

 MUSIC + STORY
+ COACHING FOR WELLBEING

THE 5-STEP TRANSFORMATION BLUEPRINT

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Cameron



Resisting and Accepting Change

“The only constant in life is change.”

- Heraclitus

Out of a desire to hear from people who **create change** or are able to **handle change** they didn't ask for (as opposed to only reacting to change with resistance, anxiety, frustration and feelings of helplessness), I created the TV show *Waking Up in America*. I interviewed guests who had made big changes in their lives in the midst of their pain. I listened as they told deeply personal stories of hitting a crossroad and choosing to pivot toward turning points. Inspired by these stories, I wrote what I learned on HuffPost.

After fifty episodes, I considered what was common to all of their transformations, and found the five step framework that I'm offering to you in this workbook.



Do you find yourself resisting change?

Everything in nature constantly changes, transforms and evolves. Humans are the only species that **resist change**. The part of our brain that plans and creates, and in the process makes significant changes to the world around us, is the same part that often gets in the way of accepting the changes **we don't get to control**. We find ourselves **stuck** in routines, thought patterns, numbing behaviors, habits and even relationships that stifle growth and become destructive and toxic. Sometimes we **don't even realize** we are stuck until something slaps us in the face and wakes us up. Other times we **desire to change** but don't know where to begin.

Since my life-changing shift in 2014, I dedicated myself to studying the catalyst for people to play an empowering role in their personal change. Each of their deciding moments had a **spiritual** dimension, **support** system and almost always there was **music**.

I'll Change, But On My Terms

In 2012 I experienced a turning point that was different from the previous ones.

I had gotten really good at making big changes. When life became overwhelming and no longer brought me joy, I'd pick up and leave, and start a new one from scratch. I came to the USA from Croatia leaving a successful pop career behind. I moved from NYC to LA when I didn't know what to do with a failing relationship. (I wrote about this in my multimedia memoir "(un)Broken.") And when, in 2012, my marriage started falling apart I was ready to do it again. My three young sons were the reason I wanted to try something different from my usual solution of 'leaving everything behind.'

I wanted to find a way to be happy right where I was. I started to write a lot of music at that time and everything that was coming to me pointed inward. On a workshop for struggling marriages, I heard that the only place we can ever make a change is within.

But the thought of having to change something within myself scared me because I didn't know yet what it actually meant.

I had no idea how to do this safely and without completely losing myself and parts that I loved about myself.

I thought making a change within meant changing who I was in order to be a better wife and I resisted it with passion. (Because trying to change myself in order to be a better this or that for someone else had been the very reason I was unhappy.)

I had already been working with a therapist and had healed a lot of issues around this. She helped me to see that changing from within meant removing the layers (of fear and shame) that cover up our authentic self, and distort how we show up in stressful situations - hurt, angry, frustrated, demanding,

I also hired a coach, who guided me to a place where I would begin my transformation.

A place within, where I felt safe, loved, supported and **connected**.

“Who looks outside, DREAMS; who looks inside, AWAKENS.”

-Carl Jung



Music + Story + Coaching

“When we are no longer able to change a situation,
we are challenged to change ourselves.”

—Victor Frankl

This workbook can help you:

- if you want to create a change like starting a new career, new relationship or developing healthy habits;
- if you are going through a life changing experience you didn't ask for (like losing a partner, or a job due to something out of your control);
- if you are in a season of life that is a change (retirement, empty nester);
- if you are ready to expand, create more joy in your life and change your old patterns

I have included a music selection, a story and coaching section in each of the Steps.

These Five Steps aren't a quick magic formula. It is a framework that I hope can serve as a prompt. You may recognize a lot of the wisdoms I included here, or they may offer a new perspective to the concepts you've learned somewhere else.

Some of the wisdom may be familiar, or may offer a new perspective to concepts you've learned somewhere else. With an open mind and heart, and some enthusiasm about tools of transformation, you will benefit from doing the work.

Now, set aside some undisturbed time, put on some relaxing music (my favorite is [Yo-Yo Ma playing Ennio Morricone](#)) and begin.



“When we are no longer able to change a situation,
we are challenged to change ourselves.”

a story

A young monk was wandering through the woods and mountains searching for something. He ran into a group of travelers who asked him what he was looking for.

"I lost the key to my house and can't find it anywhere," the monk said.

"Is it similar to the one you have hanging around your neck?" a traveler asked, looking kindly at the exhausted monk.

The monk put his hand over the key to feel it.

"That's the key I was looking for!" he exclaimed.

"I never thought to look here," he said, casting his eyes into the distance, but seeing the key in his mind.

Everything you need is already within you.

Each of us already knows how to shift
into life with joy and purpose.
All we need is a prompt. And practice.



STEP 1

Connect

"We are hardwired to connect with others, it's what gives purpose and meaning to our lives, and without it there is suffering."

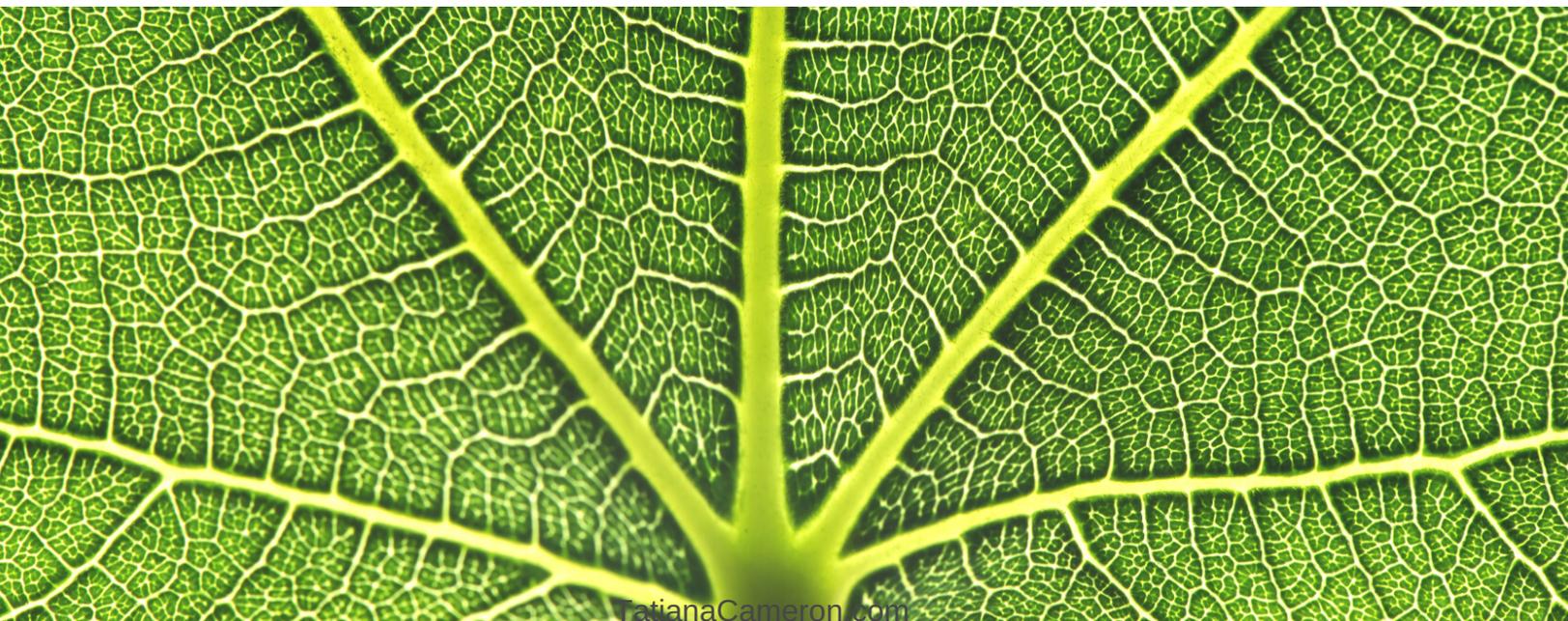
- Brené Brown

We are all connected. We are one human family.

There is an energy of life that flows through every living thing; oxygen that we all breathe; sun that warms us; gravity that keeps us all connected to one planet.

There are also spiritual and metaphysical forces that connect us, like love and grace.

Becoming aware of this connection is the first step in activating all the gifts that life holds.





When we are fully present, we can experience the connectedness with another person, with God (or higher power), or nature.

One of the easiest ways to connect is to breathe. Begin by simply becoming aware of your breath. Take a few deep and slow breaths. Observe how the air flows throughout your body, renewing life within you.

Music

"Listening to music and singing together directly impact neuro-chemicals in the brain, many of which play a role in closeness and connection."

- Jill Suttie, Psy.D. Greater Good Magazine

Reflect on how certain songs help you connect with others, with divine energy, and the deepest parts of your being. Perhaps you sang in a choir, or joined in with a crowd at some concert - how did singing together make you feel?

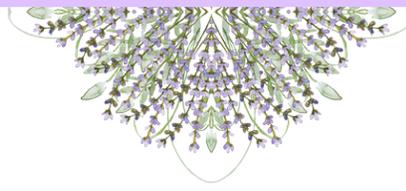
One of my songs is [What a Wonderful World](#). I used to sing it with my dad in Croatia. Years later, I moved to America and got to sing it with my own son. Most recently I sang it on a concert tour with my sister. Regardless of the geographical location, the audiences would always sing along, creating a powerful sense of connection.

Story

"Growing food is a great step in reconnecting with nature. Because you can get your hands dirty, you can see these plants grow, they feed you, they provide physical sustenance."

- Jeremy Lekich (Nashville Fodscapes)

On [Waking Up in America Show](#) Jeremy shared how he grew up playing a lot of video games, and found himself unhappy in college. Connecting with nature helped him connect with the deep joy and sense of purpose within him. Watch Jeremy's story and share your own experience of a deeper connection with someone.



Coaching

How can you notice the connectedness in your life today?

Think of a moment when you felt most connected... Write down any external details you might remember - was there music or any other sounds? What was the weather like that day? Who was with you?... Then, write the internal feelings or thoughts you might have had?

STEP 2

External Shift

“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”

- Unknown, often attributed to Albert Einstein

When we are connected (present in the here and now), we are able to assess what our current world (situation) looks like and figure out what we'd like to change in it.

Shifting from the place where we stand even an inch, will change what we see around us.

Making an external shift as a part of our awakening opens up space for a new perspective, which then prepares us for the shift in introspection.



Often, huge external shifts make us see life from a different perspective. There is nothing like a serious illness to finally get us to manage stress, or stop drinking, or stop eating poorly.

Placing some fresh flowers in a room will brighten it up and change our 'external' environment, shifting the way we feel.

Spend a day mindfully observing (paying close attention to) your physical world – situations, people, events, etc.

Music

"I need a break, but I don't know from what, from raising my kids, watching them grow. I need a break."

I wrote this song when I was a young mom of three small boys. My external situation was beautiful, but I wasn't taking care of myself. I felt guilty for wanting to take a break from my children who were everything to me. But I also knew that not bringing balance into my life would leave me alone and lost once the kids grew up and left.

Listen to [Need a Break](#) song and observe what emotions and thoughts come up for you.

Story

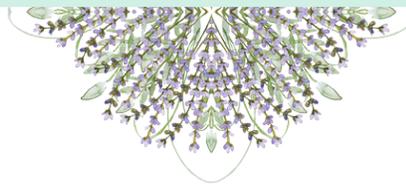
"My friend came and picked me up and instead of taking me to a bar she took me to the juice bar at Whole Foods... I started doing wheatgrass every day. I started taking care of myself because I was drowning."

- Dr. Cary Gannon (founder of AILA Cosmetics)

Dr. Gannon made an external change by taking all of the toxins out of her life. She started her awakening by changing her physical habits.

Watch Cary's story on [Waking Up in America Show](#).





Coaching

What can you do differently today that will shift the place from which you are observing your life?

What can you do to bring a physical shift into your life right now? (i.e. take a walk each day, exercise, change a pattern in your exercise routine, eat healthy foods, get more sleep, etc)

STEP 3

Internal Shift

“Transformation often happens not when something new begins, but when something old falls apart.”

- Richard Rohr

The intention to wake up already creates a shift inside of us.

The choice to bring a change into our lives happens within.

We can choose to respond with compassion instead of reacting with anger at something or someone.

We can choose to be grateful for the cup of coffee in the morning, or complain that it's not made to our liking.

Finding a solution to your life situation starts with changing your mindset about it, or as I call it here, making an internal shift.





Music

The ability to make an ‘internal shift’ requires self-awareness about our thoughts and beliefs.

It also calls for self-awareness about our feelings and our emotional reactions to places, people, and situations. One of the cultural sayings that we all use is the answer to a greeting question: ‘How are you?’ ‘I’m fine,’ we say, even when we aren’t fine.

Being aware of our thoughts and feelings, and communicating them in an authentic and mindful way, is important to our well-being.

Listen to the song [“I Feel”](#)

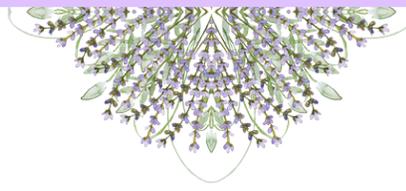
How do you feel right now? How do you want to feel in your dream life? How do you want to feel in every ordinary moment of your life?

Story

“You have to stop listening to the outside voices of the people telling you who you are and who you are supposed to be. And start listening to your inner voice that you know who you are and you know where you can go.”

- Scot Wilcox, singer/ songwriter on Waking Up in America show

Read about Scott's story and watch my interview with him on [HuffPost](#).



Coaching

One of the most important shifts is letting go of the limiting beliefs you might have about yourself. Write down three things you believe about yourself. How do those beliefs shape your actions, choices, your life?

What are you grateful for today? How does that feeling of gratitude shift your life situation?

STEP 4

Commit & Practice

“Excellence is not an act, but a habit.”

- Aristotle

It takes between 21 and 254 days to develop a new habit. It takes 10,000 hours to become a master at a craft.

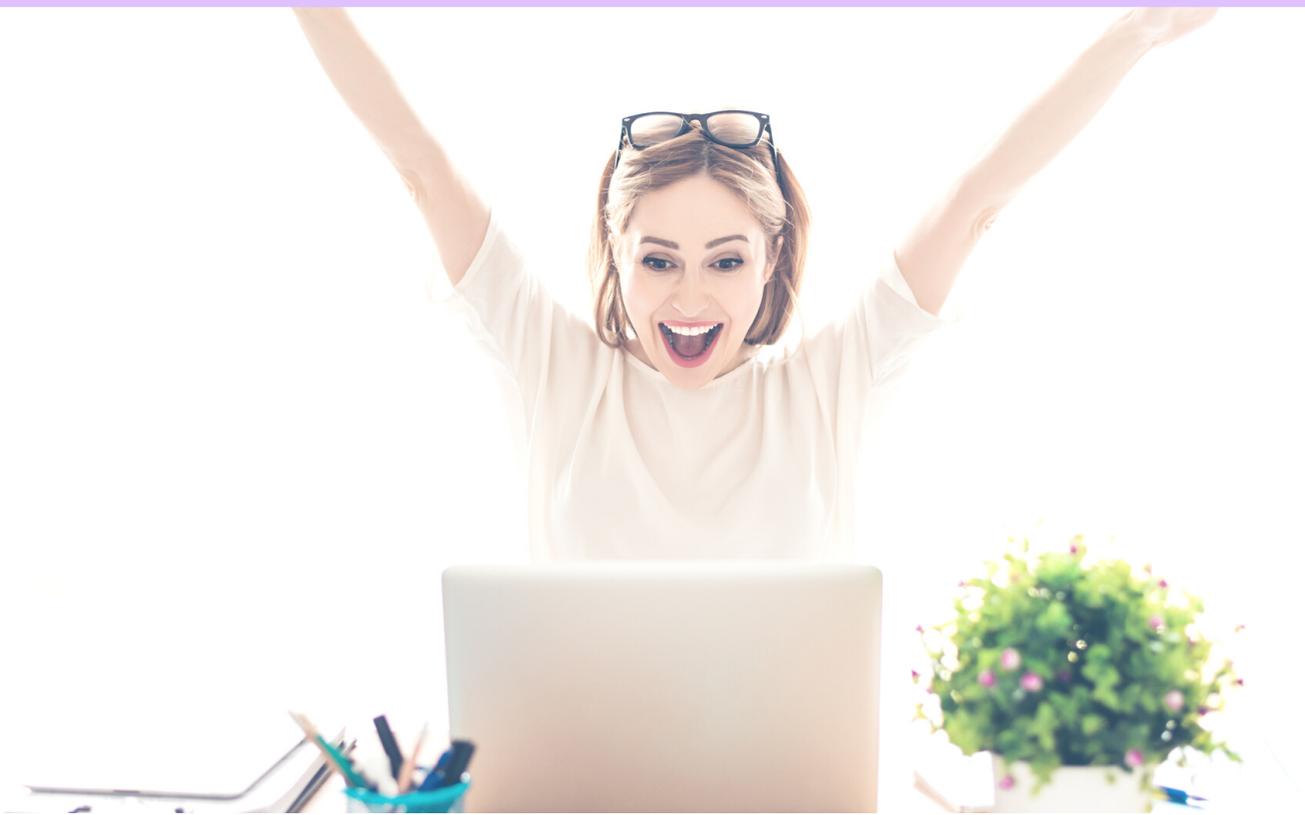
But regardless of numbers, it all starts with Day 1 and one moment in which you make your intention and commit to it. It's a process and a practice, not an overnight miracle.

Looking inside and awakening our spiritual selves to become aware of the joy and purpose in our lives is the first step. With practice this awareness can become our new 'normal.'

Practice it often, start with small, attainable steps and build up a new habit on your own pace.

Start a gratitude journal.





Music

Listen to my song **“Breathe”** and let yourself be propelled by love and enlightened by grace.

Take a few deep breaths and feel the gratitude for giving yourself this time to rediscover YOU and what makes YOU most joyful. Write it in your journal. Or just dance!

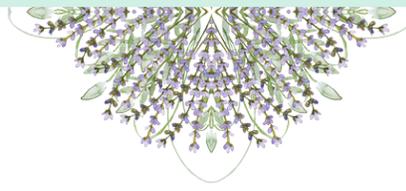
And then write it in your journal.

Story

“If you aren’t going to become aware, and accept, and be accountable for where you are and the part you played to get yourself there, then you’re not gonna go any further.”

- Brandy Word Stanton, founder and CEO of Blu Ambition

Brandy advocates investing time and energy in self-growth (such as reading, meditation, watching TED talks, coaching, etc) Read about Brandy and watch our interview on Waking Up in America show on [HuffPost](#).



Coaching

How can you practice being more awakened, more connected each day?

Commit to practice the first three steps each day:

Connect (breathe, meditate, pray, reflect for 5 minutes, etc);

Make an External Shift (stretch your body or do some exercise for 10 min);

Make an Internal Shift (choose to react with love that day, write down three things you are grateful for, read about or talk to someone who is different than you and shift your opinion about them, etc).

Write your thoughts or ideas here.

STEP 5

Pay it Forward

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”

– Kahlil Gibran

None of us arrived where we are all by ourselves.

There are a tremendous amount of things that happened just right for you and I to be where we are today.

Everything that we enjoy was grown, built, created and conceived of by a huge support system. And if you believe in God, or a higher force, that's the source of our connectedness.

So it's only natural to give back or pay it forward into the circle of all life. Think about the concept of paying it forward as extending the energy of giving and setting off ripples of kindness, generosity, compassion, and love.





Music

"Until we can receive with an open heart, we are never really giving with an open heart."

- Brené Brown

In this song, I tried to capture some of that disconnect, where an opportunity to give and heal through giving is missed because of our own feeling of inadequacy, shame, guilt, and darkness.

Listen to the song ["Only 16."](#)

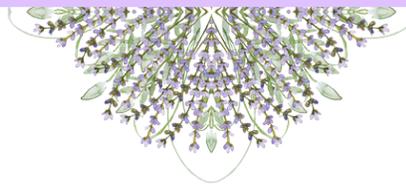
Have you ever experienced NOT being able to give or help because of your own insecurities? How does removing these obstacles change your life?

Story

"One of the things that I was missing... was helping other people... seeing what they are going through, and then seeing what I was going through was like, Pffff! Seriously?"

- Steve Reiner, co-founder of Halfway Hair started volunteering at an addiction recovery center for youth after years of battling his own addictive behaviors.

[Watch Steve's story.](#)



Coaching

How do you give back? Identify your paying forward (or giving back) point. How does your goal, your motivation, the change you create in your life, make our world a better place?

Write down a memory you have of volunteering. How did that make you feel? How does thinking about it make you feel now?

Congratulations!

I found that these steps are useful in dealing with major life changes such as moving across the continent, switching careers or ending a relationship.

These steps can also be used for little everyday things through which we build up our awareness and our ability to change, expand, and continue to grow toward becoming more of the person we are created to be.

You can use this practice to move toward achieving your goal, or to let go of anxiety and pain.

This is also a holistic practice - the 5 steps will engage you on all four levels: intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical.

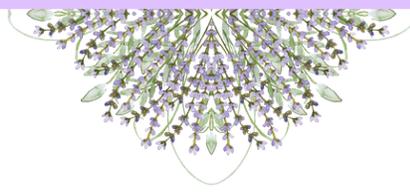
Here is how I use it to stay balanced:

- 1. Connect:** (Spiritual) Acknowledge that you are not alone; Breathe.
- 2. External SHIFT:** (Physical) Become aware of how I feel in my body through gentle movement or stretching and make necessary adjustments to my routine.
- 3. Internal SHIFT:** (Emotional and Intellectual) I observe how I feel emotionally and make a decision about how I'd like to feel for the rest of the day. I spend 15-20 min reading and learning about something that expands my views and perspective.
- 4. Commit and Practice:** (All areas) Every day I come to my practice at least once;
- 5. Pay It Forward:** (Spiritual and Emotional) Action not talk is what this step is about.

Practicing these steps daily, on little things that are attainable (and pleasant), will prepare you for the big shifts.

And keep in mind: Life is a journey, not a destination.

Travel with joy and purpose!



More Resources

Get Support Along Your Transformation Journey

1. **Music** Tajci's original songs and carefully selected covers are full of positive energy to help you reset your mindset. Download through our website + to preview them on Spotify/iTunes.
2. **Story** Tajci shares additional stories, behind the scenes and often hosts coaching chats available exclusively on her [Patreon.com/wakingUp](https://www.patreon.com/wakingUp) page
3. **Coaching** 1-1 coaching sessions and online course are available at [tatianacameron.com/coaching](https://www.tatianacameron.com/coaching).

About Tajci

Tatiana "Tajci" Cameron is an award winning music artist, speaker, published author and certified holistic life coach. She is the creator and host of "Waking Up in America" - talk show which explores turning points in people's lives, featured on HuffPost. Her books *Turning Points*, *25 Gifts for Christmas*, *Be a Rockstar of Transformation*, *George*, and *(un)Broken* are available on Amazon.com and all major online booksellers. Tajci's music is available on iTunes and her webshop at [TatianaCameron.com](https://www.TatianaCameron.com). Tajci lives in Franklin, TN with her three sons.

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