

'Transformation' Defined

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Transformation has become the new buzzword. No, not the transformation of molecular biology – but transformation of us as beings. You hear it thrown around in advertising

campaigns and in a host of different seminars and it is now popping up with regularity in titles on bookshelves at any Barnes and Nobel.

But what is transformation?

I define transformation as: a shift in the way that I relate with myself, with others, with my world, with my circumstances, obstacles and conditions.

In other words, everything in my life is technically the 'same' (as much as that can ever really be the case!), but out of a SHIFT THAT I HAVE HAD WITHIN MYSELF, my entire world shifts and the people and things in my life seem to be different. Sometimes when people do transformational work, they are initially amazed that everybody around them seems to have altered. 'No, really, my mom is being different – I swear she wasn't like this a week ago!' 'No, you don't understand – my husband has never been this affectionate and loving with me – never – not even on our honeymoon.' And it is true, people around you do alter, but it is out of the shift that has occurred within you.

Now here's the tricky part of transformation: Sometimes all of us want transformation without being willing to do the real work.

For example, in a truly transformational training, you get to be a person who can declare a goal or accomplishment and then reinvent yourself to accomplish whatever it is that you set out to do – without your circumstances, obstacles or conditions stopping you. Most people set goals and then achieve those goals if the circumstances are favorable or if no significant obstacles hinder them. Leaders are people who impact our world and operate in another way – they accomplish goals DESPITE obstacles, conditions or circumstances. Through the process of the trainings, you have an opportunity to be a person who can deliver in any and all situations and live your life.

Sounds great, right? But let me give concrete examples of where it gets a little sticky. Over the past years, Inspire Coaching, and other transformational companies where I train don't announce some trainings in advance. Unlike a Cruise ship company, where the year's dates are printed well in advance, sometimes trainings are thrown in, and other times, a partial schedule is released. Why? Because it is consistent with transformation. Believe me, even members of my own family have been shocked when I didn't give them dates for a training in another quarter. First, there is only NOW. That is all that exists. That is a lovely concept when you are reading Eckhart Tolle's The Power of Now; but when it comes to our lives, all of us would like to plan things out and fit things in when it is convenient or there are openings in our schedule. The problem is – your schedule is then the determiner of your life. What if you could move things to have everything work? Not necessarily comfortable, but most often it is possible, just inconvenient.

If I am scheduling everything according to what fits, then I am looking to my calendar to see when it would be convenient or fit in to transform my life. Other people, look to

their wallet to see if they cash or credit is there to do whatever it is they want to do. Others look to their boss to see if they can get the time off of work or manage to work it into their school schedule. And others look to a husband or wife to give them permission. Whatever you look to outside of you – that is what is determining whether or not you can do whatever it is that you want to do – whether it the trainings, go to Fiji or start a new business. Most people look to their circumstances to determine what will and will not work. Transformation is declaring it and then having it happen, without looking to our circumstances, obstacles or conditions. In other words – having it happen anyways – no matter what.

Here is where it gets even better – whatever stops you consistently in your life, stops you everywhere. So, if you never have enough time for the things that you want to do, then when it comes to enrolling in the trainings, you will consistently use the excuse that you don't have time (great to look at what do you have time for? Hint – look to your work for what has become the 'priority'). Because that is the circumstance that has power over you. If you consistently look outside of yourself for permission from your boss, your husband or wife – then you consistently look outside of yourself for someone else to have the power in your life. You are not trusting yourself and your own power. If you never have money for what it is that you would like to do, then, at some level, you must not believe that you deserve to have money. Let's be clear – there are infinite ways to generate money, but if you have a belief about yourself like 'I don't deserve money,' or 'I can't make money' or 'It's too hard', then money will continue to be a challenge for you. Think about it – Pet rocks, Chia pets, Shamwow – not ideas that involved rocket science, but money-makers. The capacity to generate money is always there – as limited or unlimited as the capacity within us to generate ideas. So, in other words, you need to have a breakthrough to even get to, or a series of breakthroughs to make it through the trainings. In having a breakthrough in whatever stops you, that breakthrough will serve you the next time that any circumstance or obstacle presents itself. The more that you practice being bigger than your circumstances or obstacles, the more you realize that nothing ever needs to stop you.

But the journey along the way isn't necessarily comfortable. By definition, transformation isn't comfortable. There is an old saying: The directions on how to get outside your box are on the outside of the box. Essentially, you need to get outside of your comfort zone -- outside of your current set of circumstances, obstacles and conditions. What's another name for inside of the box? Our comfort zone. Each time you bust through your comfort zone and the beliefs that were limiting you, your comfort zone expands and you have access to what before was unavailable within you.

When I first began the journey of transformation, I had a full-time job as a Creative Director for a fundraising firm, a boyfriend, volunteer work, service projects, while I was

ALSO refurbishing a Victorian house in Annapolis, Maryland. Life was pretty packed. There were plenty of times I was short or snippy with my coach because I couldn't see how I could possibly EXPAND MYSELF to make space for more people or things. He kept pushing me, and I kept pushing myself beyond each of the times that I thought I couldn't possibly fit more in. Guess when the breakthrough usually occurs? When you are at the edge of your breaking point. That is why it is called a BREAK-THROUGH. Now I have three full-time careers, three companies I head, a husband and two children. I would have thought you were crazy if you said that I could do all of this when I was a participant in the Leadership Practice. I expanded my box by repeatedly challenging my beliefs about time or myself in relationship with time.

So when I am enrolling someone and circumstances, conditions and obstacles present themselves, I am actually excited because the person has the opportunity to really begin the work of transformation and show themselves that they are bigger than any of the obstacles that usually stop them. Guess what? The same circumstance that presented itself will come up again and again in your life. It will rear its ugly head until finally, you do not see it as something that stops you. It is there and still presents itself – but you GIVE IT NO POWER.

For those of you on the path of transformation, remind yourselves: to keep transformation alive, you get to continually challenge your beliefs about yourself and your circumstances. You get to commit to doing things that you really want to do without looking to your calendar, wallet, boss or anything to determine if it is possible. Then the magic: CREATE IT OCCURRING BEAUTIFULLY. With nothing being sacrificed or lost in the process.

For years, I have had a few notebooks of quotes and inspirations. Here's one from Randy Pausch that describes those 'push' moments in transformation: "The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. Because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don't want it badly enough. They're there to stop the other people."

Lynne