

"I highly recommend working with Ebony Smith. The insightful facilitation of the program cultivated a highly impactful collective outcome."

# RESTLESS TO RESILIENT

REDESIGN YOUR CAREER  
IN 7 STEPS

BY EBONY SMITH



EBENUM  
EQUATION

"Ebony Smith helped me focus on my work, goals, and progress in spite of what was happening around me. As I found flow, my desire to work increased, confidence was built, and I am achieving my goals again."

# Restless to Resilient: Redesign Your Career in 7 steps

EBONY SMITH

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## DEDICATION

To all those who are on the Golden Hamster Wheel

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to Riki, Dolores, Wendy and Jamie your assistance was invaluable.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## **Getting back up after life knocks you down**

Every one of us at some point has been pushed near the edge or flattened out or found ourselves having to make a choice when neither option seems particularly appealing.

You could give up. You could stay home. You could fold your arms and purse your lips and decide you aren't going to make a choice. You could... fail. Or, you could fly. You could soar. You could turn around and stick your tongue out and show the world that you can be ridiculously awesome and successful and-wait for it-happy.

Some of you may be thinking change is terrifying.

It felt pretty scary to me one Monday morning, March 2, 2015, to be exact, as I sat shell shocked at home in my pajamas. For the first time in decades I had no place to be by 7:30 a.m.

I had left behind my role as a global director of derivatives marketing and sales for a Fortune 100 Company. Two weeks prior, they had given me an ultimatum: move again or leave the company. I decided to take the road less traveled and parted ways with the company and a 20-year-career. I even signed off my talents (or so I thought), for a whole year.

Yes, that Monday morning was scary, but at the same time I felt relief

and even gratitude for having been cornered into making a decision. I knew in my gut that I had set myself up for this.

After a solid month of relaxing, sleeping in and watching TV, I knew I needed a plan...

I faced my fears, reframed my mindset and tapped into my reserve of resilience (and also my savings account, which I nicknamed Swan. More on that later.) Many incredible human beings and resources held me and supported me through the process. Jamie gave me the gift of accountability. Coach training gave me direction for my new career. Dr. Michael Ray's book *Creativity in Business* encouraged me to be more authentic. And, finally, Joseph Campbell's research and learnings on his path to bliss, a.k.a. The Hero's Journey, provided inspiration.

### **I became a complete redesign.**

And here's the crazy thing: My life today is so much better than I had ever envisioned. Yours can be, too, whether you face a choice or not. Every day I wake up ready for exciting, new challenges. Most of my time is spent supporting clients, executives in the corporate world, as they restructure and grow their careers. I help them remain within their frameworks and redesign their current paths. Each learns how to create and build a life that supports exponential growth. This might be surprising to hear, but carving a new path, personally and professionally, only takes a five to 10 percent shift for most of us. I guide my clients there.

In this eBook I share my personal experience with the hope that it will inspire you to design a life you love. Read the parts of my story and consider the steps I suggest, but make them yours.

- Take what works for you
- Dump the parts that sound crazy



- Practice the bits that sound tolerable
- Embrace the parts that resonate with your soul and make you want to sing.

Then open your mind to the possibility that living the life you intentionally design can be your new normal.

Be well,

*Ebony*

EBONY

## 2 NAME THE RESTLESSNESS

Have you ever felt that you are living a “paint by numbers” kind of life? That your day in and day out is fully scripted before you open your eyes? That there’s not much room for creativity, innovation or even personal growth?

Many professionals feel the hamster wheel effect, working 10 to 12-hour days. They come home, go to the gym, cook dinner, shower, fall asleep in front of the TV only to start all over again. Groundhog Day. While structure and formula could lead to success in some cases, most of the time it converges on living a B minus life.

Yet if you are anything like I was, racing around that hamster wheel but driving a nice car, living in a comfortable home, taking vacations and saving, you are probably wondering what we have to complain about, right?

I enjoyed my colleagues, my company treated me well and I traveled to exotic places. But I felt empty. I realized my hamster wheel was gold plated.

Worse. I felt guilty for feeling empty.

What was wrong with me? How could I fill that empty well?

While I took the road less traveled, moving on and away from my previous career was not the only solution.

Here’s the first step I took to become aware of my restlessness, acknowledge it and get new alignment. I came to realize I couldn’t make a shift without knowing what needed an adjustment.

## Let's work on YOUR prototype:

### STEP ONE

First let's start **aligning** with who you **really** are.

- What makes you smile?
- What makes you mad?
- What, when present makes you feel alive?

The answer to these simple questions, will give you an insight of your **values**. There are 2 types of values: fear-based or conscious based. Values based on fear are the ones that cause us to take action to avoid something. They are the “have to’s” or “shoulds”. Conscious values allow people to take positive action. They are the “want-to’s”.

Let me share with you, my own personal values to give you an example. My values are: Freedom, Commitment, Abundance, Honesty and Personal Growth.

Now identify yours. From the list below, circle your top five **values**:

Accomplishment	Emotional Health	Leadership
Absence of Pain	Environment	Loyalty
Abundance	Excellence	Nature
Achievement	Family	Openness
Adventure	Flexibility	Orderliness
Altruism	Freedom	Personal Growth
Autonomy	Friendship	Physical Appearance
Avoidance of Conflict	Fulfillment	Power
Beauty	Fun	Privacy
Clarity	Holistic Living	
Commitment	Honesty	
Communication	Humor	
Community	Integrity	
Connecting to Others	Intimacy	
Creativity	Joy	

### 3 ACCEPT YOUR DESIRES

My journey started with a personal development workshop 2011. But while hiking in 2014 in Himalayas, where I found myself constantly trying to find my breath. A group of monks in Crocs and robes periodically stopped to ask me, the girl in REI hiking gear, a North Face coat and Merrill shoes, if I should be hiking at all. They were right to ask but I was determined to see the infamous Buddhist monastery Tiger's Nest. Or so I thought, at the time.

I presumed a trip across the world to a sacred space would replenish my reserves, but after that trip to Bhutan I was still restless. I came back home with a passion to set myself up for success. I hosted a vision board party and decided to dream big. Somehow I knew I was living small to fit into the B minus life. I began working with a hypnotist and scheduled a Reiki session to work on my chakras. I looked for solutions to the complacency I had felt at work. My "solutions" included everything and anything. I thought meditating in Bhutan, creating a vision board and getting a Reiki treatment would reignite my fire at work. While helpful, nothing did the trick. But they did start me on my journey toward knowing that I could do better.

- In Bhutan- I learned there was more to happiness than a first-world life. Traveling to the country that measures Gross National Happiness encouraged me to be more intentional in my steps and direct in actions.
- The vision board challenged me to dream bigger and with purpose.
- The Reiki session sparked peace and a knowing that more was just around the corner.

Have you ever dreamt of stepping away from your career? Spent your commute for 7 years designing an exit strategy?

I realized I could view my discontent as a problem that needed to be resolved or an adventure that needed to be taken.

I learned a lot along the way but, most importantly, the steps I needed to **engage** and **reconnect** so I could make a living that **aligns** with my values and purpose. Finally, I decided to sit still and concentrate on **goals**: the *whats*, the fixed outcomes in the future, my motivating factors.

When I was knee deep in my successful career, my list of goals looked like this:

- Get a promotion
- Buy a new handbag or concert tickets
- Taking all my bucket list trips with my friends
- Host dinner parties and cooking classes in my home

There's nothing wrong with these goals, but they were small and had clear boundaries. It's very likely my life would still be centered around goals like that, had I not made a change.

If you ask me what my goals are today, you would see my five to 10 percent shift. I now anchor my goals not in the tangible outcome (the handbag) but instead on the emotional experiences I want to have in my life. Nowadays my list looks something like this:

- Being present and seeking moments of alignment and ease
- Nurture relationship with self and others
- Explore the world (I Love to travel, there is so much to learn!)
- Eating healthier (fewer desserts)
- Be my own inspiration for motivated living

**Let's work on your prototype:**

STEP TWO

What are your goals?

- Why are you living this life this way?

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- What emotional experiences are you longing to have?

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- How do you want people to feel around you?

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## 4 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Just three weeks prior to Decision Day, I hosted a vision board party and I made a board that featured images of change, entrepreneurship, deep conversations, trusting my gut, living my fantasy, finding serenity and inner faith.

At the moment when I got word of the reorganization, my ideal life seemed to exist in a galaxy far, far away. So, I set up a plan of action. First I gave myself time to mourn the loss of co-workers and that chapter of my life. Next, I traveled for a month visiting friends and family, and to do that I gave myself permission to tap into SWAN, my Sleep Well at Night account with all the money I had saved taking staycations, packing my lunch, and hosting potluck brunches with friends instead of eating out. (My financial advisor coined the term and calls it the “working woman’s bag lady fund.” My mother told me to have the money to walk away, so that you know you are staying because you want to be there.)

Then, eventually, I faced reality: My future.

When that time came, I didn’t allow fear to appear. Fear is a barrier to greatness. Instead I made the conscious choice to look at my destiny with wonderment.

**But first I had to figure out what I was made of.**

A beloved former colleague nicknamed me Mayweather, after the championship boxer. She said Mayweather’s opponents typically lost because they underestimated him and never acknowledged he was the best at his craft. I embraced the nickname once again, telling myself I’m a champion and every day I needed to wake up thinking





## 5 LOOK AT YOUR TALENTS

I began the next step in my journey, the practice of being ordinary. I recalled Dr. Michael Ray's book *Creativity in Business* and realized I had to acknowledge, without thinking about it, that I possess the capacity to meet, gracefully and productively, whatever situation or challenge I find on my plate. This meant taking away all of the things that would stop me from showing up every day and being my true self, the unvarnished me that shows up when nobody else is watching. The me that doesn't get stressed out, the me who is able to tackle most challenges with champion skills. The **resilient** me.

This simple decision moved me forward, **I was just going to be ordinary and ordinary was going to be spectacular.** It was enough for me to tackle the most amazing opportunities and thought processes that were coming my way. I was going to tackle this stage in my journey by acquiring the skills I need to help with my personal transformation. I was not going to let myself or anyone else unduly influence me in getting stressed out because stress and fear don't serve me. Being ordinary was enough for me to be successful. The practice of being ordinary is easily underrated and overlooked but it is the foundation of a champion's **resilience.**

There are things in life that require extraordinary effort, but I trusted all of the steps in my journey could be completed by being ordinary. This is a classic coaching technique it's called the **reframe.** The reframe is the cornerstone of **redesigning** your career. I learned along the way there are many lenses for us to look at life through. I picked one that let me view life optimistically, as a success.

**You must first set yourself up for success before anyone else can.**

We all chase “happiness”. Not knowing there are other ways to find satisfaction. Use the art of the REFRAME to design your new rules of life. Reframing is gold that coaches sprinkle into a client’s life. I take a neutral or negative statement or idea and reframe it with positive energy and empowering impact. Sounds pollyannaish and it is, but it works.

**Let’s work on your prototype:**

STEP FOUR

Taking into consideration the positive feedback you received from your friends and colleagues, use the reframe to edit your self-reinforcing statements. Infuse each one with positive energy and empowering impact.

Example:

If you think:

“I feel like I'm being pulled in 5 directions at work.”

**reframe** it to:

“My knowledge is valued and others appreciate my input. I create balance by prioritizing the request and giving updates on my progress.”

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## 6 DESIGN YOUR NEXT STEPS

I had to tackle the question, “What defines me?” so my Hero’s Journey could begin. The Monomyth or The Hero’s Journey was brought to mainstream thinking by the mythologist and researcher, Joseph Campbell.

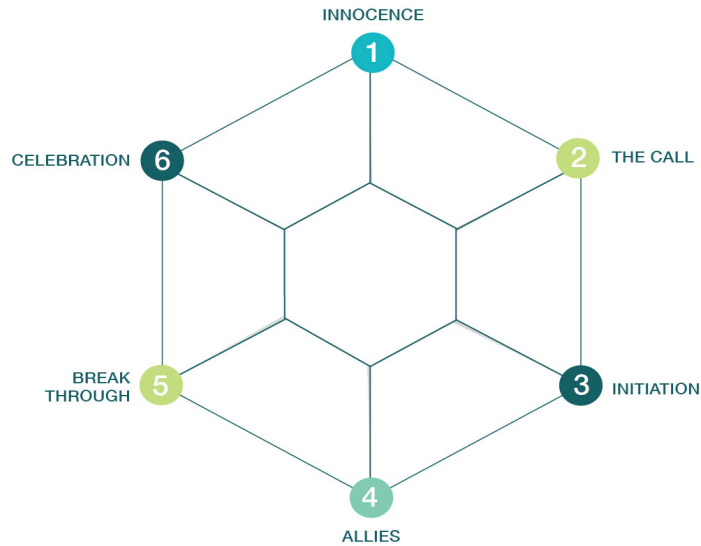
From Joseph Campbell, I learned that every story has an arc. I could not short-circuit the route. So, I decided to understand where I am and what steps I needed to reach the next milestone. Ever heard, “Who doesn’t have to be you”. I took that to heart and I tapped into the vast community of intellects, caregivers and friends that nurture me. I asked for honest opinions, ideas and brainstorming sessions for solutions. I have always had a Board of Trustees to help guide my success. For this journey, I replaced my parents, grandparents, aunts and mentors with those trusted colleagues and friends in my extended network. My design team appeared.

I originally signed up for coaches training because I knew it would assist with my redesign. I wanted tools and theory to assist in my growth. Armed with coaches training and my accountability partner, my career redesign began. It inspired me to hire a web developer, branding specialist, and a copy writer. (By “hire” I mean I talked to my friends offered their skills, gratis.) I had wrangled an award-winning web developer, a magazine editor to help with my marketing materials, and an amazing graphic designer whose wedding I officiated 8 years prior.

Other signs that I was moving in the right direction started showing up everywhere. For the first time in four years, the bald spots I had worked so hard to hide on my head were no longer there. Without the use of heavy medication, my hair began to grow back. Apparently, they were stress related. As I began to unpack my baggage, I realized that other small health issues that disappeared were also likely caused stress related.

It's was a daunting hurdle, but learned from coaching that curiosity and knowledge are the key to lock worry, doubt and uncertainty away.

Now I knew who I was and I found the support I needed, but direction was still unknown. I explored new ideas by meeting with successful entrepreneurs, spent time meditating, joined alliances and attended conferences that reset my boundaries. I read, researched and absorbed any topic that sparked my interest.



## THE HERO'S JOURNEY

The Hero's Journey necessitates crossing the threshold into the underworld or the unknown.

\*As taught in Creative Insight Journey

### Let's work on your prototype:

#### STEP FIVE

Where are you on your Hero's Journey? Identify your starting point. Then begin to gather your allies and strategize a plan. What steps do you need to take? The path between initiation and allies may take a circular loop for a few cycles but be patient- you are where you need to be.

## Allies List

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Let your Board of Directors (Allies) guide you. What do they say you should try, explore?

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## 7 NURTURE YOUR NEW NORMAL

The next step is practice being **resilient**. Be malleable, adaptable- have bounce! It's the skill that is not often thought of as being one you can practice and hone, but a great leader taps into resiliency seamlessly. It can be taught, sharpened and exercised like an athlete. It's one of the first skills that I remember learning from my mom. She constantly would change up the rules of the house and, as I followed them, she added more variables. When I started fourth grade my mom, a former middle science teacher, told me she would no longer check on my homework-all assignments, projects, book reports were my responsibility. Last-minute trips to the store for poster board were not allowed. If I need to get a book for research, I should use the school library or put it on the Saturday only errands list. It was my first taste of adaptability. My mom lovingly created a laboratory of resiliency, the skills I honed are still with me today.

I learned:

- long term planning
- how to be accountable for results and not the journey
- Even self-determined, 9-year-old me could be successful

I also learned the Power of Procrastination and how Moore's Law can serve us all. (Google Moore's Law)

Three ways to hone your ability to bounce back like a champion:

1. **Go Inward**- Inner calm and peace is the first step. I believe the famous Drag Queen RuPaul said it best.. "If you can't love yourself how the hell you're gonna love somebody else?" Start with some mindfulness-practices like walks, meditation,



yoga, and bubble baths.

2. **Create an emotional mind-** Success and failure are the same opportunity to learn. Reframing opportunities, challenges, issues and concerns sets you up to move closer to the results you seek.
3. **Cultivate your analytical mind or cognitive resilience-** Examine your self-talk. What language do you use to talk to yourself? Are you speaking from a judgmental, negative talk or are you empowering and cheering yourself on? By the way, if you did not know you could choose how to talk to yourself. I did not know I could shift the conversations in my head either until I learned how to do it. So, pay attention to the words and the tone of your self-talk. Would you talk like that to a friend? If the answer is no, shift your talk in a way that would be appropriate for someone you love.

**Let's work on your prototype:**

**STEP SIX**

Think back to a time in your life when you had to adapt. How did you succeed? Remember: past is experience is not an indicator of present potential, but it can help to direct your learnings.

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## 8 CONCLUSION

By now you have explored, with me:

- the noise within, your restlessness
- the process of clarifying who you are and what values drive you
- what needs to shift and how your goals need to reflect that shift
- and the tools to begin building your support system

The key to transformation is not to own a library of hundreds of self-help books. Nor is it thousands of dollars on online programs that will ease your pain. The key to transformation is a consistent and committed approach to uncovering the essence of you, to understanding who you are, what you are made of and what you are designed to accomplish in this lifetime. One last piece of advice: Don't do this alone.

You need someone to hold a mirror and help you understand the different parts of you in a loving, kind way while at the same time taking a stand for you and your vision.

### STEP SEVEN

Don't delay in saying yes to the support you need to build the life you want. At the end of the day, there is one question you need to answer:

Will you be satisfied if 12 months from now, you are doing the same work, in the same way and feel the way you feel today?

If the answer is no, then your next step is to email me and explore how I can support you in designing you're a plus life.

Be Well,

*Ebony*

Ebony Smith

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## 10 CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

### **Testimonials from Workshops and Private Coaching Clients**

Ebony is the total package in terms of leadership mentoring and customizing client workshops to meet their variety of needs. She is a wealth of knowledge in terms of enterprise performance and other general business related consulting, as someone with advance experience as both the "client" and "consultant", Ebony is able in the latter role to identify strengths and weaknesses that a corporation may have and immediately take steps to enhance those strengths and correct those weaknesses. She does this with critical thinking analysis and business acumen. Whether the task is change management, leadership mentoring, financial or less quantitative than that, she is ready to shine and bring any organization public or private to the next level.

- MAUREEN R., SENIOR MANAGER

I'm fortunate to do the kind of work I always wanted to do, but most people in my job are miserable to one degree or another, due to stagnant careers, frequent leadership shifts, and backstabbing behavior. Being surrounded by so much negativity made it difficult to separate the important and unimportant challenges, which impeded my productivity and decreased my desire to go to a job I love. I hired Ebony because I needed to learn how to thrive in that environment, so that I could move up, not out. Ebum Equation helped me focus on my work, goals, and progress in spite of what was happening around me. As I found flow, my desire to work increased, confidence was built, and I am achieving my goals again. I recommend Ebony Smith to people who need to find flow again, especially those who've

been so intentional but are stuck where they never imagined being, wondering what went wrong between the decisions they made and where they are now. Our weekly conversations helped me separate the important challenges from the unimportant ones and refocus on why I do this job. I now have creative responses to the unimportant challenges and the mental energy to address the important ones such that my energy is directed only toward accomplishing my goals.

- Beth K., UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ebony has all the credentials that you need for successful career in corporate America. For the past 20 years she worked for a Fortune 200 at Ryder, Sunoco Logistics, BP Supply & Trading and World Fuel Services. She has a BS in Chemistry and a MS in Environmental Protection and Safety Management. She began her career in the operations side of the oil industry and eventually made her way to energy derivative sales and marketing where she successfully developed her niche for 13 years. Ebony has completed her Certified Professional Coach training at IPEC and is designated an Associate Certified Coach (ACC) by the International Coach Federation (ICF). She is a trained Hypnotist. She is also a trainer for Creative Insights Journey, a personal transformation process based on the course and book *Creativity in Business* from the Stanford MBA program.

## EBONY SMITH

# “THE EXPONENTIAL GROWTH COACH”

You are living the life you dreamed of but it feels empty. It feels like a golden hamster wheel. You go to work, you exercise, you cook dinner, share family time, then repeat.

Ebony knows because she has been there. She had the life she wanted working for a FORTUNE 200 company until she was forced to make a decision and that's when she rolled up her sleeves, got curious and began designing the life she leads today.

You can, too.

Within a short period of time working with Ebony, her clients recognized the pieces of the puzzle that were missing and began aligning their essence, their values, their dreams with their realities. And that's when magic happens.

This book will help you take the first step on this journey.

Don't be shy. Explore, get curious, open your heart and when you are ready, Ebony is here to help. If you would like to learn more about her work then email [7steps@ebunamequation.com](mailto:7steps@ebunamequation.com).

## ABOUT EBONY

Ebony has all the credentials that you need for a successful career in corporate America. For two decades she worked for a Fortune 200 at Ryder, Sunoco Logistics, BP Supply & Trading and World Fuel Services. She has a BS in chemistry and a MS in environmental protection and safety management. She began her career in the operations side of the industry and eventually made her way to energy derivative sales and marketing where she successfully developed her niche. Ebony has completed her Certified Professional Coach training at Institute for Professional Education in Coaching and earning an Associate Certified Coach (ACC) by the



International Coach Federation (ICF), she also became a trained hypnotist. Ebony is also a trainer for Creative Insight Journey, a personal transformation process based on the course and book Creativity in Business from the Stanford MBA program.