



The New Agreements in the Workplace Releasing the Human Spirit

Notes by Frumi Rachel Barr

Forward by: Don Miguel Ruiz

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Author's Bio: David Dibble is a former CEO, systems thinker, and management consultant. David was a successful young entrepreneur with all the trappings of success and yet his life remained unfulfilled and without real meaning. A powerful spiritual awakening ignited in David a more than twenty-year commitment to inquiry into the nature of bringing joy and a higher purpose to the workplace. For eight years David studied Toltec wisdom with Don Miguel Ruiz, author of the Four Agreements.

Author's big thought: David melds the New Agreements into a simple but powerful model for transforming the workplace from a place of fear and control to one of love and support. This releases the creative human spirit that lives in each of us and in every organization, energizing the new workplace to unimaginable levels of joy and productivity. This is, he believes, our destiny.

Find Your Path

- *Releasing the creative human spirit in the workplace is a journey. A true (inclusive) path is a road map that includes proven practices and support along the way. A true path will ignite in you a higher purpose for work based in love.*
- As individuals in the workplace and in the world, each of us must find our own path to personal freedom and personal transformation.
- Before you can hope to effect change that involves other people, your workplace, or your systems, you must first and foremost find your own personal path and begin to experience the personal renaissance of a transformed life.

- Organizations too will benefit greatly in finding a collective path, a path that is inclusive.
- A true path will provide practices, tools, and support on the journey to freedom and love. One such path is the Toltec path. It is inclusive, simple, and powerful. To understand the Toltec path read *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz.
- The Toltec philosophies involve three core Masteries: Awareness, Transformation, and Intent. Out of these Masteries we can learn to live the Four Agreements. Integrating the three masteries and the Four Agreements ultimately leads to one result: transforming fear into love. If you don't resonate with the Toltec philosophies, keep looking until you find the path that *feels* right for you.

Love, Grow, and Serve Your People

- *The workplace is alive because it is made up of people. To love, grow, and serve your people means loving, growing, and serving, the living being we call organization. In loving, growing and serving others, you love, grow, and serve yourself. This is true leadership.*
- When you grow your people by helping them increase their capabilities and expand their skill sets, you'll grow the business or the organization. When you focus on loving and growing your people, they can focus on loving and serving your customers, your suppliers, and the world.
- The amount of work, learning, or healing (both physical and emotional) that can be accomplished in the presence of love-based energy field is mind-boggling.
- People including customers and suppliers, are drawn to leaders and organizations that operate in a loving way.
- In a strong emotional energy field that comes from love, anything is possible. It is in this type of environment where we may experience the release of the creative human spirit.
- Growing your people might take the form of ongoing and extensive training, rotating to new responsibilities and challenges, matching roles to what makes a person's heart sing, or providing opportunities for self-improvement.
- The area of service is particularly useful for leaders and managers. People are inclined to be drawn to and perform their best for leaders who serve them.
- When we replace the fear in our organizations with the emotional energy of love, growth, and service to others, we will see dramatic improvements in productivity, morale, creativity, quality, teamwork, and of course, sales and profits.
- When the top 5 to 15 percent of a company, *including top management*, have ignited the energy in themselves to the new vision, the entire culture will soon follow suit. It's no longer a matter of if the necessary changes can be effected; it's a matter of *when*.
- As the thoughts and beliefs of top and upper management shift, the culture of the organization begins to transform. It is in this realm of top and upper management

that the second New Agreement in the Workplace - Love, Grow, and Serve Your People - has the greatest power for organizational transformation.

Mind Your Mind in the Moment

- *Your mind creates your reality at work and at home. To change your life, you must transform your mind. Awareness of the mind in the moment when life takes place is a central practice to nearly every true path. With awareness, you can choose heaven on earth in your workplace.*
- The Toltec say that emotion resides in the mind as thoughts, beliefs and memories.
- We become aware of our thoughts when their emotional content is high enough to bring them into our consciousness. Enough emotion and the thoughts become conscious. A little more emotion and the thoughts become important. A large amount of emotion and the thoughts become all important, driving force in our lives. Too much emotion and we can't think straight.
- Memories and beliefs, like thoughts, are also weighed by their emotional content. Memories with high emotional content are more easily recalled. Beliefs with strong emotional components tend to be strongly held beliefs.
- The mind determines how we experience life and *drives our behavior*. To change our experiences we must change our minds.
- There's nothing more powerful than being aware of your mind *in the moment* when your reality is created and your life is lived.
- To make the new Agreements in the Workplace or Don Miguel's Four Agreements a part of your work life, start catching yourself in the moment. Become aware of when you're not following the practices. Utilize your awareness and notice when your mind is not acting impeccably with your thoughts, and words, when your mind causes you to take things personally, when your mind makes assumptions, and when your mind causes you to do less than your best.
- Notice when you are *not* on your path or *not* loving, growing, or serving your people.
- A crucial warning signal that can help you become aware of what your mind is up to now, in this very moment, is the emotion that comes from fear. Without awareness, your mind will produce fear-based thoughts, beliefs, or memories, and you will simply react to that emotional energy.
- Developing an awareness of your emotions as they occur, in the moment, can be a real challenge when you first begin to practice this New Agreement. With practice you will get better and better at being aware of emotions in the moment.
- Once you have become aware of what your mind is thinking, the next step is to observe the mind. The very act of observing the fear in your mind begins the transformative process.
- Finally, minding your mind in the moment means making choices about the thoughts, beliefs, and memories that you allow to enter your mind.
- Emotion is the mysterious factor that drives every decision you make and gives value to every current event you experience. You know whether life is good or bad

because your emotions tell you how you feel. Fear-based emotions keep you stuck, while love-based emotions release you and allow you to change.

Shift Your Systems

- *Systems are the formal and informal policies, procedures, habits, and agreements that tell you how to do things in the workplace. To release your creative human spirit, you must shift from the fear and control that drives most workplace systems to ones of love and support.*
- All organizations have structural components that we call systems. Systems, for the most part, direct how we do things.
- Systems can be large, such as company policies, or small, such as how the receptionist is instructed to answer the phone.
- Systems and structure in the workplaces can be considered living beings. They are the tangible and intangible structures that should help people feel supported as they work or go through change. Unfortunately, most systems are designed to give management the illusion of control over its workers, processes and functions.
- Although the data is clear, it seems to surprise people to learn that approximately 90 percent of the results produced in the workplace are a function of the systems, not the people who work those systems. Dysfunctional (fear-based) systems will destroy the human spirit in the workplace.
- If you want to change the results created in your workplace, you have to shift your systems.
- Dysfunctional systems are fairly easy to identify, once you know what to look for. Here are a few of the most common ones:
 - *Merit reviews.* This is a classic example of a fear-based system that almost everyone dislikes.
 - *E-mail.* An incredible amount of miscommunication results from unconscious use of email.
 - *Management by Objectives.* It causes people to focus on results rather than on the systems that create those results.
 - *Meetings.* Poor subsystems have created inefficient meetings which are often a huge waste of time.
 - *Offices and cubicles.* These structures create more separation. Top-down management structures produce more fear and separation in the workplace.
- Transforming dysfunctional systems can be achieved by following three key steps:
 - *Examine and Understand the Current Condition.* A good way to begin is to do an emotional content survey. This survey identifies where emotions are running high. High emotions usually indicate systems problems.
 - *Focus on the critical 20 percent.* 20 percent of the variables control 80 percent of the output.

- *Make Immediate Changes*,. After you've identified the critical 20 percent of variables that control 80 percent of your output. Use that information to make immediate changes that achieve meaningful results.

Practice a Little Every Day

- *To make the New Agreements a reality, you must practice a little every day. As you practice, you will notice change. Wit regular practice, you become the New Agreements. This is true mastery.*
- We human beings make a lot of mistakes, and we're frequently going in the wrong direction. We must chart a course toward our final destination and then navigate as we go, checking our position and making daily adjustments.
- Like any new skill, mastering the New Agreements in your life and your workplace and making them something you do naturally requires regular practice.
- Practice your new skills and use your new tools in a sensible manner. Strive for consistency.
- The final piece of the five New Agreements is the fabric that connects all the agreements together. "When in doubt, love some more" means that when you're in doubt, you should love the fear some more. Embrace the fear, acknowledge it, and gently pull it to love. But do so out of a state of awareness and choice.

The Toltec path to Freedom

Breaking Old Agreements

- To be Toltec is a way of life. It is a way of life where there are no leaders and no followers, where you have your own truth and live your own truth.

Recommendation: This book is a great follow-on for the Four Agreements if you live and work in the workplace.



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