. Kim Wright's newest book. She is an American Bar Association best-selling author and her previous book, *Lawyers as Peacemakers: Practicing Holistic, Problem-Solving Law* (ABA, 2010) was the first book to chronicle the ways in which lawyers were making positive differences in the world. Since that book the Integrative Law movement has continued to develop, grow and expand, and *Lawyers as Changemakers* is overwhelming evidence that we are in the process of seeing a new system in the making.

J. Kim Wright has been licensed as a lawyer in the United States since 1989 and over the last 30 years she has held many titles, roles, and job descriptions. Mostly she is about transformation – systems, ideas, approaches, perspectives, locations, habits. She is a connector – of cutting-edge lawyers, like-minded professionals, communities – and a creator of books, courses, articles, new approaches, ideas, websites, and organisations about the evolving legal system which serves lawyers, their clients and the planet.

Being a changemaker takes courage because it involves taking a different, less travelled, and often new path to the whole. Being a legal changemaker takes even more courage because that whole is the system that consolidates the norms and practices of our society into an entrenched set of rules and laws about how things are done. Being a changemaker can also be lonely, especially when those few courageous lawyers are spread far and wide across the globe. *Lawyers as Changemakers*, with its more than 50 contributors, is the antidote to this loneliness and the tonic for greater courage.

My own connection with the movement happened in 2012 when I met Kim on her visit to South Africa. I fetched her from the airport in Cape Town and as we had a few hours to kill we went to drink coffee at the beachfront. In those few hours she told me about many other lawyers around the world who felt just like me and who were bringing about changes to the system. Up until that moment I had felt very alone as a lawyer and was contemplating giving it all up. Hearing about those other changemakers was the tonic I needed for greater courage to practise law in a different way – one based on consciousness and love. When, a few years later, Kim asked me if I wanted to contribute to her new book about legal changemakers I immediately said yes. Naturally I wanted to be part of this remarkable collection of innovators and leaders but more importantly I hoped to inspire those, who like me, felt alone.

*Lawyers as Changemakers* is organised into six parts:

1. What is Integrative Law, The Elements of Integrative Law;

2. Integrative Models and Approaches, Shared Values of Integrative Lawyers;
3. Other Stakeholders in the Legal System;
4. Engaging Challenges and the Courage to Lead, The Courage to Confront Personal Challenges;
5. Evolutionary Leadership in Law, Integrative Law Leaders Around the World;
6. Designing the Future.

If you're new to the Integrative Law movement then the best place to start reading this book is at the beginning. In the Acknowledgements section Kim writes that 'Integrative Law is an emerging movement. ... It's about a shift in the legal profession to a more conscious, humanistic, and inclusive model of justice and peacemaking.' If that in any way resonates with you, I urge you to buy a copy of this book now.

The Integrative Law movement started emerging about 20 years ago when lawyers began to see how the legal system wasn't able to meet the needs of a constantly evolving society and a developing human consciousness that wanted a more restorative, holistic, creative and person-centred system. Being a changemaker starts with a feeling that something isn't working anymore and then the courage to start doing something different. This feeling isn't limited to just the legal system – many people in business began exploring more conscious business models around this time too. Part 1 Section 2 of the book gives a wonderfully inspiring overview of some other models of consciousness that have inspired lawyers to bring about change in the legal system.

The book introduces the many models and approaches within the Integrative Law movement and it is like having your own personal login details to Kim's brain. If she were superhuman she could have coffee with all those lawyers out there who felt like I did, and if she can, she will. If there is an area of law that you've imagined could be different, reading through Part 2 Section 1 will connect you with another lawyer who has had similar thoughts and feelings. *Lawyers as Changemakers* is filled with inspiring stories from lawyers who have, often in the face of great personal and professional adversity, begun to practise law in a more conscious and humanising way. The overriding joy that is found in this book is the knowledge that you are no longer alone.

Part 2 Section 2 is about how to become an Integrative Lawyer. In my view the feeling (that something isn't working anymore) is the starting point but at their core Integrative Lawyers share many similar values. Seeking to align their professional lives with these values is what begins the journey. The reward that awaits one is a feeling of true integrity and purpose. Kim's last 10 years as a legal nomad travelling the world and connecting lawyers has confirmed these shared values amongst Integrative Lawyers: compassion and dignity; happiness and well-being; love; creativity; inclusivity; being in relationship; making the

world a better place; spirituality; and sustainability. She explores these through her own reflections and the personal stories of the contributors. These were not the values I was taught at Law School and so in some ways this book is a re-education and an expanding of your legal toolkit.

If you're already a proponent of the Integrative Law movement then the book is designed to be dipped in and out of over time rather than reading it in a linear way. What I love about it is that no matter what is happening in my life at any particular time I can always find something in the book that resonates. It may be the chance to connect with a new person, how to manage a personal challenge or a source of inspiration, encouragement and guidance.

Another hallmark of Integrative Law is collaboration, not only within the profession but with other stakeholders and across disciplines. Part 3 is about how these other stakeholders, such as prisons, are implementing integrative approaches and bringing about changes aimed at a human and holistic approach.

If Part 2 is the inspiration then Part 4 is the tonic. For me it's like the perfect lawyer self-development handbook. It gives guidance and reflection about how to engage challenges and finding the courage to lead in the face of adversity. It's not easy being a changemaker especially in a system as entrenched and interwoven as law.

Part 5 tracks the movement globally and recognises the contributions of leaders around the world.

And as all changemakers should, Part 6 looks to the future and how together we can bring about a new system which can meet the needs of a changing global consciousness.

*Lawyers as Changemakers* is an illuminating book for anyone who is interested in how things can be done differently to create a legal system that is founded on dignity, compassion and love. If you've ever felt that something just isn't working anymore or that, as a lawyer, your own values are at odds with the system, then you ought to buy this book and dip in and out of it on a regular basis – you never know, it might just be life-changing.