



TRANSFORM YOUR WORDS IN 4 STEPS

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“Without language, we find ourselves living in a state of emotional chaos. Our brain has given us the potential to communicate in extraordinary ways and the way we choose to do so can improve the neural functioning of the brain. In fact, a single word has the power to influence the expression of genes that regulate physical and emotional stress. If we do not continually exercise the brain’s language centers, we cripple our neurological ability to deal with the problems we encounter with each other.”

– Dr. Andrew Newberg, Words Can Change Your Brain

It's hard to believe but you can transform the quality of your entire life simply by becoming conscious of what habitual vocabulary you use for negative emotions, and shifting them with words that break your patterns and provide you with new and better emotional choices.

Your assignment is very simple: Below you'll see my 10-day challenge. I call it “**Watch Your TV**,” watch your “Transformational Vocabulary.” The labels you attach to your experience can transform the way you feel. Again, it's not hard to realize that if you habitually take any intense emotion and say it's “depressing,” it's going to feel very different from if you say you're feeling a little “down.” Being enraged by somebody's reaction is very different from being a bit frustrated by their response. Saying to yourself they utterly rejected you, is quite different than they didn't agree with your suggestion.

The real secret to transforming your life is to wake up and become conscious of the patterns that are currently unconscious and shaping the way you feel.

Ultimately the way we feel determines the quality of your life. You could have whatever you think life's dream is—building a billion dollar enterprise or a family that totally loves and adores you—but if every single day you live with the emotions of feeling frustrated and angry, then the quality of your life is called frustration and anger—it has

nothing to do with the economic opportunities you have, much less the love you are surrounded by.

The quality of our lives is the quality of our emotions.

The power of Transformational Vocabulary is its simplicity. It provides you with an immediate tool to increase the quality of your life. So here are the four steps to your 10-day challenge:

STEP 1: CHECK YOURSELF

Become conscious of the habitual words you use to describe your unhappy or distressing feelings. Begin to notice the labels you are putting on things.

My favorite example of this is the use of the word “hate”. It’s an extremely **STRONG** word and when do you **REALLY** hate something? If you think about it, it’s hardly **EVER**. Maybe you dislike something entirely, or you strongly disagree?

If you say something like, “I’m so worried about this,” stop yourself and acknowledge that “worry” might be too strong a word. Maybe what you really are is “a little bit concerned.” Monitor your language and make sure your language isn’t exaggerating the intensity of emotions. Or

better yet, consciously pick a word that would lower the negative intensity (instead of saying that you are “furious” with someone, describe yourself as being a little “irritated” or “disappointed with their reaction”).

If somebody asks you, “How’s it going?” instead of saying, “Okay,” what would be a word that might put a smile on your face to even say, that would break your own pattern? Like, “You wouldn’t even believe how I’m feeling!” with a smile, to be playful with yourself. Or a simple response like “I’m committed” or “I’m lucky” or “I’m grateful.” And then take a moment to think about what you are grateful for. We often lose sight of what’s beautiful in our life because of a few things that are out of line with our expectations.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY 3 NEGATIVE WORDS

Write down three words you currently use on a regular basis that intensify your negative feelings or emotions. Maybe you use words like “I’m frustrated,” “I’m depressed,” or “I’m humiliated.” Come up with alternative words that will lower the intensity of those negative emotions. Maybe instead of “depressed” you say you are “a little bit down.”

What would happen if instead of saying you feel “humiliated” you say you are “uncomfortable” with how the situation was dealt with? You can soften emotional intensity even further by using modifiers like “I’m just a bit peeved,” or, “I’m feeling a tad out of sorts.”

STEP 3: FIND 3 POSITIVE WORDS

Write down three words that you use to describe your experience that is somewhat positive. When someone says, “how’s it going?” come up with three alternative words that will amplify and intensify the positive feelings and inspire you. Instead of talking about how things are “all right,” replace those words with “incredible,” “outrageous,” and “spectacular.” What’s a positive word that if you really thought about your whole life, you could say and own congruently?

STEP 4: PICK TWO “ACCOUNTABILITY” BUDDIES

Get leverage so you follow through. Pick two key people in your life – a close friend and ideally someone you respect that you would not want to disappoint. Pull them aside and explain to them your commitment to replace two or three key words in your vocabulary.

Most importantly, give them permission if they hear you using the old word to ask you if that’s really the word you want to use to explain how

you feel. For example: Let them know if you start to say, “John f’n pisses me off,” that you want them to intervene and ask you, “Do you mean John’s behavior frustrates you a bit J?” In the past I have even stepped up this strategy by creating a system where myself and my accountability buddy would charge each other a quarter if we used the negative terms, or words. In the end we would spend the money on lottery tickets just to make it more interesting.

I know this sounds ridiculous, but if you are committed, a simple reminder will get you to catch yourself and lower the intensity immediately. It will help you recognize that you have control of your own space in this moment and by simply selecting a different word, you can change the meaning completely. If you do this well, you’ll find yourself smiling while you do it, like an inside joke. But it’s impact is no laughing matter.

Or if you use a phrase like “I’m depressed,” you may want them to ask you, “Hey are you depressed about this, or are you feeling a little bit down?” Are you frustrated or fascinated by how people often respond to things? Making a commitment to make these changes to a dear friend or an important and respected colleague will give you the additional support and incentive to actually follow through and break your own patterns.

By carefully and consciously selecting the words you are attaching to your experiences and doing it for a ten-day period, you'll find an immediate change in how you feel and this becomes positively addictive. I can tell you for those who have lived this ten-day plan, the experience can be life-changing.

Again, I know it sounds overly simplistic, but if you test it out and are diligent with it for 10 days, you'll experience a transformation in your emotional patterns – and the emotional patterns we live are what control the quality of our life. You'll even feel the difference in your body – a lot less pain and a lot more pleasure. Don't you deserve to have a better quality of life? Plus when you're in a great state, how do you treat others? The better your state, the more powerful the impact on everyone around you – your businesses, your friends, and your family.