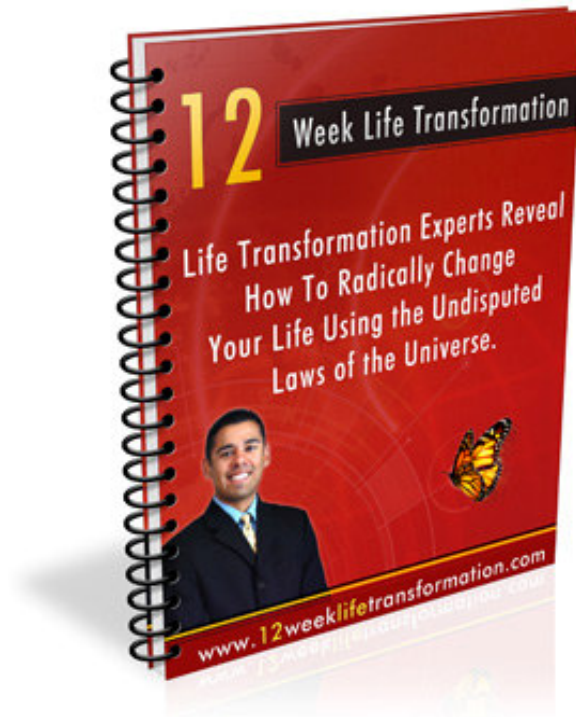


12 WEEK LIFE TRANSFORMATION

BY ANTHONY TREAS



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12 Week Life Transformation – Peter Shepherd

Anthony: *The [12 Week Life Transformation](#) project is about helping people to make some radical changes in their life. I want to get into that and the transformational psychology that you talk about in your book, *Transforming the Mind*. But before we do that, would you take a minute or two to introduce yourself to people who may not know who you are?*

Peter: I run the [Tools for Transformation](#) web site, which is a personal development site. It has all the tools and methods that I've found to be most effective to help people start to change their life around... to move from a flat or lowering level in their life and to start again and begin a new life, with good information, good tools, and all sorts of ways that suit different people. I've presented various courses of my own, which have been successful, and they appeal to particular kinds of people - perhaps people like me! But people are very different, more left-brained or right brained, or in the middle. They're practical, they like things to be in audio, or they're very visual... all these kind of differences.

They're in different stages of their growth path in life as well. They may be young, middle aged or old. They may be new to the concept that they can actually be in control of their life and the whole idea that you can actually change your beliefs is novel. Some people think, well that's how I am, that's it. Another person may have more introspective and able to realize that they actually create their thoughts from all their life, and they are therefore in a different stage of their path.

So all these different kinds of people need different tools, so gradually I've been adding what I've found to be really good tools. My wife is French, and she's different from me, in all sorts of ways. We get on great together but... she's different! And so she wants different courses and programs than I want. I learned a lot and worked for one or two other people besides myself, and I try to collect all these good things that work on the Tools for Transformation site.

You have to find the thing that's right for you. Just as in life you have to find the direction in life that's right for you - not what other people want you to do, and not what you may have been told to do, not what you may think you ought to do, but what is actually right for you.

There's all sorts of paths and routes to get to the top of a mountain. As you go

up the mountain you get a better view, and at the top you get a fantastic view and everything becomes clear that wasn't clear before. Some people may take an elevator or take a helicopter and get dropped on the top - it doesn't matter, because there is a way that's right for you and I want everybody to find that way.

I work mainly now running the web site and writing for it. Earlier on it was a bit different. For quite a few years I was psychotherapist in England and when I was working in that field, I obtained a lot of useful knowledge and experience. But I was continually working with people who were looking to solve a problem in their lives but without any ambitions beyond that, they didn't have that idea that life could be really, really great. They simply had a problem to solve that they hoped that you could help them with. I tried to get people who were open to it to understand that life is an ongoing learning process, to be happier and more fulfilled, and to achieve things of benefit not just to oneself but to everybody else. My work moved naturally, therefore into personal development, where you haven't just got somebody who's feeling sorry for themselves, you've got somebody who really wants to make a difference in their own life, and a difference in the world. And that's a much more exciting thing to do, so I gave up being a psychotherapist and moved into personal development.

Anthony: *In helping people, what has been the number one request that you have come across, that people are looking for help in?*

Peter: Quite simply, it is this business of personal development. That means, a way to positively grow in their life, to better meet the challenges of life, rather than the sort of personal problems you might go to a psychotherapist about. Problems can be a pain in the ass or they can be problems that are exhilarating to meet and overcome. Two very different ways you can look at problems. Most people could use bit of therapy, in fact, but they are able to handle these issues themselves, in the context of a more positive drive toward self improvement, and starting to turn their lives around. To increase their self esteem, to be happier, more fulfilled... People want to know how to do that because there are many conflicting theories in psychology, and many people trying to sell them stuff. It's always exaggerated, the sales spiel for products, which must be very confusing for people that really don't know. So I try to guide people in this, based on my own experience and the experience of others that I have been able to help.

Anthony: *So people are basically just looking for ways to improve themselves and be better able to meet the challenges that come their way. Is that right, or is there one particular area that people are looking for help in... is it really in a relationship, is it in the financial, is it really just in the personal development?*

Peter: It's all those things, but the thing that people really find most difficult is to find their real identity in life, because it's not easy! There's pressure's on you

to be a certain way and to follow certain rules. You have a lot of invalidation and criticism, even from people that love you, that are trying to help you. It can knock you, so you don't know who you really are. And then, just at your most vulnerable time, as a teenager, you have to decide about what career you want to do, and take subjects at school according to that, and that's an incredibly difficult decision to make, particularly when you're fighting to find an identity.

It's something that happens to many people, that they drift one way or another into a career, they drift into relationships, when they haven't been taught, really, anything about how to communicate, how to understand what goes on in a person to make them behave the way they do. So it's very hard for them to have good relationships and they can drift into being married with a child, with somebody who they really hardly even know. Relationships are important, and success is important, but the key to success and happiness with those issues is self knowledge - knowing who you are and what you really want yourself, what your talents are, what your abilities are, and knowing the potential that you have. And starting to recognize that you don't have to believe what everybody else has said about you, and maybe you feel are thinking about you, but start to be objective and find yourself. So this, I think, is the real crux of the matter: the issue of identity and who you are.

This has always been recognized by the philosophers: the classic "Know thyself" is critical. Partly because if you don't know yourself you can't love yourself, and if you don't love yourself it's very hard to love anybody else. If you don't love yourself it's hard to forgive yourself, and if you don't love other people it's hard to forgive them. You can have chips on your shoulder in abundance, both regarding yourself and regarding others. It's just not the way to a happy life, so self knowledge is the number one thing, I think.

Anthony: *Self knowledge is the beginning of how someone can start understanding who they are and their potential?*

Peter: Yes. And it's essential. The first thing you need to do is to really consider your life: is it pointed in the right direction? Are you doing what you're doing because it's aligned with your own values, your own path, and your needs? We have needs for safety, we have needs for belonging, and to fit in and to please others, and these are all things that we feel we should be doing, and we need to do them at a certain stage of our development. These things, they keep you alive, but they don't make you happy. Happiness comes from working towards goals that are truly your own, that are based on high ethical values - because you've thought about ethics, what's right and wrong. Really it comes from an attitude, about flowing love and caring toward other people, to contribute and be of service to others. So this is getting beyond personal needs to actually being an out-flowing person who has a bigger domain than just themselves. Not just themselves, their relationship and family, but to be part of

society and to be of value and of service on a broader level. That can really give you a fulfilling life. You don't get that from being rich, or anything that comes towards you; it's what you know of your own worth through being of value and service to others.

What you give, you get back in satisfaction and the feeling of self worth. The value that you create will also naturally be rewarded by exchange, by greater wealth - wealth in terms of happiness and also wealth in terms of money and possessions. Those things naturally come to you because people want to give value back in exchange for value. But first of all you have to put the value out there. That's what abundance is about, and making money. It's not just because you want to be rich, it's about what you can put out there that is valuable.

Anthony: *What have you found in working with people, and helping them to make some changes in their lives, to be the number one thing that really stops people, right in their tracks, from reaching their goals and to find out who they are? Is it influence or surroundings... what do you think it is?*

Peter: The number one thing that stops people is fear. It's stepping out of the comfort zone that we all create around ourselves, which is made up of all the solutions which we've found to make life easier to face up to. We stay as we are - even if we don't have money and it may be physically uncomfortable. We're not having to actually face up to our fears, and to that extent it's comfortable.

Another factor, as you say, is our conditioning... all the influences around us pushing us to conform - in Freudian terms, the Superego and in Transactional Analysis terms it's the Parent - the tapes that play in our head that tell us what we should be doing and ought to be doing. If we're going to be successful we need to be creative, to think outside the box. To be creative we have to break free of this stuff, about what we should be doing and ought to be doing, and what might happen if we don't.

The energy in the motivation, to achieve a goal, and to break through the barrier of fear and of conditioning, to "do it anyway," is derived from having a vision that's really exciting, and is a reflection of our own true nature and desires. When that vision is really clear to us, then we can achieve anything. What you want, you energize, naturally. What before was a fear that you couldn't confront, you can brush it out of the way now. What before was a kind of pressure on you to be a certain person who you have been before, you can brush that off. It's like a coat you take off. You really want to get to this vision.

A classic vision is of a painter, painting a picture. They start with a white canvas and they get a picture in their head... maybe a beautiful scene of water and trees but painted in a special way that mixes colors up. Once you've got that picture in your head, nothing stops you until you've actually manifested

that physically. You'll learn what you have to learn to do it, you'll get the skills you need. Say if your vision is to create a new type of bicycle, that is good for going up mountains, and you have some creative idea about how to do it. But you need to learn about making plastics that are stronger and you have no idea how to do that, so you can learn these things. And to use it you need to be more physically fit, so you do it. But all the steps of the way you have the vision that empowers you.

What tends to happen, even if you overcome the fears and you've got a good idea, and you're working toward the goal, half the time people stop then anyway, and they don't achieve the goal. They've stopped reminding themselves of the vision. They've stopped remembering the reason for persisting on what may be quite a rigorous path. They simply forget and drift on to easier targets. So it's really important to keep reminding yourself of the reason why and to get that picture as vividly as possible, and keep putting it there every day - to keep renewing your purpose in the present moment. Ask yourself, why do I want to do this, to achieve that? If you keep putting the reason why there, each step becomes achievable.

You can have a why for each step toward the goal as well, not just the vision at the end - how each step towards it will make a difference. So the reasons why are always the thing to be aware of. If you're losing interest, that is the cue for saying to yourself, "Hang on, I've got to sort this out! I had a fantastic vision that was really exciting and I've lost the vision. So I've got to get that back and look at all the advantages and benefits that will accrue if I do the next step."

People start towards a goal, and they do some valid first steps towards the goal, then they look at the vision for the end result and it still seems just as far away as when they started. There may be a lot of things to do to reach a final goal. But the thing to do is not to do that: you look at the final goal to give you a reason to continue, but to assess what you have achieved you need to **not** measure the distance from where you are to the final goal but the **distance from where you are to where you started**. It's much more encouraging to think, "Well I've laid all these plans, I've done all this training, I'm doing well now and I've got the funds that I need. OK, I haven't done all these other things yet, they're on the list, but there's an awful lot I have done." And that will validate your progress much more than looking at the road ahead, which may well be long.

So there's these two things to balance, to think of what the benefits are for the next step towards the goal, and what the overall achievement is to date. Benefits for yourself and your family and for others. This whole thing about motivation is so important. To be workable it has to be built on a solid idea of who you are and what you want, because to achieve a goal that isn't actually yours but is your wife's or your father's or such like, is going to leave you as frustrated and unfulfilled as when you started.

Anthony: *So one of the main things then is to see where you have come from, not necessarily to see how much more you have to reach your goal, but to really give yourself that credit for the changes you have made in order to get that goal. And when someone is working toward the goal, like building a bike, and they really have that desire there and they're into bikes, and they really get into it and to that point, to remind themselves of why did they want that goal in the first place. And once they really understand why they want this goal - and it's got to be their goal so they're going to have those ideas of why they want to accomplish - and it's going to help them to overcome the rough spots, the time when it's not going to be exciting, the time when it seems too far for the goal to actually come about.*

For a lot of people who want to be authors, they think I want to write this book, and they start to write it and before you know it they begin to realize, I gotta get an agent and find a publisher and all these other different things. Before you know it they have this book written and it probably could do very well, but then they have to write summaries and send these things out to publishers so that they would want to publish the book and give you an offer, but people realize that's a lot of work and it sets them back. But they if they really want that goal they're going to push forward.

Peter: A friend of mine who lives in Paris has just got a contract for publishing her book about sacred symbology. She had to create a prospectus to send to the publishers, which sums up the book. She's been working on this for years, scholarship and putting all of herself into this work. It's an esoteric subject but it's her subject absolutely, she lives for this stuff, and she's just had the book accepted for publication. But for a lot of the time, she's had to hold this vision in sight, of her book being published on this subject, and to overcome all the obstacles. It's only really at the end when the publisher says yes, that you could say it's a success. Developing on the basis of her scholarship and building a beautiful creation, and because it is a beautiful creation she's got the contract. But if she hadn't done that building, all that time of persisting, she wouldn't have.

Anthony: *I'm sure she had lots of denials, people actually turned her down.*

Peter: She didn't have actually, because she got it perfect and she went to the right publisher, but she's had so much flack from her family and friends, over the years - that she won't succeed, that who does she think she is to write a book, who wants to read a book about sacred symbology, and all this kind of thing - but she stuck to it and I'm really thrilled for her.

This whole thing of goal setting and getting is not so fashionable now, because the fashion now is all about manifesting and waving a magic wand. But goal setting and getting is important as ever, as are skills. All the different skills that are involved in achieving something - like concentration, study skills,

communication, memory, creativity, intuition, leadership - these are all skills you can do courses on and get better at. I sell Mind Development Courses, because they are very helpful for people to get the skills that are necessary, to be able to do what they want to do.

To achieve anything meaningful, we need to put our heart and soul into the mix too, it's not just have a good idea, and having the skills or doing the courses to acquire them. It's not just an intellectual process, it's also a process that must come from the heart and from the spirit. And it's those last two factors that people are really talking about when they're talking about manifestation. It's not possible just to wave a magic wand and have what you want appear in the world... but that doesn't mean to say that there isn't a bit of magic in it. Whether or not you consider there to be a spiritual element, and what you consider spirit to be - these are subjects that you can philosophize about. But really it's down to identity, who you are, that is your source of intuition and inner knowing of what you want. You could call this your spirit, your higher being.

Creation occurs when we have a clear image of something that we desire to be. We trust that we can make it happen. If we can make it happen subjectively, in our imagination, and to visualize it, then generally we can make it happen in the physical world too. So motivation and the energy to create comes from this desire; it's a kind of tension between the current reality and the desired achievable reality, the vision. To be able manifest something and make something come about, the vision is critical. Here are some steps you can go through in a manifestation process...

It starts with defining the goal, the state desired, as we've been describing. And then you need to get your emotions into this...

What would it be like if you could....? Say if the goal was to be a singer, what would it be like if you could get on stage and sing? And then you want to bring up anything inside you which is saying, no. Like the fears or beliefs that I can't do that, and people would think this, and so on. Expose all the resistances that you have, and then you can see, do they actually make sense? Is it somebody else saying this that I'm believing? Get them out into the open and let them go. Put them in a box in a corner of your mind.

Pretend that you can.... Pretend, for example, that it is right now, you are singing - you are a singer, and people are listening and enjoying, and you're singing what you want to sing too, and you're singing well, like you know you can. And you think, what does it feel like to be doing this? Some people are moved by your singing, some are dancing... what does it feel like, in all your senses and emotions?

Be thankful, already - though you haven't done anything yet in the external

world - that you can make it so in your subjective reality, feel gratitude that you already have what you are desiring, to be singer. You actually have it. As far as the mind's concerned, there's no difference between what you have in your mind and what you have in the real world. At the same time feel without attachment to what you've achieved, that it's for the good of all that you can sing, but also that you could happily let go of the same thing. I'm thankful if I can be a singer and sing but it's OK if I can't. You have to be able to let go too! There's nothing wrong with desire, that's what life's all about; it's attachment is what leads to suffering. People think Buddhists are saying that desire leads to suffering but that's a misunderstanding, it's attachment that leads to suffering, where you cannot let go. It also leads to not having, if you attach, as the jealous husband will tell you - if you attach and can't let go it's a pain to everyone else and your wife will not be happy at all about that control by her husband over her life and she'll probably leave. The worst possible thing to do if you want something is to cling on to it.

Accept responsibility for being the agent, the one who will put into action and reality, all the actions and knowledge and wisdom and whatever else is required to manifest the state that is envisioned. One has to accept responsibility for being the agent, for that to happen. Not some other person delivering it to you on a plate. YOU are the channel for the manifestation of what you want to manifest. In spiritual terms, it's because you and others are One anyway. If you and all are One and all that is One is God, and God is manifesting, then that means you! You're not out of the equation. You can't expect other people to manifest something for you if you're not doing it yourself. That's virtually like saying I don't want it. You have to be responsible for making it happen.

And then, the magic happens. If you take responsibility for doing whatever is necessary to make this goal come true, using the old-fashioned goal setting and getting that we've been talking about earlier, then the magic happens - you find that synchronicities occur, that people arrive at the right time to help you in the way that you need just at that moment. It's because there is this connection between all people. It's not generally understood in this modern educated left-brained society, but you see it with animals. In the Tsunami tragedy, in Indonesia, before the wave came all the animals knew it was coming and they communicated to each other and fled up into the hills and after the tragedy there wasn't one dead animal, except those that were tethered. And then they came back and some helped carry children to safety. So animals know and they live this connection. It's a primitive kind of aspect of our abilities. Modern education gives us the ability to make plans, to make philosophies, to make scientific developments, to have all kinds of ideas, write books and literature and lots of great things. But it tends to lose the right brain functions of our primitive nature and our spiritual connection with reality.

So you accept responsibility for being a part of making happen what's going to

happen. And then it will communicate to others and they will support you to do - by the magic of the universal mind - what is necessary to make it happen. The movie, *The Secret*, which has come out recently... a lot of people were impressed with that because it was very well presented and it did explain how it's possible for a bit of magic to come into your life. One of the people in *The Secret* made this point, that I'm making, but most people I feel do not understand and the film did not make clear that one's self is the primary channel for the manifestation process. If you put yourself into making it happen, in the physical world, then all the magic will come in for you as well. That's how it is and it's fantastic really, that life can be magic.

Anthony: *It's real powerful when you see somebody dedicated to making things happen and things do start to present themselves, and this Life Transformation project is an example of that. One last thing, Peter... what would be, for someone who's listening, and can really understand what you're saying, what would be your encouragement to really start taking action towards their goals?*

Peter: I would say they should not underestimate themselves. An individual person is like a flower, and other people are each flowers too, they're different flowers but in the garden of life we are each of us fantastic, beautiful flowers or human beings, who have their own value. There's something to remember:

There's no beauty that you could perceive or create if it were not already within you.

This has a lot of implications. So the most wonderful things in the world that you could think of - you are actually as wonderful yourself, otherwise you wouldn't be able to perceive and understand that it was that wonderful. People are incredible - you are, and each person listening to this, most definitely is incredible. There's nothing you can't achieve. Even if you do nothing, you're incredible! I hope everyone can really appreciate that for themselves and have a great time in their lives.