



## 22 Practices That Will Transform Your Life

While there are many action steps we can take to create positive change in our lives, a few practices are actually transformative... meaning, they effect change that exponentially and fundamentally shifts an entire life's paradigm. Due to its fundamental and significant nature, transformation is more likely permanent, and also positively effects change in others too. In the thirty years that I have been working with people and organizations, these 22 practices will transform your life. Do some of them for a shift, do all of them for a quantum leap

**Journal** - Buy yourself one that honors this deeply transformative practice. And while you are at it, buy a pen that feels really good to write with. Studies show that journaling has a positive impact on physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. Writing accesses your left brain, which is analytical and rational. While your left brain is occupied, your right brain is free to create, intuit, and feel. Journaling removes mental blocks and allows you to use all of your brainpower to better understand yourself, others, and the world around you.

**Adopt a player mindset**- Essentially, we slip into one of two mindsets: Victim or Player. A Victim mindset posits that life is happening 'to' them. Challenges are setbacks over which they have little to no control, deflecting any contribution. A Player mindset sees opportunities in challenges, and assumes responsibility and accountability to effect change where they are able.

**Daily You Time**- You are your greatest asset. As a high performer, your wellbeing on every level is paramount to your success. Commit to a daily ritual where you drop into and spend time with yourself. This is different from exercise time. This is a time for reflection, learning, being curious, exploration, and listening.

**Understand Impact vs Intention**- What we say and do, regardless of our intentions, can impact people in so many ways, especially when we are not aware of the social implications. Validating the impact you may have had on someone (a 'Player' move) and moving to repair, rather than rushing to defend your intention (a 'Victim' move) is a way to generate positive and resilient relationships.

**Watch Your Defensiveness**- Defensiveness keeps us confined in our comfort zones. Our greatness lays beyond our comfort zone, into the places that scare us. Be brave enough to notice what your defensiveness is trying to protect you from, and ask yourself what life is inviting you to grow into.

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**Drop In-** Don't save meditation for special occasions, or even just once a day, instead drop into presence / beingness / mindfulness as many times a day as possible. You can create multiple small micro-moments of stillness throughout your day. This serves to regulate your brain more effectively, and remind you of a different 'perspective' more frequently.

**Boundaries-** Boundaries are not static or rigid. They are dynamic and fluid, reflective of the ever emerging, ever-changing circumstances of life. With nimble and present responsiveness, determine what is ok and what is not ok, what is allowed, what is not allowed, and what can and cannot happen in your life. Set them with love.

**Trust Your Body-** Your body is a multi-lingual receptor of information. A twinge here, a cramp here, a burning in your chest, a drop in your stomach are all the body's way to communicate important information. Instead of numbing or quieting your body's cues, try slowing down and listening.

**Say No-** The only way to create a life of true 'yes's' is to say clear 'no's'. What do you need to say no to so that you can feel more alive, creative, and joyful?

**Who's in Your Circle-** Draw a circle. Now write inside the circle the names of people and projects that truly bring you alive. Write outside the circle the names of people and projects to do less than that. Tell yourself the truth. Now ask yourself this: what is it costing you to keep the 'outside your circle' people and projects inside your circle?

**Commit to Self First and Most-** High performers tend to be over-committed to others and under-committed to themselves, thus setting themselves up for plateaus and self-sabotage. Disappoint another long before you are willing to disappoint yourself.

**Create Rhythm-** Fast and efficient are just one speed setting in a spectrum of possibilities. The speed of mind is quick and mercurial, the pace of heart is deep and considered. Both are essential. Live life flowing gently between the speed of the mind and the pace of the heart.

**Be Present-** Put down your phone and be present inside conversations, events, lives. Deeply listen, see, and experience. Give yourself breaks and rest so you can be present

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**Make Clear Requests-** We empower others to support us, or our vision, when we speak requests with kind clarity, rather than veiled suggestions or innuendo. Challenge yourself to get clear about what you want and what you need, and then express it.

**Set Clear Intentions-** All great and innovative endeavors started with a thought, and from there a clear intention. What do you want to create? What is possible? Dare to dream as big as you can, and then direct your energies and thoughts towards its actualization.

**Sabbaticals-** We need time off and time away. All natural cycles have a time of action and a time of dormancy. Take regular multi-day sabbaticals so that you can renew, nourish your creative genius, listen to your heart. Take regular technology sabbaticals - daily and weekly where the tyranny of access cannot find you.



**Say No to Oppression in All Its Forms-** For thousands of years we have been indoctrinated into oppression. Oppression hurts everyone. Defensiveness, fragility, victimization, perfectionism, rigidity, task over relationship, individualism, knower over learner mindset, racism, sexism, xenophobia, nationalism, homophobia, and paternalism are all signs of oppression in our lives.

**Call Them In-** In the face of most conflict, most people know only two options: calling out with blame and finger pointing, or opting out. But there is a third way: Call them in. When we call someone in, we stand in calm presence, vulnerability, compassion, candor, and integrity, and call them into a new productive conversation.

**Challenge Your Beliefs (and question your assumptions)-** Expose yourself deliberately to different points of view, and diverse understandings and mindsets. Be a 'learner' instead of a 'knower'. Expand your awareness and challenge your thinking. And any time you are upset with someone about something, question your assumptions.

**Understand How Brains Work-** Humans are difficult and complicated. Understanding how brains work enables you to create conditions of safety and trust for the people around you so that you empower them to be the best humans they can be, while you are being the best human you can be. So some reading on neuro-psychology, brain plasticity, and the neuroscience of relationships as a 'user guide' to navigating humans.

**Micro-steps-** Studies show that change happens more effectively and quickly through many small micro-steps. Rather than take on some huge and difficult new habits or practice, take it apart into smaller more do-able micro-actions and build up from there.

**Allow Change to Be Messy-** The number one reason people do not want to change and grow is because the process along the way is messy, embarrassing, hard, and exposing. Allow yourself and others to be messy, fumbling and stumbling while they are learning new things. Wear your messiness with pride.

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