



Dr. David Hanscom

The Seven Stages of Healing and Personal Transformation

An interview with Emerald Greenforest
on Back in Control Radio with Dr. David Hanscom

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Emerald Greenforest - The Seven Stages of Healing and Personal Transformation

Tom Masters: Hello, and welcome to another episode of Back in Control Radio with Dr. David Hanscom, I'm your host, Tom Masters, and today our guest is Emerald Greenforest, returning to the program to continue her discussion about the process of personal change and transformation. Hi, David.

David Hanscom: I'd like to welcome Emerald Greenforest back to our podcast. We spent a half an hour talking about her very energetic life. She's an entrepreneur, she's a real estate developer, and in 2016, she had a very significant family situation which really caused her to change course. She's written multiple books. She is a very active, energetic person. She's also very inspiring with her energy, and we discussed the seven Cs for creating conscious change, and we covered four those of in the first podcast, and we're going to finish with the last three. So Emerald, welcome back to the show.

Emerald Greenforest: Well, thank you so much for having me back, David. I really appreciate it.

David Hanscom: We discussed about being aware of your unawareness as the first step, and then courage, and about changing direction being anxiety producing. It does take courage to make a change, and hopefully you don't have to go through the crisis that she went through, and I have been through myself, before we create that change. Coaching is a big deal. ***The biggest step in actually moving forward and becoming aware is actually being open to coaching***, and if you're not open to coaching, you just simply have to ask yourself why—because it makes life much, much more interesting. Then we talked about what I think is essential—creating that vision about what you want. Emerald, just some comments in these first four things we talked about in the first podcast, any thoughts you'd like to share with the audience?

Emerald Greenforest: Yeah. ***I think the first thing I want to share is awareness is healing***. I agree with you a thousand percent, and oftentimes we are mired, so mired and so engaged and so enmeshed in whatever it is that is creating pain in our lives that there's not even any room for awareness, so oftentimes awareness comes as an epiphany. It comes as what I call divine intervention. So yes, it's important to cultivate the practices that will enhance your capacity to access awareness, and yet, for me at least, the initial awareness of the fact that I was living a life that was not healthy, right, not healthy.

The initial awareness came many, many years ago, and it's been a process of building on that awareness again and again and again, over and over and over, and maintaining that openness of thinking and heart that says, "I have no idea. I don't know anything. The only thing I know is that there's a whole lot I don't know."

David Hanscom: Well, it's also an incredibly freeing experience because the way the brain works, if you're judgmental, opinionated, angry, et cetera, you're just simply projecting your view of yourself onto the world, and eventually it becomes very tedious. ***What people don't understand, which I did not until I was forced to wake up, is that when you're aware, everything is interesting.*** Everything is new. ***It's an***

incredibly different life living in awareness. The *next step* that you talked about after clarity, courage, coaching, and creativity, ***is checking in, assessing and adjusting to align with what you really want.***

Emerald Greenforest: Yes, in the first step, *we have to know what we want.* That's the ***clarity step.*** We have to know what we want. Then we have to find the heart to go after it. Then we have to find support from mentors. Then we have to take our leap and engage in the inspired action in the direction of what it is that we want. But what happens a lot of times is when we're coming from a space that we are dismantling in service to creating this new space, what we wanted from that space, by the time we get into motion, we sometimes need to take a moment and reflect and say, "Oh, is this really what I want?"

Let me use an example. Let's just say that you decide that you no longer want to work in real estate. I'll use myself. You get clear that working in real estate is not working for you anymore. And you have this epiphany or a vision that says, "It's time to go." I had that vision, and it wasn't so much of a vision of what I was going to create as it was a knowing of, ***"If I stay here another minute I'm going to die."*** And so what ended up happening was I took the leap out, I took that inspired action out, and I stepped into a new reality that I was creating, which at that time was, I said to my business partner, ***"I'm going to be a crystal healer."*** And I didn't even know what that meant, right?

Emerald Greenforest: This was back in 2000-

David Hanscom: How did your partner respond to that?

Emerald Greenforest: He looked at me like I had three heads, seriously. He was like, "What are you talking about?" I had never even had a crystal healing. I didn't know what it was. I had no connection whatsoever with alternative methods or mindfulness or any of that. Except I had started a yoga practice a couple years before. So what happens when you jump out is now you're literally in the experimental zone, right? You're in the zone of awe and wonder, you're in the zone of creation. And you are at this point in the journey, the check-in point, right? When you are in this process of creating conscious change. You've got to be able to stop for a moment and look at, "What am I creating? Am I still creating old stuff that I need to move out of again? Or am I creating something that I actually really want from this now newly evolved space," right?

Because once we get this creation process going, we're constantly evolving. So the decisions and choices and inspired action that came to you when you were stuck in this pain space, got you out of the pain space. But now the decision has to be to really check in with yourself and say, "Okay, I'm moving, I'm moving in this direction. Is it really what I want?"

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So I'll give you another personal example. Back in 2018, I sold my house because I had just gotten to a point where everything had collapsed in 2016 and '17, and everything was falling apart, right?

David Hanscom: Right.

Emerald Greenforest: Because I had chosen to uproot myself from the toxic soil of abuse, *I had chosen and consciously made actions and made a creation to exit that*. And so everything that was connected with that began to disintegrate. I ended up with three weeks to figure out where I was going, ending up in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. And within three months or four months of being in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, I was like, "What the heck am I doing in Pawtucket, Rhode Island? This is not the place that I need to be." But I had to stop and say, "Okay, I got to put the brakes on for a minute here and say, is this what I really want." And then it became clear, I needed to adjust. I needed to course correct.

So it took another several months, and I was in Pawtucket for nine months interestingly enough, it was like a little incubator, but it took another few months for me to align and restore myself into New Hampshire again, because it became clear that that was the direction that I needed to go and that I wasn't creating the life of my dreams in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. It was just like a way station.

David Hanscom: Let me make a comment here. One reason people don't make those changes that you made, and I heartily applaud you for this, is that you're familiar with life, however dysfunctional it is, it's familiar. When you make changes like that, your anxiety goes up. I'm guessing that is something you had to deal with. Again, ***the mental pain is actually a bigger problem than the physical pain***. It is not psychological but a chemical reaction in the body. ***It's a very deep, unpleasant reaction, but you have to train yourself to actually tolerate anxiety***. It's never going to be pleasant, but it's a learned skill—not a psychological issue, ***but to make change creates anxiety***. So I'm guessing that you had to actually navigate that a bit.

Emerald Greenforest: Yeah. ***So what I really want to express here is not only did I have to navigate anxiety, but I had to navigate my own pattern of trying to fix it again, right?***

David Hanscom: Right. Fix about your life or the anxiety?

Emerald Greenforest: Fix my life again. So I had to actually surrender my desire to be fixing all the time. So what happened when I went to Rhode Island and then I became clear, like, "What the heck am I doing in Pawtucket, Rhode Island?" When I returned to New Hampshire, which in some cases could look like a regression, ***what I did was I broke my pattern of my own self-abuse***. So my self-abuse is fine. Let me just throw myself out in another direction and I'll figure it out, and I'll fix myself somehow over here. ***By returning to home ground, I was able to actually consciously create an environment within which I was able to actually recover.***

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When I first began, I didn't give myself the time and space to recover because I dismantled so much of my life and I expended so much energy in the dismantlement of my life that I now needed time to recover my energy and my capacity to focus and create consciously. And by completely destabilizing myself, by putting myself in Rhode Island, that was abusive. That was self-abusive.

But it was all I had in front of me at the time. And so coming, returning to New Hampshire allowed me to have enough of a safe space around me. But I wasn't using my energy trying to figure out, "Where's the grocery store, where's the post office? How am I going to get to the beach when I need to go decompress?" Like I had, all my whole life, I was trying to reconstruct and I needed to take it a little bit less drastically.

David Hanscom: Now *I'm impressed you course corrected* because a lot of people keep reacting and keep doing the same thing, just in a different format. So they don't necessarily recognize this is the same behavior pattern. What process allowed you to become that aware that you were, even though it seemed like you were in a different physical space, in the same behavioral pattern? That's a pretty big awareness. *And so again, everybody has their blind spots, and I have huge ones, still, always will by definition. You can't see your own blind spots. So something happened that allowed you to see that*, "Okay, I'm in Pawtucket, I think I'm making a new life for myself, but I'm still in the same behavioral pattern." That's a pretty big deal. *In fact, the essence of healing is recognizing your deep behavioral patterns. I'm curious what happened that allowed you to make that switch?*

Emerald Greenforest I love that question. So I moved to Pawtucket at the end of March, and in July, I gave myself a week in the national forest in New Hampshire at a state park called Pawtuckaway. I went from Pawtucket, Rhode Island to Pawtuckaway Park in New Hampshire. And by day two of being in the park, tenting, it was the first time I had ever tented by myself. So that alone was a big like, "Oh, I'm going to go do this by myself. I'm going to set up my own tent. I'm going to have my own campsite. I'm going to just do this by myself."

I had a hammock that strung from the trees. I gave myself something to celebrate, like, "Damn, I got the tent up. Yay." And then by day two, I'm in the hammock and I'm swinging in the hammock, I'm swinging in the hammock, I'm swinging in the hammock, and the trees are talking to me and nature is feeding me and nurturing me. *And all of a sudden the epiphany came in, like this divine intervention that said, "What the heck am I doing in Pawtucket, Rhode Island?" Like, "This is where I belong. I need to be in a place where I'm nurtured by nature."*

David Hanscom: Right. Well, a couple of comments, first of all, my wife and I have done this somewhat unsuccessfully, but we're going to start again this weekend is that we're trying to give ourselves one day a week off of digital media. So creating space is what I hear you saying is really critical. And we do it intermittently. It's

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wonderful to actually take yourself off digital media for a day, and it's a big deal. But the second thing is I just spent 10 days in Chile, Patagonia, on a fishing trip with my son and best friend, and I had not been in nature at that level for a long time. And you cannot substitute for that.

David Hanscom: I mean, most people have a nice walk within half an hour, even in a big city or Central Park in New York, whatever. But I think getting back into nature is really a critical part of the healing. So **number six is choose**. Accept and allow yourself permission to reach your dreams.

Emerald Greenforest: **Choosing means to me giving yourself permission to reach your dreams.** After I left real estate, and then did crystal healing for a while, I opened my own art gallery and healing arts center for two years. And then I hosted a street festival for two years in a row. And then I got into the internet space and started to work as a speaker, an internationally recognized speaker all over the world. And when I stepped into that evolution of my life path, the vision at that point was to, by the time my son was 18, I would have a completely mobile business and be able to serve people from anywhere in the world at any time, just via the internet. And I actualized that within 17 months.

David Hanscom: Wow.

Emerald Greenforest But I didn't allow myself to own that I had already landed in the dream.

David Hanscom: Okay.

Emerald Greenforest: So what this step is all about is recognizing when you've made the change, right, and giving yourself permission to actually fully embody it. So I kept this vision out here and I had already actually embodied it, but psychologically, mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, I hadn't owned it. I hadn't accepted, **"Oh, I've created this."** And once you get something created that you intend to create that you consciously choose to create, if you don't accept that you've created it, then it's always out there and you close off the opportunity and the possibility for creating whatever is next. So I stayed stuck in this place of thinking that I was still creating it. And so I got stuck in this perpetual, another pattern of behavior of mine, I was in perpetual creation but never actually acknowledging, *"Oh, I've completed this. I've actualized this."* And so there was like this split within me. ***So this step is really about saying, "Oh, you can actually have this." Like I had it, but I didn't have it, if that makes sense.***

David Hanscom: Right, it's about behavior patterns. I went through what's called the **Hoffman Process Seven Day Workshop in Napa Valley**. I found out that there's tremendous anxiety with success. A lot of us drive ourselves to the top, particularly physicians, but any high level professional. Is what drives us that we're not good enough? And that voice doesn't turn off. Just because you get the success doesn't mean that you actually let that voice turn off. When you have success, then you're not sure when the other shoe's going to drop and

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something's going to fail. I found out that I was working really hard to be successful and actually creating tremendous anxiety within myself, and then I would self-sabotage. So ***I liked that step about choosing yourself and giving yourself permission to reach your dreams.***

And, again, it's not as easy as it sounds—***of course I can give myself permission to reach my dreams***, but there are behavioral patterns that are very deep. ***Here is where coaching helps by guiding and supporting you as you ask yourself, "Where's my blind spot? Why aren't I reaching my dreams? Why am I choosing to remain in misery (whether it's mental pain, physical pain, or just circumstances)?"*** I think that's a wonderful step.

The last one is ***feeling safe*** which we know is *the essence of healing physical and mental pain*. When you feel safe, you're full of oxytocin, dopamine, serotonin, GABA drugs, and they're basically the ***"play"*** chemicals, and celebration is a form of play. And we find out that chronic pain is a memorized set of circuits, you have to think in terms of neuro science and neuroplasticity, as opposed to psychology, because you want to move forward, not move backwards.

One of the major factors with celebration is that it changes the body's chemistry. I have endless stories, myself included, about taking an attitude of celebration and play and joy into every day. My New Year's resolution this year is just simply to be nice. I'm just going to be nice. I don't care who's coming at me, whatever reason, I'm going to be nice. I'm also going to celebrate my life. And I love that last step of celebration. Obviously, you have some comments I'd love to hear.

Emerald Greenforest: ***So, I actually need to make sure that I change this in my own psychology, as well as on my magic card. When we celebrate, the work is about enjoying what manifests, and what I had on my little note card that I sent to you was "Manifest from your hard work." Well, I am now in the process of changing that psychology that says that I have to work hard in order to create the life that I want. And instead, I want to underscore that this is really about enjoying what manifests from your commitment and devotion to creating change.***

David Hanscom: Gotcha.

Emerald Greenforest: ***So brief story, I had no idea that I didn't know how to celebrate.*** That was one of my ***blind spots***. I didn't know how to actually celebrate. It wasn't until I was in a Mastermind Group where I was on a team, and we were going through this whole team building thing where we had to do three or four or five different contests and at the end of the first contest, my team won the first stage of the contest. Everybody was jumping up and down on the beach, and I'm jumping up and down on the beach. And the next thing you know, I'm passed out on the ground. I literally left my body in the middle of the celebration.

David Hanscom: Wow. Wow.

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Emerald Greenforest: It was a huge epiphany for me realizing that I don't know how to celebrate, and not even do I not know how to celebrate, but I left. I exited from the celebration. My spirit, my soul, my consciousness exited stage left, and my body ended up on the ground. I looked up and all the other people were jumping up and down and they were like, "What's going on with her?" Right?

David Hanscom: Right.

Emerald Greenforest: So that was a huge epiphany for me and my podcast. My **Men on Purpose Podcast** has been such an amazing gift, not only to heal my relationship with the masculine. I've been doing the podcast for two years, and we're now in 86 countries and just hit number 46 in Australia on the charts. And we're a number 78 in the US on the charts. The podcast has given me an opportunity to celebrate. ***So every time I put out a new episode, I can look and see, "Oh, we have new downloads from Liberia, or Russia, or the United Arab Emirates." And I can celebrate that.*** And the other piece about celebration is celebration is really best in a community. For me, being in the podcasting community, that has been a space where not only can I celebrate my own successes with the podcast, but I can also celebrate my cohort's successes.

And we all love on one another which amplifies all the oxytocin and all the good point hormones, and ***celebration is key.*** And a lot of times when I'm interviewing my guys on **Men on Purpose Podcast**, I'll ask about that question. I'll ask that question. I'll say, "How do you celebrate?" And unfortunately, so many don't have a great answer about celebrating because they're also stuck in that idea of "If I just keep working harder and harder and harder and harder and harder, I'll get to where I want to go." But if you don't give yourself the grace of celebrating even the small steps, then you literally run out of fuel and you burn out, and the creation of whatever it is that you've created has no meaning for you anymore. It's actually empty. It's really empty.

David Hanscom: That's fantastic. Well, Emerald, I want to give you a few minutes to let people know how to get ahold of you. Would you mind just reading off the seven Cs just to review those for us?

Emerald Greenforest: *The first is **clarity**. You've got to know what you want. The second is **courage**. Find the heart to go after it. The third is **coaching**. Find support from mentors who've been where you are or are where you want to go. **Create** is number four, take the leap and engage in inspired action. And this is action that comes from inspiration, not action just for action's sake. Five is **check-in** where you assess and adjust so that you align yourself to what you really want. And every time you create something, you have to give yourself the grace of checking in to make sure it's what you really want. The sixth is **choose**. Accept and allow yourself permission to reach your dreams. And the seventh is **celebrate**. **Enjoy what manifests from your commitment and devotion to creating conscious change.***

David Hanscom: Let us know how to get to your website. All these materials are on her website. I would strongly encourage you to visit that. What's your website, Emerald?

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Emerald Greenforest: It's www.emeraldgreenforest.com/gift If you go to that page, you will get access to my instant clarity exercise, because clarity is step one. And from there, you can also find out how to book me to speak or hire me to be your mentor if it's a right fit for you.

David Hanscom: Well, Emerald, thank you very, very much for a wonderful interview, and I think the listeners will benefit greatly from this. Thank you very much.

Emerald Greenforest: Thank you for having me.

Tom Masters: I'd like to thank our guest, Emerald Greenforest, for being on the show today and sharing her insights about the process of personal change and transformation for emotional and spiritual healing. I'm your host, Tom Masters. And I want to remind everybody to return next week for another episode of **Back in Control Radio** with Dr. David Hanscom. Until then, please visit the website at www.backincontrol.com .

Notes: The original transcript of this episode of Back in Control Radio with Dr. David Hanscom has been edited for readability.