



Transformation

This is the bike that started my transformation. This was on display at the Widen & Kennedy Handmade Bike Show one year ago. I wanted it. They're experts at making people want, after all.



Purchase

This is the bike I bought on the day that I bought it. I'm test riding it up on Council Crest. I practiced riding, stopping, riding, stopping. I wasn't sure I was hip enough to ride it, but I wasn't going to crash.



Psychology

My transformation, any transformation, involves physiology and psychology.

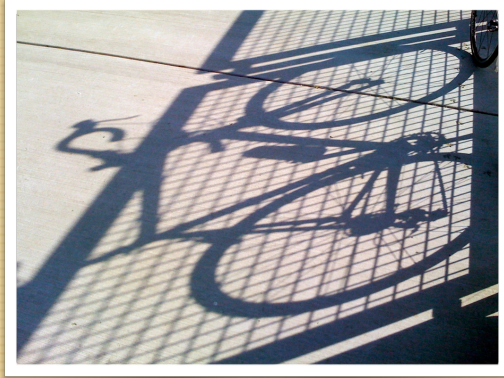
My physical transformation took two months. The psychological will take two years.

Remember this formula. It is the centerpiece of this talk.



Increments

I had to work up to being strong enough to ride over the west hills. Every day I'd ride one traffic light further before turning around. I started looking forward to traffic lights. Imagine that.



Carless

I'm bike-commuting off and on when my car was stolen. Man, I so didn't want to deal with that, so I didn't.

The theft was the push I needed to complete my transformation. To become bike-oriented.



Bus

I had to learn a lot more things. Like how to ride a bus when it was just too icy.

Now I note the bus number of every bus I see. Hmm. I wonder where that one goes?



Technology

There is some wonderful technology to help. Like this phone. Its got all the maps and bus schedules right here. And it took every picture that I'm showing you tonight.

And how about this miniature headlight? Two months on one charge.



Weather

I found that I loved the weather. I loved being out in it, even when it wasn't so good. Every day felt a little different. I liked that.



Gloves

I can't tell you how many gloves I bought before I found some that kept my fingers warm.

Here's a tip: Get to know the bike shops. The guys there love bikes and can help. This guy in Multnomah is helping me strap a full sized service stand on to my bike rack. It fit, sorta.



Bikes

You're going to need more bikes too. Just think how much money you're saving by not driving. I bought this one, bike number four, second hand, in Sellwood.

Every bike has personality. Get to know lots of them. Don't search for perfection. Enjoy variety.



Routes

You're going to need new routes too. Don't follow the same paths you did in a car. There are much nicer ways to go.

Get a bike map and study it. You'll be glad you did.



Train

The train is awesome, a very civilized way to tour. Here I'm heading to a conference up in Bellevue. They nick you a few bucks to put a bike in the baggage car. But they'll never take your car.



Cars

Pretty quickly you learn to stay clear of cars.

Drivers, I want you to know. I'm thinking hard about every close call I've ever had as I pass that way again. I may bend the rules a little bit but I'm not doing so carelessly.



Law

Here's an example. I can make this series green lights going up hill out of portland. But if I miss one, its darn hard to catch the sync again. So if I jump, its a calculated move, to make both our lives a little better.



Recovery

So then, after five months, my car comes back. Who ordered that?

It was cool to see just what damage the crooks did and didn't do. But I had a strangely negative attitude about driving it again.



Parking

For example: I didn't want to deal with parking. Parking's a hassle.

I use to be good at it which you can see here. Now I leave an empty spot for you, everywhere I go.



Change

Remember what I said about the physical and the psychological. I've been using that formula a lot. It's a lot easier to work on your mind when you've already succeeded with your body.

That didn't happen to me here. Yoga is a lot more physical than it looks. But I'll try it again someday.



Vegetarian

The body before mind has worked well for my diet. I stopped eating high-fructose corn sirup. Then, everything else, tasted better. I'm not a vegetarian, yet, but I do love my vegetables.



Lighten

I know, I have to work on the physical first. I will take two months to clean up my clutter. Then I'll work on the psychological. How do I have to think to not just make piles over again?



Joy

My middle class wealth has hasn't always been good to me. I've been carrying a lot of, well, baggage. But I've found with my little formula, I can enjoy years of learning another way.

Ward Cunningham,
November 2009