We Need Soul-Designed Organizations

for Harmonious And Prosperous Future

Teja Breznik Alfirev

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For Harmonious And Prosperous Future

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FOREWORD:
Let's Hear Your Melody

Why This Book Matters

In 2013, my life took an unexpected turn. Despite having everything - a rewarding career, thriving business opportunities, a loving family, financial stability, supportive friends, and the most affectionate dog - I felt a deep sense of unease. My energy faded, passion diminished, and anxiety clouded my days.

Physically, emotionally, and mentally, I was drained. Every morning, I woke up feeling hollow, and every night, I went to bed with the same emptiness. It wasn't just an internal struggle; my external world started to crumble too.

The most heart-wrenching challenge was my eldest daughter's sudden and severe health crisis. The mystery of her decline threw us into turmoil, and in a desperate bid to find balance, I left my corporate life for freelancing.

This decision, coupled with my daughter's uncertain future, intensified my sense of loss and confusion. The more I strived to find solutions, the more my familiar self-image - as a proactive doer, a problem solver, and a strong, independent woman - began to fall apart.

During that period, I sought both conventional and unconventional methods to improve my daughter's and my own health. I discovered significant relief through meditation and neurofeedback training, which proved somewhat helpful. Both techniques contributed positively to my nervous system, making it easier to navigate daily challenges. However, I remained perplexed about what was hindering my progress and why I couldn't return to the same hyperproductive state I had experienced previously.

But it was only when I discovered shamanic journeys that I found true understanding, particularly one of the journeys, which I felt in my entire body. This journey took me far beyond conventional wisdom, revealing insights that transcended mere intellect. I recognized that the person I believed I was, was just a façade masking my true self. For years, I had been living a life shadowed by conditioned beliefs and societal expectations, believing it was the right path.

My struggle with the intense energy of the business world was no coincidence. The relentless pace, the weight of unspoken pressures, and the facade of professionalism drained me. Witnessing the tears and frustrations of my coaching clients, the pervasive exhaustion, and the prevalence of narcissistic leadership in the business environment overwhelmed my senses. In response, I instinctively retreated into myself, hiding from the world.

Embracing my inner transformation, I began to understand how the business environment contributed to my turmoil. I wasn't alone in this realization. Many were seeking to enhance their lives, some by leaving the corporate world, others by fostering positive changes within it.

A wave of change was evident. People yearned for more human-centric business practices, the rise of positive psychology, and support groups for both women and men. The prevailing business culture, rife with conflict, power struggles, and toxicity, signaled a deep, collective disconnect.

This book, along with all my endeavors, is dedicated to a singular mission: shining a light on the destructive energies pervading the business world and transforming them into forces that affirm life and nourish the soul.

"To think about the Soul, to think about it at least once in the confusion of every crowded day, is indeed the beginning of salvation."

- George Duhamel

This transformation is not about superficial "good vibes only" mantras or cosmetic changes that fail to address the deeper issues plaguing companies today – issues like low engagement, talent shortages, resistance to change, mental health crises, and sluggish adaptation. My experience has shown that focusing solely on our "strengths" or chanting "good vibes only," without deeper introspection and action, fails to create meaningful and lasting improvements at both individual and team levels.

I've learned through my journey that we aren't entirely responsible for everything that happens to us. The belief that we are is often a tool used to manipulate us, selling ideas that fuel dissatisfaction and guilt. The economy thrives on this dissatisfaction, perpetuating a cycle of guilt and shame with messages like "You aren't good enough," "You brought that on yourself," or the overly simplistic "Just think positive."

While our reactions to life events are important, the advice that our circumstances are solely a result of our "low frequency" or that "we attract what matches our being" is not only unhelpful but can be naively dismissive or even aggressive. Such statements often add to the burden of guilt or shame on an already struggling individual.

In my perspective, our lives are significantly influenced by our history and environment. We are deeply interconnected, impacting each other's mental health, nervous systems, and ultimately our overall well-being. This interconnectedness is crucial for productivity, but productivity doesn't arise from surface-level solutions like ping-pong tables, endless improvement initiatives, or superficial team-building activities.

I do not claim that the approach outlined in this book is the sole solution – that would be overly presumptuous. However, I firmly believe that we need to take a moment to pause and reflect, not only on business outcomes but on ourselves. We must broaden our perspectives, delve deeply within, and initiate honest conversations about the realities we face.

As Mate Gabor aptly noted, "We live in a toxic civilization" – a civilization obsessed with control. Control over nature and our inner human nature, leading us to become domesticated beings who seek to manage each other, our psyches, and our environment. It's no surprise that we are confronted with numerous social and psychological challenges – challenges that are unnatural and detrimental to life.

My hope is that this book ignites curiosity and awareness, inspiring us to build our lives and businesses on entirely different foundations. It's a challenging task, but it's also courageous and necessary. Everyone has the capacity to contribute to this transformation.

What You Will Discover in This Book

The essence of this book is straightforward: transforming businesses requires personal transformation first. It's about reshaping our mindset, confronting our hidden selves, and aligning our actions with the essence of our being – our soul.

You'll find insightful discussions on humanity's psychological evolution, supported by diverse research. These explorations are meant to pique your curiosity and encourage deeper inquiry.

A key concept introduced is Wetiko, a psycho-spiritual affliction that pervades our modern world, affecting every aspect of our psyche, including the business realm.

The latter part of the book presents principles and methodologies for organizational change. This change transcends mere positive thinking or superficial company transformation. It's about acknowledging and transforming the negative energies that cause dysfunction, stress, and health issues. Essentially, it's about awakening the most profound aspect of ourselves – our souls – enabling us to flourish in today's complex world.

While my perspective is one among many, I trust it offers substantial insights and empowers individuals and organizations to contribute meaningfully to a better world.

Let's Hear Your Melody

Let's Hear Your Organization's Melody! As we delve into the concept of soul-designed organizations, let's start with a metaphor. Metaphors stimulate parts of our brain that often remain inactive in the business world, engaging more than just our logical and analytical faculties.

Imagine if your team, company, or community could express itself through a song. What kind of melody would it be? Would it reflect joy, creativity, and passion, or would it be a sorrowful tune burdened with regret? Is it a song that uplifts and inspires, or one that feels uninspiring and disjointed? Does it resonate in harmony, or is it a jarring noise? Consider whether this song is known and embraced by your team members. Do they sing it with pride, or is it something distant and unengaging to them?

The power of a song is profound – it can uplift, leave us unchanged, or plunge us into sadness. The song of an organization reveals much about its collective spirit. It indicates whether we approach the world with energy and determination or with a sense of defeat. It helps us understand our collective identity – are we unified and purposeful, or fragmented and uncertain?

The melody of our organization shapes our energy, driving us either toward constructive action or steering us into negativity and despair.

REFLECTION

Now, let's turn the spotlight on your organization's collective tune:

1. What emotions or energy does our team's "song" convey, and how does it impact our collective mindset and performance?

2. Are our team members conscious of the "song" we're harmonizing together, and do they actively join in with enthusiasm? Or is it something unfamiliar or unwelcome to them?

3. How can we transition our team's "song" into one filled with joy, passion, and creative expression that uplifts and inspires, fostering a sense of purpose and unity?

4. What kind of melody do we need to thrive in our ever-evolving world?

INTRODUCTION: Navigating Change in a Complex World

Our world is in a constant state of flux, filled with various theories and methodologies all aiming to guide businesses not just to survive but to thrive. The challenge for companies lies in quickly adapting, and finding the right tools and skills to remain relevant and successful. There is a continuous emergence of new methods, particularly focused on empowering leaders for effective transformation.

The Role of Belief and Behavior

The value of these approaches is undeniable, but their success hinges on the people implementing them, especially managers. This success is deeply connected to their personal maturity and consciousness level.

For example, if I staunchly adopt a "Profit first" mentality, that might dominate my decision-making process. I could verbally stress the importance of my team's growth, but in challenging times, I might resort to harsh measures like layoffs or overworking employees.

In contrast, if I view people as the primary creators of value and commit to fostering an environment conducive to their growth, my focus extends beyond profit to the overall well-being of my team.

The Influence of Attitude on Collective Energy

The concept might seem simple, yet it's profound: our attitude – a reflection of our mindset and inner being – significantly impacts our capacity for change, learning, and growth. An attitude marked by self-centeredness, dominance, arrogance, or insecurity stifles these potentials.

In contrast, an attitude imbued with compassion, care, gentleness, patience, and understanding positively influences others. Such an attitude encourages adaptability, effectiveness, and a collective spirit of contribution.

The cultural atmosphere within an organization, especially as perceived by those in junior positions, is profoundly influenced by the attitudes of its members. These attitudes, emanating from our deeper selves, are not just felt but deeply understood by others. The energy we project plays a pivotal role in shaping the responses and attitudes of our colleagues.

For example, if I sense that you are primarily driven by a desire for dominance and power, this perception will trigger an instinctual reaction in me, often manifesting as either a defensive or evasive response. This dynamic fosters an environment devoid of trust, where everyone is primarily concerned with protecting their interests. In such a climate, the actual subject of discussion becomes secondary; the primary focus shifts to either 'winning' the interaction or simply 'surviving' it in a psychological sense.

The situation becomes even more complicated if I operate from a victim mindset. In this case, I might view you as a potential rescuer, someone who can fulfill my needs and provide salvation. If you, perhaps for egoistic reasons, indulge this dynamic by presenting yourself as the sole provider of solutions and validation, you inadvertently cultivate a culture where a victim mentality thrives.

Attitudes Are Not Just Behaviours

It's important to realize that attitudes are not just behaviors – they are the very energy of an organization. This energy manifests in various aspects of organizational life, such as its structure, the nature of interpersonal interactions, decision-making processes, and more. Essentially, this energy forms the culture of the organization, dictating the invisible forces that shape our workplace reality.

With over 15 years of experience in change management, I've observed that many initiatives aimed at transformation, whether at the individual, team, or organizational level, often fail because they overlook the soul of the people involved. This failure stems from a lack of understanding or an intentional disregard for human nature.

Leading with an appreciation for human nature doesn't mean coddling employees with lavish perks or setting unreasonably low-performance standards. Rather, it involves offering genuine support that enables people, starting with ourselves, to shift from a victim mentality to a state of alignment with their authentic selves. This approach is crucial for transforming a team or an entire company into a dynamic, forward-looking, and passionate community, well-equipped to face any challenge.

> "Attitudes are not just behaviors – they are the very energy of an organization."

> "This mindset rooted in fear leads to numerous negative outcomes. It fuels power struggles, creates division, assigns meaningless roles, and erodes connections and support."

A Fear-Driven Society

Our society, irrespective of location, is largely driven by fear, a fact often ignored in the business world. We fail to see how our decisions are subtly influenced by the fears and desires lurking in our subconscious.

This mindset rooted in fear leads to numerous negative outcomes. It fuels power struggles, creates division, assigns meaningless roles, and erodes connections and support. The results are increased mental health issues, dysfunctional cultures, strained relationships, high employee turnover, and an obsession with short-term achievements. This focus on immediate results hinders skill development and deprives us of essential competencies.

It appears that we have shaped a world dominated by almost psychopathic tendencies, with a relentless pursuit of profit. This approach propagates a rigid, uncompromising attitude, and its consequences are deeply felt in our professional and personal lives.

The question remains: What kind of song can we sing in this world dominated by fear?

A Reflection On Personal And Organizational Well-Being

Examining Two Case Studies.

Consider John, whose life revolves exclusively around personal success and financial gain. He has amassed wealth and professional acclaim, yet at a cost: he's estranged from friends and family, plagued by chronic stress, and feels an overwhelming emptiness. His relentless pursuit of material success has adversely affected his mental and emotional health.

Similarly, XYZ Company prioritizes profit maximization above all else. This approach has ensured high short-term profits, but the consequences are stark: employee burnout leading to high turnover rates, a culture marred by distrust and intense competition, poor teamwork, low morale, and a tarnished public image.

Both John and XYZ Company are examples of how being driven by ego-centric fears and desires can lead to significant issues. Their focus on destructive energies, without the balance of nurturing, life-affirming forces, results in disharmony and a multitude of negative impacts, including potential long-term health issues.

REFLECTION

Below is a very basic list of constructive and destructive forces within your team or entire company. Assessing these questions can provide insights into the presence of these forces within your organization.

Destructive Forces:

1. Do fear-driven decisions or actions prevail in your team or organization?
2. Is there a noticeable self-obsession or a "me-first" attitude among team members?
3. Do you observe a lack of collaboration, support, or empathy within the team?
4. Is there a strong focus on short-term results at the expense of long-term development?
5. Do power struggles and internal politics appear common?
6. Is there a high level of competition that hinders cooperation?
7. Is there either an artificial harmony where team members avoid conflict or, conversely, a prevalence of aggressive-passive behaviors, leading to deeper mistrust?

Constructive Forces:

1. Are there examples of strong teamwork and collaboration within your team or organization?
2. Do team members exhibit empathy and support for each other?
3. Is there an emphasis on long-term development and skill-building?
4. Do you notice a focus on shared goals and shared success rather than individual recognition?
5. Are decisions made with a holistic view, considering the well-being of all stakeholders?
6. Is there a sense of shared purpose and values that guide the organization's actions?
7. Do team members openly share their opinions, concerns, and ideas, and do such behaviors lead to more trust and better productivity?

Which forces impact yourself, your team, or your entire company the most?

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PART ONE:
Forces That Shape Our Reality

What is the true nature of humanity? Are we fundamentally good or bad? Sane or insane? Is our modern world a true reflection of normalcy? Are selfishness and violence ingrained in our being, or do empathy and compassion naturally emerge, independent of self-interest?

These questions might seem abstract, yet they are crucial for every leader to consider. Our leadership style is deeply shaped by our ingrained beliefs about human nature, both individually and collectively.

The common narrative suggests that our modern society has made remarkable strides in various domains over the past century. Indeed, we've witnessed extraordinary technological advancements and significant social progress, including the abolition of slavery, strides toward gender equality, accessible healthcare, animal rights legislation, free education, heightened environmental consciousness, and robust child protection laws. These achievements are commendable and indicative of societal evolution.

However, when we turn our attention to the understanding and nurturing of the human psyche, it appears that our progress has been less pronounced. Despite our advancements, we face deep-seated issues that render our world unbalanced and, consequently, unhealthy. This paradox of progress alongside persistent psychological and social challenges raises critical questions about our development as a species.

This dichotomy is explored in various books that challenge the conventional narrative about our history and humanity's evolution. These works argue that traits like violence and selfishness are not intrinsic to our nature. Instead, they illuminate a time

in our history when our existence and approach to life were markedly different from what we see today.

One such notable work is Steve Taylor's "The Fall," a compelling read for those seeking to challenge entrenched beliefs about human nature. In this book, Taylor delves into the past, exploring how humans once lived and what evidence suggests about their mindset and guiding principles. He refers to these ancient societies as 'Unfallen,' implying a state of being that was more in harmony with the self and the environment than what is typically observed today.

Taylor's exploration serves as a critical reminder of the importance of introspection and reevaluation of our current societal constructs. It highlights the need to not only celebrate our technological and social advancements but also to critically assess how these developments have impacted our collective psyche. Understanding our past, particularly periods of harmony and balance can offer valuable insights into how we might address the imbalances in our contemporary world, leading us toward a healthier, more holistic future.

Let's begin by examining the darker facets of human history, focusing on Steve Taylor's work in "The Fall."

> **"Despite our advancements, we face deep-seated issues that render our world unbalanced and, consequently, unhealthy."**

The Dark Side of Human History

War

Our technological progress stands in stark contrast to our violent history, making us arguably the most destructive species on Earth. This contradiction was poignantly noted by my daughter during her high school years when she questioned the overwhelming focus on wars in history lessons.

Historical records, often beginning with the rise of civilizations like Egypt and Sumer around 3500 BCE, predominantly chronicle endless wars, conflicts, and invasions. This might lead one to believe that violence is inherent in human nature. However, as highlighted in "The Fall," this is a misconception. War, surprisingly, is not as ancient as humanity itself but rather a more recent phenomenon.

Contrary to the belief of early humans as aggressive 'savages,' recent archaeological and ethnographic evidence suggests that our ancestors were predominantly peaceful and non-belligerent.

The inception of warfare is traced back to around 4000 BCE, significantly later in the human story.

"There is still a general assumption that early human beings were primitive 'savages,' much more aggressive and warlike than their modern counterparts. However, archaeological and ethnographic evidence collected over recent decades has dispelled this notion." (The Fall)

Patriarchy

The annals of history reveal not only wars but also the emergence of patriarchy – the systematic domination of women by men.

This patriarchal system began to take shape around 4,000 BCE, marking a significant shift in societal dynamics. Since its inception, patriarchy has largely relegated women to subordinate roles in many cultures.

Despite progress towards gender equality in regions like Europe and North America, subtle and overt forms of male dominance and violence persist in daily life.

Yet, historical evidence paints a different picture of the past. Findings from the Paleolithic and early Neolithic periods show little evidence of male supremacy. Women often held roles of equal prominence to men, with societies practicing matrilineal and matrilocal traditions. Property was passed through the female line, and men would often move to live with their bride's family upon marriage, suggesting a more balanced societal structure.

Social Inequality

The cycle of oppression didn't halt with wars and the subjugation of women; it expanded to encompass social inequality, typified by the ruthless oppression of the many by a privileged few.

"One of the world's earliest class-based systems was developed by the Indo-Europeans, ancestors of the Romans, Greeks, Celts, and the majority of contemporary Europeans and Americans. As they migrated to new regions like the Middle East and Central Asia, conquering the native populations, they introduced a new class into their social structure, comprised of the conquered individuals who, from that point on, would be mercilessly subjugated and exploited." (The Fall, page 19)

Again, this cycle appears to have begun around 4,000 BCE.

"The question arises: are humans innately violent, sadistic, and discontent? The answer, suggests otherwise."

The Nature of Human Violence and Discontent

The question arises: are humans innately violent, sadistic, and discontent? The answer, as illuminated by Steve Taylor, suggests otherwise.

The issues of violence and discontent we see today are not age-old but have developed relatively recently in human history. Homo sapiens have existed for about 200,000 years. However, a significant shift occurred around 6,000 years ago, a period often termed "The Fall" or an "ego-explosion." This shift brought about dominance, violence, warfare, inequalities, and a disconnection from nature. For the vast majority of human existence – about 95% of our history – we lived in ways drastically different from the last 6,000 years. The evidence suggests that the traits of violence and selfishness are not inherent to human nature or a result of genetic determinism.

Yet, this relatively recent period of human history has profoundly impacted us, influencing not only our external world but also our internal psyche and emotional well-being.

Our inner state shapes our external environment, creating a cycle where external conditions further affect our internal state, forming a continuous feedback loop.

In some indigenous cultures, this psychological ailment that we've collectively suffered from since "The Fall" started has a name: WETIKO.

WETIKO – A Contagious Psycho-Spiritual Disease

Paul Levy extensively explores Wetiko, a psycho-spiritual disease that infiltrates all aspects of society.

Wetiko thrives in the unconscious parts of our psyche, hindering our ability to recognize our destructive tendencies and compelling us to act counterproductively. Described as a spiritual affliction, Wetiko is akin to a malignant element within humanity. It is the driving force behind much of the chaos in our world, manifesting as greed, exploitation, violence, and oppression.

This collective psychosis gives rise to a destructive force, marked by relentless greed, excessive consumption, and pointless conflicts against others, nature, and even our own species.

The effects of Wetiko are evident globally through wars, injustices, harassment, and violence, constantly highlighted in the news. Wetiko is a universal affliction; no one is immune.

Believing that we are unaffected by Wetiko while others are, is itself a deception of this condition. It leads us to falsely believe that the source of our problems lies outside of us, fostering fear and a sense of separation. Wetiko aims to cloud our vision, stifle our creativity, and fill our minds with fear-driven self-preservation thoughts. It inflates our ego, disconnects us from our inner wisdom, and renders us susceptible to external manipulation.

Wetiko acts like a parasitic force, draining others for personal gain.

The primary conduit through which Wetiko spreads is our relationships. It thrives within our relationships with ourselves, with each other, and with the broader world.

There are both large and small manifestations of Wetiko. The larger ones can be seen in institutions and exceedingly affluent individuals whose primary agendas are greed and exploitation, often facilitated through corruption.

However, the smaller, everyday manifestations of Wetiko are equally significant. We encounter them within our communities, workplaces, families, and social circles. We are all complicit in these smaller manifestations.

We unknowingly support the existence of Wetiko. We are all ensnared by its spell, and it's imperative that we awaken to this reality.
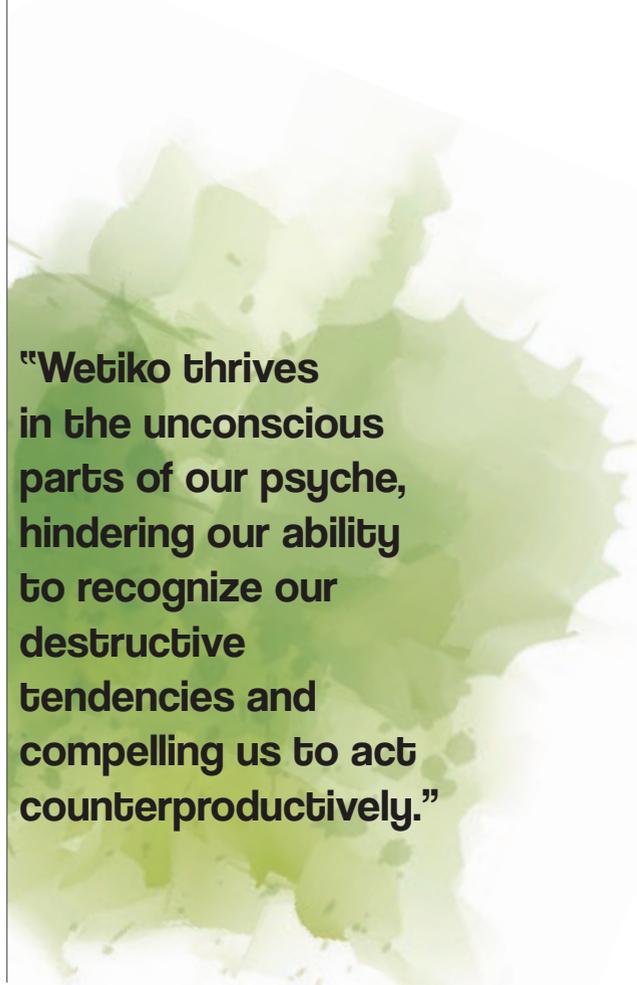
"Wetiko thrives in the unconscious parts of our psyche, hindering our ability to recognize our destructive tendencies and compelling us to act counterproductively."

Wetiko in the Business World

The impact of Wetiko is clearly visible also in the business sector.

The dominant "Profit first" mentality, deeply rooted in corporate culture, has led to widespread damage, often unnoticed or ignored.

Marketing strategies increasingly rely on fear to sell products and services. Employees are frequently viewed as mere resources or expendable parts of the corporate machinery, perpetuating the notion that "everyone is replaceable." The promotion of artificial desires, based on unattainable standards of beauty, success, and even a false sense of self-fulfillment, has become widespread. Social interactions, both within the corporate environment and beyond, are often driven by self-serving motives under the guise of networking. The tolerance of unethical behavior and various forms of harassment, including sexual misconduct, often goes unchecked, with many choosing to look the other way. Authoritarian power dynamics in workplaces, where leaders adopt a "my way or the highway" approach, are still common. Furthermore, the stark wealth disparity, where a few accumulate significant wealth while many others strive to replicate their success, illustrates this paradox. Ironically, those who criticize the wealthy frequently possess a latent desire to be part of that elite group.

In my career, I've observed numerous instances where Wetiko infiltrates organizations. It's tempting to view ourselves as immune, believing we are inherently kind, fair, and decent. However, this self-perception is often challenged when we face situations that trigger a fear of self-preservation.

EXAMPLES

Let me share various examples from both my own experiences and those of my clients, highlighting Wetiko's manifestation in business settings and within us. These instances, often appearing mundane, are typically overlooked as Wetiko-driven behaviors.

Take, for instance, a manager in his fifties who became CEO of a company he had long served. Keen to prove his worth, he mistakenly identified the employees as the problem. He declared, "The culture here is unproductive. It needs a change. The solution is to fire half the workforce and bring in new talent." Following his directive, HR executed the layoffs. However, nearly two years later, the company culture hadn't improved; it might have even deteriorated. Failing to recognize that the real issue lay with him and his management team, he, driven by Wetiko, unjustly dismissed numerous employees. In this scenario, both the CEO, manipulating people's livelihoods for 'business reasons,' and HR, complicit due to fear or a desire to stay close to power, were under Wetiko's sway.

Another case involved a client who was a middle manager with a seemingly congenial boss. When she was instructed to conceal information during an external audit, she was appalled. Knowing it was wrong but fearing job loss, she complied.

I also have a personal story. While in a management role, I received a year-end message from the CEO stating that the company wouldn't pay the due incentives to employees. The reason wasn't financial strain but a fear that these payments would impact the projected profits. Ironically, that year we had achieved record profits and were acclaimed as the best in our international group. Outraged, I drafted a resignation letter and presented it to the CEO, who persuaded me to stay with flattering justifications.

These examples reveal Wetiko's subtle operation, often unnoticed as we unwittingly participate in its game. It's not just the misguided managers, who might not be intentionally harmful but are aligned with Wetiko's agenda, but also HR in the first case, my clients in the second, and myself in the third. Our actions, albeit unintentional, further cement Wetiko's hold, leading to a gradual erosion of our integrity.

The Cost Of WETIKO: Toxic Civilization

Civilization is something that can be either healthy or toxic. Unfortunately, many aspects of our society lean towards the latter.

This toxicity manifests in various ways, impacting both physical and mental health. We're witnessing a rise in chronic conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes. Anxiety among the youth has reached alarming levels. The prevalence of asthma, autoimmune diseases, addictions, and depression is increasing. Burnout has become a widespread issue, and tragically, youth suicide rates are climbing. This societal crisis is characterized by feelings of separation, disconnection, and loneliness, exacerbated by a culture prioritizing profit over well-being.

Gabor Maté, renowned for his insights into stress and disease, points out our tendency to see ourselves as competitive and self-serving individuals, driven by manipulation and a relentless pursuit of material satisfaction.

The growing number of children diagnosed with ADHD, anxiety, depression, self-harm, and obsessive-compulsive behaviors indicates a significant imbalance. This leaves us with two interpretations: either we accept these disturbing trends as unexplainable anomalies or we acknowledge that our culture's toxic nature is profoundly affecting our children's development, leading to increased mental instability and, in extreme cases, self-harm and suicide.

The discourse on these issues predominantly centers on alleviating the symptoms rather than tackling the deeper social and cultural roots of the problem. Our society, which perpetually instills a sense of inadequacy, urging us to strive for more attractiveness, success, and wealth, leaves us in a relentless state of void. This void fuels our consumer-driven culture, incessantly prompting us to crave more. It's a culture addicted to satisfying an unquenchable thirst to fill this internal emptiness.

This disconnect from our true selves is hardly surprising, given that our concept of civilization often involves suppressing fundamental human needs. Historian Morris Berman characterizes today's global capitalist society as one dominated by economic forces, shaping our entire mental landscape. This cultural and economic milieu has historically been a source of chronic stress, eroding human well-being.

In his shamanic work, Paul Francis terms our society, which evolved during "The Fall" era, as a "Taker society." According to him, this society is inherently psychopathic. It profoundly influences our collective life view and our understanding of humanity. It introduces notions like segregating the world into living and non-living, materialistic attitudes, rampant consumption, the belief in limitless exploitation of animals, plants, and Earth, the concept of ownership, a philosophy of taking without giving, egocentrism, the idea that we are the universe's focal point, hierarchical thinking, and even the endorsement of violence.

Many institutions reflect these thought patterns and exhibit traits such as:

- Hierarchies headed by charismatic but often narcissistic, sociopathic, or psychopathic leaders.
- Limited or absent accountability for these leaders.
- Tactics of manipulation, exploitation, and coercion used by those in power.
- Leaders hoarding more than their share.
- Suppression or persecution of dissenters.
- Viewing non-conformists as unconventional and threatening.
- Imposing a specific version of "truth" on its members.
- Negative impacts on the mental and spiritual health of its members.

We live in a world where trauma is a common, yet often unacknowledged, part of our lives. Gabor Maté's perspective highlights how our 'Taker' society's values inflict psychological trauma on many individuals. He emphasizes that this trauma is at the root of much of what we classify as disease, advocating that true healing involves reconnecting the mind and body. This reconnection, fostered through a sense of community, meaning, belonging, and purpose, is crucial for our well-being.

Our authentic selves are often lost or obscured due to the trauma we endure, stemming from a disconnection from our true nature. Healing, therefore, is about rediscovering and reconnecting with this authentic self. To fully grasp this concept, it's essential to understand that we all exist on a spectrum of woundedness. This spectrum is shaped by a variety of factors, including our cultural context, upbringing, and the societal norms that perpetuate trauma.

Each person's position on this trauma spectrum varies, but what is constant is our coexistence in a society that often fails to meet our fundamental human needs. This systemic failure not only exacerbates our trauma but also contributes to chronic stress. Stress, in turn, is a significant catalyst for bodily inflammation, which is linked to various diseases, including cancer.

In addition to Maté's insights, it's important to consider the role of individual and collective resilience in addressing trauma. Resilience can be fostered through supportive relationships, positive experiences, and constructive coping strategies. By building resilience, individuals and communities can better navigate and heal from the traumas inflicted by societal structures.

Moreover, there's a growing recognition of the need for systemic change to create environments that nurture rather than harm. This includes reevaluating societal values, enhancing support systems, and promoting practices that prioritize mental and emotional well-being. In doing so, we can create a society that not only acknowledges trauma but actively works towards healing and preventing it.

"Our authentic selves are often lost or obscured due to the trauma we endure, stemming from a disconnection from our true nature. Healing, therefore, is about rediscovering and reconnecting with this authentic self."

All That Surrounds Us, Impacts Us

Our prevailing cultural mindset often leans towards the belief that our genes are the unchangeable blueprint dictating our health, traits, and potential. However, the field of epigenetics offers a transformative understanding – it shows that our life experiences significantly influence the potential of our genes. The environment in which genes operate, including our socio-economic conditions, can alter our epigenome, impacting our health and well-being either positively or negatively.

Adding to this, our attitude and mental state also play a pivotal role in influencing our DNA. Research in epigenetics has revealed that our thoughts, emotions, and beliefs can induce epigenetic changes. For example, chronic stress or prolonged negative thinking can lead to changes in gene expression, potentially impacting our susceptibility to certain illnesses. Conversely, positive attitudes, such as optimism and resilience, can lead to beneficial epigenetic modifications, enhancing our overall health and well-being.

This knowledge highlights the profound interconnectedness between our environment, mindset, and genetic expression. It suggests that not only does our external environment affect us on a biochemical level, but our internal mental and emotional landscape does as well. Moreover, our often subconscious disconnection from our true selves contributes significantly to the stress and sense of emptiness many experience in modern life.

Understanding this connection between attitude and DNA empowers us to take active steps in shaping our health and life experiences. It encourages us to cultivate positive mental states, engage in practices that promote well-being, and seek environments that support our holistic health. By doing so, we can potentially influence our genetic expression in ways that foster better health and a deeper sense of connection with ourselves and the world around us.

Our life experiences significantly influence the potential of our genes.

The drama within companies can often resemble shadow plays, unfolding persistently and dramatically.

Our Shadows Playing Out

The drama within companies can often resemble shadow plays, unfolding persistently and dramatically. In my career as a coach, I've observed an overwhelming number of individuals in professional settings break down in tears, overwhelmed by feelings of disrespect and hopelessness. This emotional turmoil frequently manifests as passive-aggressive actions: gossip, withholding information, manipulation, avoidance, and direct personal attacks.

Reflecting on my own journey, I remember joining a company where I was met with a cold and sometimes outright hostile environment. Despite my efforts to break through this frosty atmosphere, my attempts remained largely unsuccessful. The turning point came weeks later when a kindly coworker revealed that the former head of HR had been spreading damaging rumors about me before my arrival, falsely painting me as a negative influence.

This revelation was a stark example of how individuals can unconsciously project the darker, shadow aspects of their personalities. In this case, the former HR head was unwittingly a part of this all-too-human drama, contributing to a cycle of negativity and misunderstanding.

Human Drama

People often find themselves trapped in the dynamics of the Karpman Drama Triangle*, fluctuating among the roles of victim, persecutor, and rescuer. These roles are shaped by their interactions and emotional responses, creating a cyclical pattern where victims turn into persecutors, persecutors become victims, and rescuers might also end up as victims.

In many corporate environments, this drama is either blatantly obvious or subtly hidden under a veneer of false harmony. Regardless of its outward appearance, the hallmark of such drama is its ineffectiveness in fostering constructive change. Instead, it perpetuates harmful behavioral patterns dominated by control, severity, blame, and a victim mentality.

In these settings, it's not surprising that people develop coping mechanisms that are ultimately detrimental to themselves and others. These behaviors, which I term "wetiko kids," encourage disconnection, egotism, grandiosity, and narcissism.

These manifestations are essentially our 'shadows' at play. The shadow, in this context, refers to the parts of ourselves that cause suffering – the aspects deep within our subconscious that we find difficult to acknowledge. These shadows include intense emotions like anger and fear that we often avoid confronting. Their origins are deeply rooted in fear, particularly the unconscious fear of being separate from our surroundings. This perceived separateness makes us feel vulnerable and susceptible to external influences, fostering a culture of blame and shame.

Understanding that the shadow is a pervasive influence affecting most people, including ourselves, is crucial. This shadow frequency has unfortunately become a global norm.

To create a truly connected and positive culture in the workplace, where individuals can express themselves genuinely, it is essential to confront and understand our own shadows. Real transformation lies in this self-awareness.

Hidden within the shadow frequency is a wellspring of creativity. As we undergo significant shifts in our attitudes, we unlock the doors to our minds and hearts, revealing hidden talents and capabilities. It is in this transformative space that the immense potential of both individuals and teams can be fully realized.

> "Hidden within the shadow frequency is a wellspring of creativity."

* **The Karpman Drama Triangle** is a psychological model that was developed by psychiatrist Stephen Karpman in the 1960s. It provides a framework for understanding dysfunctional social interactions and conflicts in various contexts, including personal relationships, workplaces, and other social settings. The triangle consists of three primary roles or positions that individuals may adopt in these situations:

1. Victim:

The Victim role is often characterized by a sense of powerlessness, helplessness, and self-pity. People in this role tend to see themselves as victims of circumstances or the actions of others. They may passively accept their situation and feel as though they have little control over their lives.

2. Persecutor:

The Persecutor role involves a more aggressive and controlling stance. Individuals in this role may display critical, blaming, or bullying behavior towards others. They often seek to exert power and control over those they perceive as victims.

3. Rescuer:

The Rescuer role is marked by a desire to help or rescue others from their problems. People in this role may offer unsolicited advice, support, or assistance to those they see as victims. They often believe they know what's best for others and may become frustrated when their help isn't appreciated.

The Drama Triangle describes how people can shift between these roles in interpersonal conflicts, and how these shifts can perpetuate unhealthy dynamics. For example, a person initially acting as a Victim may become a Persecutor when they feel frustrated or threatened, and a Rescuer might switch to a Victim role if they perceive that their help is unappreciated.

The model highlights that these roles are often driven by unmet emotional needs and can be detrimental to relationships and personal well-being. Breaking free from the Drama Triangle involves recognizing these patterns and consciously choosing more constructive, empowered roles that promote healthier communication and problem-solving.

It's worth noting that the Drama Triangle is a simplified model for understanding complex human interactions, and it may not capture the full complexity of real-life situations. However, it can be a useful tool for gaining insights into recurring conflicts and behaviors.

In a Nutshell

1. Attitudes and mindsets shape organizational culture, influencing the success of change initiatives.
2. Neglecting individuals' spiritual and soulful aspects hinders transformation; embracing true selves is essential.
3. Fear's prevalence leads to negative consequences in society and business, necessitating strategies for navigating this fear-dominated world.
4. Despite technological advances, the modern world has deep imbalances and psychological shadows requiring attention.
5. We are all influenced by our history, the collective unconscious, and the environment.
6. "WETIKO" is a psycho-spiritual disease driving behaviors like greed, exploitation, and violence, contributing to a culture of insatiable greed and warfare.
7. Wetiko impairs creativity, manipulates thoughts with fear-based ideas, inflates egos, and severs connections to innate wisdom.
8. In the business world, Wetiko is evident in profit-first approaches, fear-based marketing, dehumanizing employees, and wealth disparity.
9. Wetiko affects everyday business scenarios, perpetuated by individuals unaware of its influence.
10. The price of Wetiko includes rising chronic disorders, anxiety, burnout, depression, addiction, and youth suicide due to a culture of separation.

Before WETIKO

According to Steve Taylor and various researchers, the Unfallen people, as described in Taylor's book "The Fall," lived in a state of peace, cooperation, and harmony, which stands in stark contrast to later times marked by the "Ego Explosion." Delving into the key characteristics of the Unfallen people provides a glimpse into what a peaceful and harmonious human existence could look like:

1. Spiritual Connection with Nature:
The Unfallen people harbored a profound spiritual connection with nature. They saw a sacred force animating everything within it – the land, animals, and plants. This reverence for nature was integral to their lifestyle, as they lived in balance with its rhythms and laws. This spiritual bond likely played a crucial role in nurturing their peaceful disposition and respect for all living beings, discouraging harm and violence.

2. Community and Cooperation:
As beautifully illustrated in a story borrowed from Dr. Mate Gabor about a Lakota community, these societies saw illness not just as an individual's burden but as a reflection of a larger dysfunction within the community. They believed in the interconnectedness of all beings and saw healing as a collective responsibility. "Your illness represents some dysfunction in our whole community... So your healing is our healing. How can we support you?" This perspective underscores a deep sense of community and cooperation, where mutual support and shared experiences were central.

3. Peaceful and Nonviolent:
The Unfallen people were inherently peaceful, shunning violence, including war and violent crime. Early human societies, as evidenced, did not exhibit tendencies for violence against one another. The absence of dominance and power struggles, common precursors to violence, marked their way of life, leading to communities free from the conflicts and violence seen in later societies.

4. Egalitarianism and Equality:
In these societies, there were no social divisions, class structures, or social inequalities. They did not feel the need to control nature or other people. The later emergence of dominance, violence, and hierarchy was absent in the Unfallen era. Gender equality was a norm, with women holding roles of equal significance to men, and property often passed through the female line. Children were not subjected to the strict controls seen in modern societies, and all aspects of nature were treated with equal respect.

5. No Need for Leaders:
In Unfallen societies, the conventional concept of leaders was likely unnecessary. Decision-making processes were probably based on collective wisdom and consensus, reflecting their egalitarian and cooperative values.

6. No Shame of the Body:
The Unfallen people did not experience shame, disgust, or hostility towards the natural functions of the body. They embraced their bodily impulses without repression, contributing to their overall well-being and harmony with nature. This acceptance starkly contrasts with the body shame and sexual repression prevalent in modern societies. The repression of natural bodily impulses often leads to violence and a disconnection from the wisdom of the body. It's not surprising that the repression of an organism's natural impulses coincides with the oppression and exploitation of fellow human beings and efforts to dominate and commodify nature.

The Unfallen era, as depicted by Taylor, serves as an inspiring example of what human societies could achieve in terms of peace, cooperation, and harmony with nature. Their way of life underscores the potential for a human existence that is deeply connected to nature, community-oriented, egalitarian, peaceful, and accepting of the natural human body and its functions.
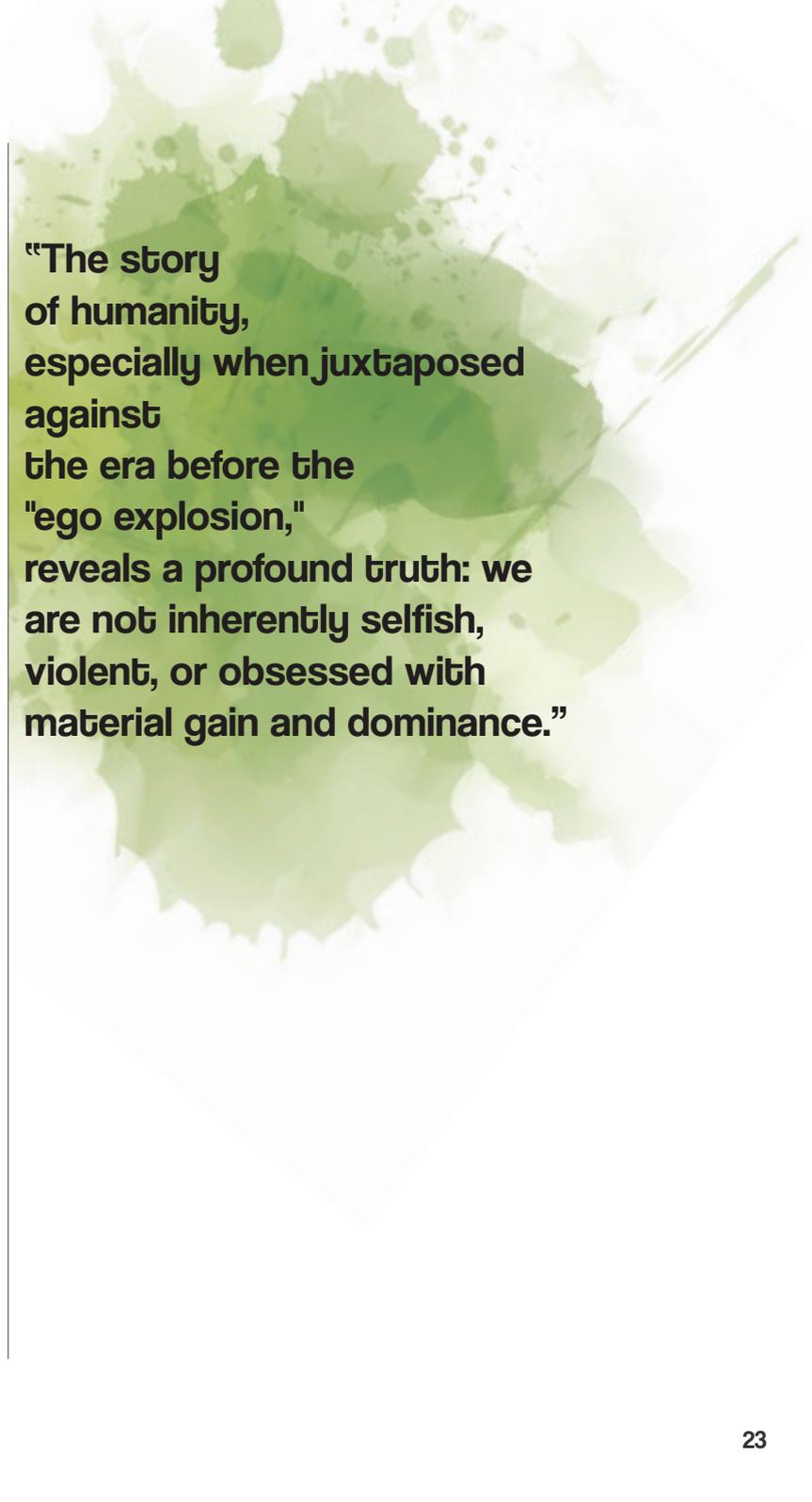
The story of humanity, especially when juxtaposed against the era before the "ego explosion," reveals a profound truth: we are not inherently selfish, violent, or obsessed with material gain and dominance. This comparison underscores our remarkable capacity to shape our world, offering a choice between crafting a heavenly existence filled with peace and harmony, or a hellish one marred by conflict and disconnection.

In our current age, despite the marvels of technological progress, we find ourselves drifting away from our core essence. This detachment isn't just from each other or the natural world, but also from the spiritual dimensions that nurture our sanity and inner peace. As a result, we grapple with chronic stress, a growing sense of selfishness, and an underlying emptiness that pervades modern life.

However, this doesn't have to be our inevitable path. There's a brighter, more hopeful choice available to us. We can step away from the pervasive victim mentality that often feels embedded in our culture. We have the power to embrace a life centered on well-being, soulful living, and positive contribution, thereby actively resisting the spread of Wetiko's negative influences.

In this endeavor, we're not merely passive participants but active creators. The essence of our choice lies not in the act of creation itself, but in what we choose to create: a world that resembles heaven in its harmony and compassion, or one that echoes hell in its strife and discord. It's a choice that speaks to the very heart of our humanity, urging us to reconnect with ourselves, with each other, and with the planet that sustains us all. In making this choice, we reclaim our power to shape a future that reflects our highest ideals and aspirations.

"The story of humanity, especially when juxtaposed against the era before the "ego explosion," reveals a profound truth: we are not inherently selfish, violent, or obsessed with material gain and dominance."

The Choice We Have

We stand at a crossroads, faced with a pivotal choice. Will we perpetuate the influence of Wetiko, contributing to the shadow that envelops our world, or will we reject being mere puppets to this force and instead journey towards a world grounded in connectivity and compassion?

It's a misconception to believe that we are solely responsible for our own well-being, independent of our surroundings. For most people in the modern world, it is nearly impossible to remain unaffected by the collective energies and the environment that envelops them. Many lack the awareness to distinguish between their true selves and the selves shaped by external influences – the conditioned self. This lack of awareness, however, doesn't strip us of the power to take responsibility and initiate change.

Our unique energetic design, encoded in our DNA and often referred to as our soul, is pivotal to this understanding. When individuals remain oblivious to this inner essence, they exhaust their energies conforming to a conditioned self. This conditioned self, shaped by societal norms, cultural expectations, and personal experiences, often obscures our authentic self – the true, innate nature of a person.

Paul Levy encapsulates this idea, noting that while Wetiko cannot control our true nature, it can manipulate the false identity it fosters within us. Falling under Wetiko's illusion leads us to identify with what we are not and dissociate from our true selves, ultimately surrendering our power. "Wetiko is powerless to control our true nature, but it can control and manipulate this false identity that it sets up within us. When we fall under the sway of Wetiko's illusion, we simultaneously identify with who we are not, while dissociating from and forgetting who we actually are—giving away our power, not to mention ourselves, in the process.

The presence of Wetiko within us is undeniable, but so is its antidote. Recognizing the interplay between external events and our inner worlds is crucial in addressing larger societal issues. Acknowledging our collective unconscious, inclusive of our darker aspects, is a vital step towards healing. This realization liberates us, instilling the belief that hope exists even in the darkest corners and that the solution lies within the problem itself. This insight guides us towards awakening and nurturing free human souls, promoting harmony and prosperity.

To authentically transform our behavior and impact, we must engage in deep personal and communal transformation – an awakening of the soul. In organizational contexts, this can be achieved through what I term 'Cultivation of Soul-Designed Organizations'.

Central to nurturing such organizations is supporting individuals in their journey of deconditioning. This process involves introspection, self-reflection, and efforts aimed at aligning one's life with their true nature and values. It's about unraveling the authentic self and learning to live in harmony with it.

Moreover, we should strive to create environments that value our shared humanity and its natural characteristics. Cultivating patience, compassion, gentleness, and mutual respect is essential not just for creativity but also for the resilience needed to face future challenges.

By engaging in this inner and external work, we contribute not only to the success of our organizations and teams but also play a crucial role in elevating the collective consciousness. Such efforts are fundamental in shaping a more harmonious and prosperous future for all.

"Will we perpetuate the influence of Wetiko, contributing to the shadow that envelops our world, or will we reject being mere puppets to this force and instead journey towards a world grounded in connectivity and compassion?"

In a Nutshell

1. The Unfallen people, as depicted in Steve Taylor's "The Fall," serve as a testament to harmonious human existence, challenging the historical narrative of violence and selfishness in human behavior.

2. Choosing a life focused on authentic well-being and doing good counters the spread of Wetiko's negative influence.

3. People are heavily influenced by collective energies and their environment, often lacking awareness of self-shielding.

4. Genuine transformation involves personal and community development, awakening the soul, and fostering soul-designed organizations.

5. Supporting individuals in their deconditioning journey through introspection is crucial for living authentically.

6. Fostering an environment valuing common humanity with qualities like patience, compassion, and mutual respect is essential for creativity and addressing challenges.

PART TWO:
Cultivating Soul-Designed Organizations

In this book, my objective is to highlight the diverse energy frequencies that not only sculpt our reality but also significantly influence our life experiences. These energies are pivotal in shaping our sense of achievement and can determine our success or failure. Ignoring or underestimating these energies, whether they are comforting or challenging, is essentially overlooking a vast wellspring of untapped creative potential within us. More so, it's akin to neglecting the essence of our humanity. A focus exclusively on the positive is an oversimplification and shows naiveté.

Today's corporate world is awash with jargon suggesting what to prioritize in our professional and personal lives. Terms like resilience, psychological safety, and positive thinking are commonplace. Yet, my encounter with these buzzwords often evokes apathy rather than interest. They seem inadequate for addressing complex challenges and sometimes feel like a forced alignment with a potentially harmful work culture.

The idea that life is an illusion and we are all interconnected, a staple of new-age spirituality, is appealing. However, we must also recognize that we live in a world of dualities: good and bad, joy and sorrow, kindness and cruelty, warmth and cold, success and failure. This binary thinking is deeply ingrained in our psyche, categorizing experiences as either pleasurable or painful.

In our modern society, we seem to be constantly chasing rewards and avoiding pain. Yet, it is vital to understand that these forces, both pleasant and unpleasant, are meaningful. They exist to spur transformation and are an intrinsic part of our being.

Rather than being mere puppets to these forces, why not learn to harness their potential? This understanding can lead to enhanced creativity, harmony, and fulfillment, not just within ourselves but in the broader world.

"The aim is to create an environment that allows individuals to tap into their soul's gifts, leveraging them to create value and fulfill the organization's mission."

What is a Soul-Designed Organization?

A soul-designed organization is far from being a cult or a "positive vibes only" movement. Instead, it is rooted in authenticity and truth. It doesn't promote one-sided spirituality characterized by superficial kindness driven by the fear of confrontation or rejection. It's not about blind compassion that avoids addressing real issues or pretending to be "holy" and eternally positive.

In a soul-designed organization, every aspect of the human experience is welcomed with open arms. Transparent and heartfelt dialogues are encouraged, all in the pursuit of truth. The goal is to bring our complete selves to the workplace, learning how to express our true selves constructively, set boundaries, and explore inner urges and soul impulses. This process helps individuals break free from their self-limiting conditioned behaviors and find their most fitting role within the larger system, whether it's a team, organization, or society.

From an organizational perspective, the aim is to create an environment that allows individuals to tap into their soul's gifts, leveraging them to create value and fulfill the organization's mission. It's about fostering an atmosphere where authenticity, truth, and the full spectrum of human experience are celebrated.

What is a Soul Anyway?

In the enigmatic journey of understanding the self, the concept of the soul emerges as a pivotal element. Bill Plotkin, in his insightful work "Soulcraft," delves into this profound question, presenting the soul as a sacred and deeply personal realm. It is likened to an acorn, embodying an intrinsic blueprint of our unique purposes and the distinct gifts we are destined to share with the world. This mystical domain of the soul is not just a passive repository of potential; it is an active, guiding force, a sacred Other, urging us to realize and embody the extraordinary roles we are meant to play in the grand tapestry of life.

The Soul: Unlike other creatures, humans possess the peculiar ability to either heed or ignore this call of the soul. This choice, often made at the crossroads of personal desires and societal expectations, defines our journey toward self-actualization. The soul, in its essence, is a repository of desires, qualities, and intentions that lie beyond the grasp of our conscious mind, beckoning us to explore depths we seldom venture into. It's a reminder that our true essence is interwoven with a unique narrative, one that is waiting to be discovered and lived. As we navigate through the layers of our being, the soul stands as a testament to our individuality, yet firmly roots us in the collective saga of human existence.

There are differences between the soul, the spirit, and the ego, which are often intertwined yet distinctly separate in their roles and essence.

The Spirit: The spirit, as Plotkin describes, is the all-encompassing Other, a vast, boundless expanse that transcends individual identity. While the soul is deeply personal and unique, the spirit represents the universal, the totality of existence, and our connection to everything that is. It invites us to experience the present moment in its fullness, to embrace our essence that is intimately linked with the universe. Unlike the soul, which is our guiding force towards a personal purpose, the spirit calls us to transcend beyond ourselves, to recognize and celebrate our oneness with all of existence.

The Ego: Then there's the ego, often misunderstood and sometimes vilified, yet an essential component of our psyche. In Plotkin's view, a healthy ego acts as an intermediary, a bridge between the soul and the spirit. It's not an adversary but a necessary agent that navigates the messages from our deep inner world (the soul) and the expansive outer universe (the spirit). The journey towards the spirit is seen as an ascent, a transcendence towards a broader understanding, while the journey inward towards the soul is a descent, delving into the depths of our inner being and unearthing the treasures hidden within.

This trinity of soul, spirit, and ego forms a complex yet harmonious structure within us. The soul, with its unique calling and personal mythos; the spirit, with its universal embrace and transcendental nature; and the ego, the mediator, balancing our ascent to universal consciousness with our descent into personal depths. Together, they weave the intricate tapestry of our existence, guiding us towards a life of fulfillment, understanding, and profound connection to both our inner selves and the world around us.

The image creatively interprets the concepts of the soul, spirit, and ego through symbolic representations:

1. The Soul: This is depicted as a unique, vibrant tree rooted deeply in the ground. The tree symbolizes personal growth and individual purpose. Hanging from its branches are various symbols like musical notes and books, representing the unique aspects and contributions of an individual's soul.

2. The Spirit: Represented by the vast, star-filled sky that transcends and encompasses the area above the tree. This symbolizes the universality and the connection to all existence. The spirit is depicted as something larger and more encompassing than the individual, illustrating its role in connecting us with the broader universe.

3. The Ego: Shown as a human figure standing between the tree (soul) and the sky (spirit). One hand of the figure touches the tree, while the other reaches towards the sky. This represents the ego's role as a mediator or bridge between the soul and the spirit. The ego is not dominant but serves to connect and balance the personal and the universal, the inner and the outer aspects of our existence.

The Soul encompasses our self-identity and is driven to lead us into deeper realms. It seeks to move beyond the superficial narratives created by the "Taker" culture, embracing authenticity and connection to nature, free from domestication. It is our non-domesticated, wild nature, rooted in the heritage of our hunter-gatherer animist ancestors who were free from the "Taker" society's mindset of isolation, domination, and hierarchy.

It's important to note that this perspective doesn't place the soul (or spirit) on a pedestal or imply that some parts of our reality are better than others. It's not about rejecting our ego; instead, it's about understanding and integrating all aspects of ourselves, allowing our ego to serve as a conduit through which our Spirit and Soul express themselves.

In summary, the essence of this understanding is that we need to embrace all parts of ourselves, including the Ego, Spirit, and our forgotten Souls, to become true Adults. It's about fostering a holistic awareness and connection with our deepest, most authentic selves.

How We Can Start Cultivating Soul-Designed Organizations?

Cultivating a soul-designed organization can become one of the most profound experiences in your life. It's not just a platform for your personal growth and freedom, but it can also be a lasting legacy.

Venturing off the beaten path might not be the easiest choice, but neither is repeating the same ineffective patterns. It's not just unrewarding; it can be detrimental to you and those around you.

Imagine stepping into your organization one day and telling your close colleagues, "Let's create a soul-designed organization!" You might get puzzled looks and concerns about your well-being. But consider this: are you truly a forward-thinking leader if you don't challenge the status quo? We all know the answer, right? Following the herd won't give you any advantage.

So, be a rebel! Be a rebel with an open heart and an open mind. Embark on a journey to discover the treasures within yourself and your team, and witness the magic unfold. Sure, the road might be uncomfortable at times, but every great story follows a similar path: from inspiration to challenge to revelation. That's what makes a good story beautiful.

The General Approach to Cultivating a Soul-Designed Organization

To cultivate Soul-designed organizations, the essential starting point is a commitment to leading with an open heart, not as some idealistic notion, but as a vital departure from the predominantly intellect-driven world we inhabit, filled with ego-driven stories often fueled by fear and a disregard for life's natural flow.

Genuine transformation, the core of SDO, hinges on opening our hearts, transcending our minds, and shifting our approach to leadership. Techniques, methodologies, or approaches can only go so far; without open hearts, true change remains elusive. The authentic spark of sustainable team spirit, meaning, connection, and the drive to create something extraordinary is ignited by deeply engaged hearts.

By aligning our leadership intentions with the creation of wholehearted environments, we unlock the magic that dismantles resistance to change, revives engagement, and banishes challenges like zombie-like attitudes, conflicts, friction, and low productivity. In SDO, we're not learning entirely new concepts; we're rediscovering what it means to be human and how to meet human needs in a wholesome manner. Playfulness, creativity, forging connections, and various beautiful traits are innate within us.

This book delves into numerous facets all intertwined with heart-centered leadership. Cultivating profound interpersonal bonds, and fostering communities rooted in care, support, laughter, and rituals naturally follow. Prioritizing physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being forms another crucial dimension. A relentless pursuit of reinvention and value creation is also integral to this paradigm and comes naturally when we do the inner work.

In summary, SDOs are vibrant communities where people support and uplift one another, collaborate creatively to overcome challenges, and simultaneously create value for all stakeholders, expanding beyond traditional clients to encompass the broader environmental context in which the organization thrives.

"To cultivate Soul-designed organizations, the essential starting point is a commitment to leading with an open heart."

Core Principles of Soul-Designed Organizations

In distilling the essence of soul-designed organizations, I focused on simplifying the concept into core principles that align with humanity's collective consciousness. Among the many possible principles, three stand out as particularly transformative and essential. These chosen principles are not only fundamental but also have the greatest potential to profoundly influence and shape these organizations.

Principle 1: Infuse every action with a commitment to healing

Years ago, in my earlier days of management, I faced a revealing moment. I was sitting across from a team member during her annual review, confident in our strong, positive work relationship. I had prided myself on being a supportive manager – regular meetings, shared decision-making, and always there to help tackle challenges.

But something was off. Just 15 minutes into our talk, she started to cry. It hit me like a bolt out of the blue. Her tears? A reflection of stress and feelings of inadequacy, all under my watch. She felt unseen, unheard – just another cog in the wheel.

At that moment, I stood at a crossroads. I could've shrugged it off, labeled her as 'too emotional,' or worse, 'difficult.' That would have been the easy path, but also the one leading to more disconnect and workplace drama.

Instead, I chose introspection. Why did she see me this way? This wasn't just about her; it was a mirror for me too. That conversation became a turning point, not just in our relationship but in how I approached leadership. It was a deep dive into understanding and empathy.

We often forget that we carry hidden wounds, echoes of our past, and sometimes even the burdens of generations before us. In our daily interactions, we can unknowingly trigger these hidden pains in others. Our words and actions hold the power to either hurt or heal.

This is why the first cornerstone of Soul-Designed Organizations is about infusing a healing intent into every interaction. It's more than just being nice; it's about genuine compassion. It's about understanding that behind every professional facade, there's a personal story, a human being with fears and hopes.

So, let's try to see our actions as opportunities to heal, not harm. It's a subtle shift in perspective, but its ripple effects can be profound. Give it a day, give it a try, and witness the transformation in your relationships and workplace dynamics.
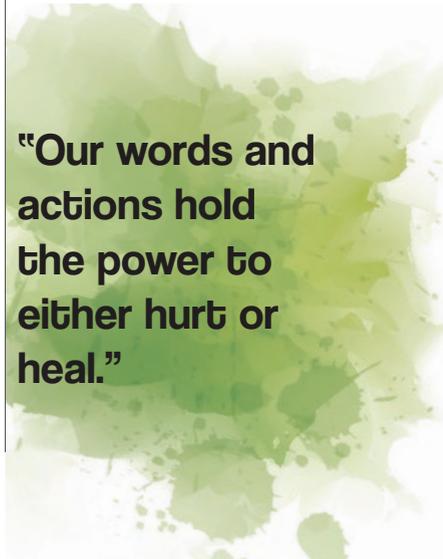
> **"Our words and actions hold the power to either hurt or heal."**

Principle 2: Address workplace drama

Have you ever heard that a spiritual person is just an ordinary one who sees beyond life's drama? This hits the nail on the head about what it means to be spiritually mature. To live from your soul is to step into true adulthood, far away from the web of drama.

Let's face it, drama is like an unwanted guest in every workplace. It's there in whispered rumors about the new boss, the gossip that spreads like wildfire, damaging more than just feelings – it can erode the very fabric of a company.

Think about it – the office politics, the hidden bullying behind closed doors, or the outright conflicts where teams become rivals instead of collaborators. It's about individuals dodging responsibility, playing the blame game, or being caught up in a whirlpool of jealousy and unhealthy competition. Sound familiar?

Sadly, what we often see are not adults, but rather children in grown-up bodies, playing out endless dramas. Being an adult isn't just about having a job or a mortgage. It's about tuning into your soul, listening to that inner voice of wisdom and truth. How many people do you know who actually live this way? Who confronts their inner truths, and faces their shadows head-on, without falling into the typical victim or persecutor roles?

Drama loves company, and it can be a vicious cycle. While getting caught up in it might feel satisfying at the moment, it drains energy from what really matters – building meaningful relationships and achieving our goals.

In a soul-designed organization, we strive for truth and genuine adulthood. It's about having the bravery to face reality and embracing our adult selves – qualities deeply rooted in our souls.

Souls don't indulge in drama; they seek truth and authenticity. They avoid 'spiritual bypassing,' a trap of ignoring the deeper issues in favor of a superficial peace.

So, if you're aiming for a more soulful, mature, and thriving workplace, start by acknowledging and tackling the drama head-on. It's a crucial step in nurturing a soul-designed organization, where drama is replaced with genuine connection, creativity, and growth.

"Sadly, what we often see are not adults, but rather children in grown-up bodies, playing out endless dramas."

Principle 3: Respect Natural Rhythms in People and Initiatives

Imagine for a moment that our workplaces are like a lush, vibrant forest. In nature, everything has its rhythm and time. Seeds don't sprout overnight, and an apple tree never tries to be an oak. This is the essence of our third principle: respecting the natural rhythms of people and projects.

Each one of us, like every tree in the forest, has our unique pace and purpose. We all have gifts, and these gifts shine brightest when we're in sync with our true nature. The key questions are: Does our work resonate with our inner self? Is our environment nurturing our creativity and allowing us to play our part in the bigger picture?

In today's fast-paced, 'get it done yesterday' world, we're often pushed and prodded into change that feels forced and unnatural. But is this the right way? Does hammering down orders or chasing after relentless deadlines really bring out the best in us?

No, what we need is a reawakening of our souls. We're born curious and creative, it's in our DNA. True progress, the kind that has propelled humanity forward, comes from this innate curiosity and creativity.

However, these qualities only truly flourish under the right conditions, when we're not being forced into a mold. It's about creating an environment where people can grow at their own pace, where their natural talents are recognized and valued, and where change is a journey, not a race.

So, in a soul-designed organization, we honor these natural rhythms. We understand that real growth and sustainable change come from respecting the uniqueness of each person and the natural flow of initiatives. It's about moving away from the 'Taker' culture, where everything is about immediate results, to a more balanced, soulful approach that values patience, understanding, and genuine progress.

"In a soul-designed organization, we honor these natural rhythms. We understand that real growth and sustainable change come from respecting the uniqueness of each person and the natural flow of initiatives."

The Essential Conditions for Cultivating a Soul-Designed Organization

To truly nurture a Soul-Designed Organization (SDO), certain fundamental conditions must be integrated into its core. These conditions, spread across four crucial areas, lay the groundwork for a transformative organizational culture:

1. Challenging the 'Taker' Society Beliefs:

The first step is a bold one – questioning the dominant beliefs of the 'Taker' society. It's about reconnecting with the wisdom of our pre-Fall ancestors and realigning our values accordingly. This shift in mindset is not just important; it's the bedrock of a soul-designed organization.

2. Fostering Individuation and Adulthood:

Encouraging each individual to fully embrace their adult self is crucial. It's about nurturing 'Real Adults' within the organization, those who can drive meaningful change and create an environment where everyone thrives. This is about growth, maturity, and the courage to be one's true self.

3. Embracing Transformation Wholeheartedly:

Whether it's personal or team transformation, it should be approached with an open heart and mind. This unwavering commitment to change is what propels the organization forward. It's a journey of continuous evolution, where every step counts.

4. Valuing the Journey Over the Destination:

It's not just about where you're going, but how you get there. The focus should be on the transformative process itself, rather than being overly attached to specific outcomes. This approach allows for organic growth and unforeseen, yet often magical, developments.

5. Unwavering Commitment to Truth:

This is about a relentless pursuit of truth and authenticity, both within oneself and in others. It's important to steer clear of 'spiritual bypassing,' a common pitfall that can impede real growth and transformation. Genuine progress comes from facing truths, however challenging they may be.

In essence, the cultivation of an SDO is a harmonious blend of these principles. It's a journey that requires courage, introspection, and a commitment to not just change, but transformative growth. These conditions are not just steps but a way of being, a path towards creating an organization where the soul, not just the mind, leads the way.
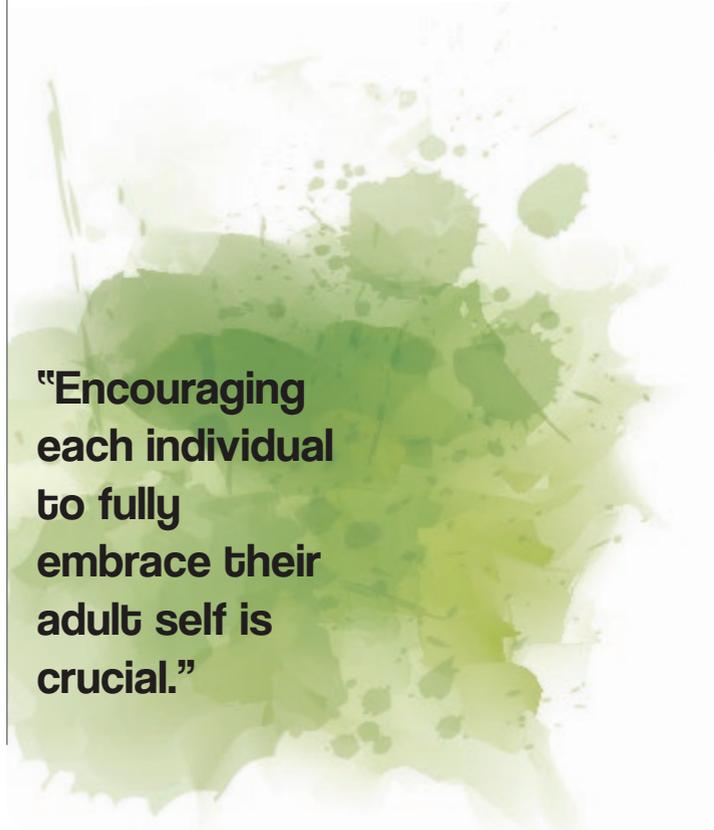
"Encouraging each individual to fully embrace their adult self is crucial."

Practices of Soul-Designed Organizations

Think of cultivating a soul-designed organization not as following a strict map, but more like an adventurous exploration. It's not a straight line. Each organization is like a living, breathing being, with its own personality and needs. What I'm sharing here are not rigid rules, but key areas to focus on and transform.

As you dive into this journey, you'll find that the biggest changes often come from who we are deep down, not just what we do. It's about constantly questioning and challenging ourselves. Are we really seeing the truth, or just what we want to see? Are we stuck in old patterns, thinking they're normal? What beliefs are holding us back, and what can we do to break free from them?

In the following pages, you'll find ideas and experiments to try out. It's all about trial and error, learning, and growing.

## The Four Pillars of Soul-Designed Organizations

In my role as a heart-centered reinvention partner, I delve deep into the realms of personal, team, and organizational transformation. True transformation, I believe, transcends mere processes and practices. It lies in the intricate tapestry of our internal dynamics – the thoughts, feelings, and soulful connections that define us.

Over the years, I've observed a striking commonality: many people, regardless of their success, struggle with a lack of self-awareness and self-love. Despite their achievements, there's often an underlying dissatisfaction with life. This led me to uncover a profound truth: a disconnection from our true essence is at the heart of much discontent.

In soul-designed organizations, we aim to bridge this gap. The goal is to create deep, meaningful connections – with ourselves and with others. It's about recognizing how shifts in our core being can dramatically reshape our environments and communities.

I've seen firsthand how compassionate, open-hearted communication can spark incredible transformation. The quality of our interactions, the depth of our empathy, they're not just social niceties – they're powerful forces for change.

Consider the power of listening, understanding, and genuine care. These acts can lead to pivotal moments in people's lives, offering solace, connection, and the courage to face inner challenges. Often, the most significant transformations begin with simple, heartfelt interactions.
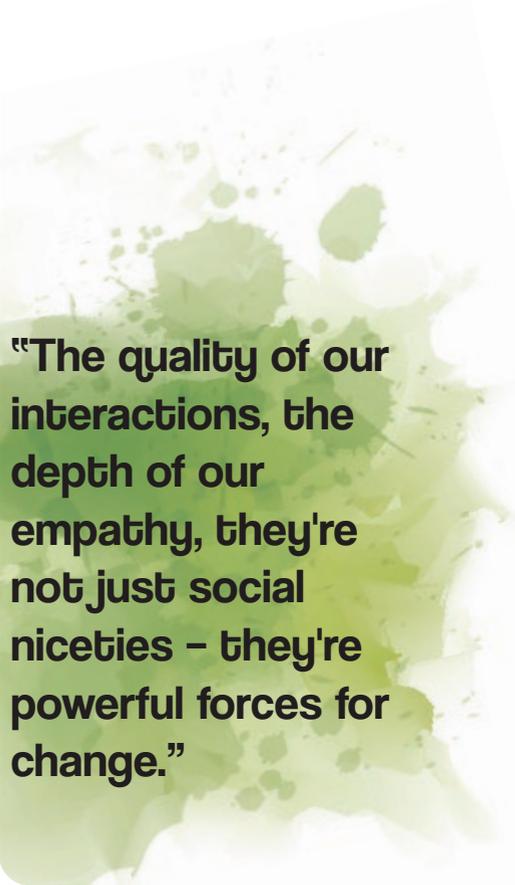
"The quality of our interactions, the depth of our empathy, they're not just social niceties – they're powerful forces for change."

The work environment is more than a backdrop for productivity; it shapes our mindset, behaviors, and perceived limitations. Environments that welcome every aspect of the human experience can ignite creativity, motivation, and well-being, providing fertile ground for growth.

In contrast, toxic or unsupportive environments can quash creativity, foster negativity, and limit potential.

To foster a soul-designed organization, I recommend focusing on four key areas, which will be detailed in the pages that follow. While it's ideal to transform all these areas, starting with the ones most resonant with your organization's current state can be equally effective.

Adopting a holistic approach to leadership and organizational development is crucial. It's about unleashing the immense potential waiting to be realized. However, this transformation is contingent upon moving beyond the confines of a 'Taker society' mindset.

By challenging existing beliefs and embracing these principles, your organization can embark on a journey toward becoming a truly soul-designed entity. Here, individuals, teams, and the collective can not only thrive but flourish in unison.

Image: The Four Pillars of Soul-Designed Organizations

HEART-CENTRED LEADERSHIP

PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

Soul-Designed Organizations

VIBRANT WORKING ENVIRONMENT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Heart-Centered Leadership

Heart-centered leadership is quite simple—it's about relationships. A heart-centered leader gets that everything revolves around relationships, and in business, it's no different. But not the sneaky kind to get ahead. It's about truly caring for people and relationships. A heart-centered leader cares more about people and their growth than just external success. It's creating situations where everyone wins, making people feel cared for and connected, and taking a real interest in their lives. A heart-centered leader trusts in the power of people and believes that when they feel connected to each other, to themselves, and to the purpose of their work, financial success follows.

Heart-centered leaders have some key qualities: humility, self-honesty, and open-mindedness. They lead from principles, values, and virtues. Everything they do comes from an emotional place, and it's genuine. To pull this off, a heart-centered leader has to truly believe in it. If they're just playing a mental game, it won't work and will feel like manipulation.

"Our souls ache for connection. It's not just a want; it's a need woven into our very being. It's in our DNA."

Traits of a Heart-Centered Leader

Here are some traits of a heart-centered leader, inspired by the book "Heart-centered Leadership: Lead well, Live well":

- Commitment to personal growth to know oneself
- Open-mindedness without judgments, but with a willingness to understand
- Letting go of fear-based ego needs like being right, the need to control, and the need for power
- Being aware of how words and actions impact others
- Taking care of oneself physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually
- Being authentic by recognizing one's own needs and the needs of others and knowing how to communicate/address them properly

Contemporary leadership is heavily influenced by the belief system of the modern Taker society. The prevailing perception of a leader is someone with power, dominance, and often charismatic traits, which may include narcissistic tendencies.

Heart-centered leadership challenges and urges a departure from this conventional view. It calls for releasing the mindset ingrained by the Taker society. The issue with the traditional perspective lies in the strong association of leadership positions with the pursuit of power. Often, the quest for power serves as a camouflage for the deeper desire to boost self-esteem and seek validation from others. This ego-driven pursuit of power can lead leaders to prioritize authority over genuine connections with people.

The journey toward Heart-centered leadership involves letting go of the Ego. Janet Hagberg, in her book Real Power, highlights that as leaders evolve, various issues may resurface, such as low self-esteem, possessiveness (protecting territory), reluctance to be vulnerable, and the belief in projecting a strong and unyielding persona. These inner barriers mirror the obstacles that hinder the connection with the heart.

The hurdles we face in leadership often reflect the hidden, less favorable parts of ourselves—the shadows. That's why personal transformation, including dealing with these shadowy aspects (we call it shadow work), is super important in creating soul-designed organizations.

Without heart-centered leadership, a soul-designed organization isn't in the cards. And for heart-centered leadership to thrive, personal transformation is a must. It's like a dance of continuous change, and leaders need to be comfortable swaying to the rhythm of transformation while on the move.

Every organization or community is a mystical playground for our personal growth. Relationships can serve as a powerful catalyst for our personal transformation. It's like they become the mirrors reflecting back our journey from a head-centric, fear-driven state to a more heart-centered, trust-filled one. It's like having a playground that not only serves our growth but also contributes to the well-being of others. Why not make the most of it?

Three Steps Towards Heart-Centered Leadership

1-Intention

It all begins with intention. If you're aiming for heart-centered leadership, make sure your intention mirrors that. This is closely tied to the first principle of soul-designed organizations: "Infuse every action with the intention of healing."

Let's delve into the example:

a) Imagine entering the room with the intention of finding a win-win solution, regardless of the challenges. Your energy exudes openness, curiosity, and a genuine interest in understanding others' perspectives. Your language and body gestures convey collaboration, empathy, and a willingness to explore mutually beneficial options. People sense your positive intention and are likely to reciprocate with cooperation and openness.

b) On the contrary, if your intention is to overpower the conversation with a need to prove your point and ensure others cannot refuse your idea, the energy you bring is likely tense and defensive. Your language and body gestures may reflect a more aggressive and assertive stance, potentially creating an adversarial atmosphere. This approach can lead to resistance, defensiveness, and a lack of genuine collaboration.

In essence, our intentions shape the energy we bring into a situation, influencing the dynamics and outcomes. Choosing a positive and collaborative intention can set the tone for constructive dialogue and the possibility of finding solutions that benefit everyone involved.

To stay committed to the intention to speak for healing and not for hurting, here's a straightforward technique: before letting your decisions, words, and actions see the light, allow them to flow through your heart area. Let the energy of your heart color your words and actions, and witness the positive impact it has on both yourself and others.

2-Focus

In my training and coaching sessions, I often observe people grappling with relationship challenges. Their primary concern is often centered around how they can manipulate or influence others to meet their expectations. This mindset resembles a childish belief that we are the center of the universe, fostering tension and revealing a deep mistrust in the natural flow of life.

A more effective approach is to shift the focus away from personal agendas and onto others. Make each conversation about the other person—seek to understand their perspective, concerns, and desires. This not only increases the likelihood of finding mutually beneficial solutions but also fosters a sense of genuine care and, consequently, a high level of trust.

"Make each conversation about the other person—seek to understand their perspective, concerns, and desires. "

3-Practice

Your communication serves as the foundation for the culture you're shaping. Every conversation you engage in contributes either to the creation of a more connected and trustworthy culture or the opposite.

The key lies in being aware of the various levels of communication. I appreciate the insights from experts like Judith Glaser and Marshall B. Rosenberg. Glaser's work emphasizes three levels of communication, with a focus on Transformational communication, while Rosenberg teaches Nonviolent Communication. Studying both approaches can enhance your communication skills, enabling you to establish deep connections with others through heart-centered communication.

Becoming a professional coach is another excellent approach. Professional coaching offers a transformative communication style that can significantly enhance your ability to lead conversations successfully. Moreover, it can personally support your development, guiding you toward leading and living a more heart-centered life.

Techniques are tools in the toolbox, but the driving force behind them, the intention, is what gives them true power. It's like having a beautifully crafted guitar, but without the musician's passion, it remains silent. The heartfelt intention is the melody that brings the techniques to life, creating a meaningful impact.

"Techniques are tools in the toolbox, but the driving force behind them, the intention, is what gives them true power. "

Community Development

Our souls ache for connection. It's not just a want; it's a need woven into our very being. It's in our DNA. For most of our human story, we thrived in tribes, deeply connected to each other and the world around us. But look at us now!

The loneliness epidemic highlights this heartbreaking paradox. Despite our high-tech society, we've lost touch with our souls and genuine connections. People globally feel isolated, not just from personal contact, but from real, meaningful bonds.

This epidemic is another facet of the Taker society. It champions individualism, feeds us with self-sufficiency notions, and claims we're each solely responsible for our well-being. These toxic ideas give rise to our lonely world.

Loneliness is a dark disease! It's a reason for premature deaths and numerous health issues. It's a call for change. But here's the twist: it's also a monumental chance for businesses. Imagine the heaven you could build! A place where mutual respect, profound ties, and unwavering trust reign, where everyone seeks the greater good, evolving through soul-driven work and relationships.

This place would be a symphony of hearts, where authenticity isn't awkward but applauded. Creating such a space unleashes boundless potential – energy, passion, loyalty, and creativity would flow endlessly, a wellspring of resilience and strength.

A deeply connected community is built on trust, open communication, and shared values. It thrives on genuine care, mutual respect, and a sense of belonging among its members. People in this community feel heard, supported, and accepted for who they are, fostering a sense of safety and understanding. Collaboration and cooperation are at the core, where everyone's contributions are valued and acknowledged. Emotional connections run deep, creating a network where individuals can express themselves freely without fear of judgment. This sense of unity transcends individual interests, promoting the well-being of the collective.

In a deeply connected community, conflicts are recognized as a natural part of interactions. However, these conflicts are not seen as disruptive but are embraced as opportunities for deeper connection and a creative search for solutions. They are viewed as chances for growth, mutual understanding, and the enhancement of relationships, contributing to the community's resilience and adaptability.

Communities with such deep connections often emerge when individuals consciously embrace their adulthood. This transition involves a shift from ego-driven behaviors to a more soul-centered existence, encouraging responsibility, compassion, and an understanding of interconnectedness. It's this intentional and mature approach that fosters the creation and sustainability of deeply connected communities.

Dunbar's Number

It's valuable to reflect on your organization and its size. When striving to create a community, keep in mind that, according to Robin Dunbar, the maximum number of people conducive to fostering a community is up to 150.

Dunbar's number, proposed by anthropologist Robin Dunbar, suggests that there's a cognitive limit to how many stable social relationships one can maintain. This number, around 150, is based on correlations between primate brain size and average social group size. The theory is rooted in the idea that brain size directly influences the number of stable relationships a person can maintain comfortably. It's informally described as the number of people you'd feel fine joining uninvited for a drink if you bumped into them at a bar. This limit extends to past colleagues or friends you'd want to reacquaint yourself with. Groups larger than this might need more rules to stay cohesive. The number's range is thought to be between 100 and 250, with the common value set at around 150.

It's essential then to consider your organizational structure and how people can be arranged in a manner that enables them to form meaningful connections with others.

Three Approaches to Cultivating Such a Community

1-Values system

Understanding and living by our values is integral to our lives, whether we're conscious of them or not. While some values are apparent, others operate beneath the surface, influencing our thoughts and actions without our full awareness. Knowing our values is important, but understanding the driving force behind them is even more crucial.

Consider the value of respect. Many people assert that it's among their top relational values, expecting mutual respect in their interactions. However, upon deeper inspection, various motivations can come to light. When someone demands respect or feels others are disrespectful, it may reflect their own lack of self-respect or an unmet need for acceptance. This could even manifest as an expectation for compliance, misconstrued as respect. Fear often underlies these behaviors.

On the other hand, a genuine aspiration for respect might stem from a deep understanding of accountability—acknowledging the impact of our words, actions, and emotions while considering the needs of all involved.

Simply stating our values doesn't uncover the full story; they are reflective of our underlying needs. It's essential to probe deeper and examine the motivations behind our values. Are they rooted in self-protection, the desire for control or power, or are they driven by a genuine commitment to the common good?

Recognizing and understanding the motivations

behind our values is crucial. It allows a profound understanding of the forces guiding our decisions and actions. Such self-awareness is the cornerstone of conscious actions.

Creating a community centered on trust and accountability involves deep discussions about needs and values. This initial step is essential for individuals to recognize the motivations behind their attitudes. Unfortunately, many companies take a superficial approach to defining their values, often disconnected from their true essence.

It's far better to avoid defining values if there's no sincere commitment to invest time, effort, and align practices accordingly. Simply listing values might seem easy, but the real issue emerges when there's no follow-through in implementing these values. In such cases, values become empty words and are often mocked.

If you want to create soul-designed communities, you need to develop a value system that reflects the needs of all stakeholders, but most importantly the employees. Through deep dialogues, we need to understand which values are actually rooted in fear and which values are our higher aspirations, the echo of our souls.

> **"Creating a community centered on trust and accountability involves deep discussions about needs and values."**

Why should you do that?

1. Values rooted in fear sooner or later can create dysfunction. When you know them and understand the ego fears of your employees (yourself included), you can take two actions: First, you can develop measurements on a team/company level to prevent fear from dominating the show, like a fair compensation system developed with employees. Secondly, you can support people in dealing with their fear-based motivations so they can understand themselves better and learn how to manage their fears without letting them act out.

2. Values rooted in the common good serve as a compass for decision-making. At times, values appear to be contradictory, such as employee well-being and efficiency. It's crucial to address these paradoxical values so that daily decisions don't exclude one value in favor of another. This demands more creative and inclusive ways of thinking from everyone involved.

3. Defined value systems are crucial in setting boundaries. Clearly communicating what is unacceptable in your team or company and what behaviors are strictly prohibited helps shape the company culture. It goes beyond mere behavioral demands; it's about instilling a shared understanding of what is unacceptable and addressing any deviations from those values through dialogue. These conversations build awareness, foster heartfelt and open dialogues, and encourage individuals to take responsibility for themselves.

Your values are the standards of your attitudes and who you are. They are challenged daily, as it's not always easy to live by our standards, especially when fear kicks in.

But without a commonly agreed standard of who you are as a community and embedding these standards into everyday work and processes, you're at the mercy of everyone's subconscious fears and desires. This lack of clarity is the root cause of workplace drama (think of the Karpman triangle).

For a values system to work, it needs to be rooted in the intention of genuine care and a willingness to live the values daily. It's an ongoing inquiry, learning, and part of daily life.

Additionally, it shouldn't be something separate from the business. It's an integral part of the business and can be as simple as using the values in every meeting. You can bring awareness of the commonly agreed values into meetings by asking just two questions:

- Do our decisions reflect our values and in what way?

- How successful were we in this meeting in expressing our values through our communication and the way we conducted the meeting?

This approach is characteristic of heart-centered leaders. They prioritize integrating values, fostering genuine care, and embodying these values daily as a fundamental part of their leadership style.

2-Relationships

In nurturing a soul-designed organization, personal development stands as a fundamental pillar. A key facet of this development is facilitating how individuals engage with one another. My experiences across numerous companies reveal a widespread lack of skills and awareness in fostering healthy relationships.

Essential skills like articulating needs calmly, addressing breaches in mutual agreements with respect, resolving conflicts constructively, or even managing underperformance are often deficient. When these conversations aren't approached due to unpreparedness and fear, the issues deepen rather than dissipate. Sooner or later, they escalate.

Moreover, individuals lack expertise in offering support, requesting assistance, establishing boundaries, and organizing team efforts. This skill gap often leads to workplace drama. Evading essential conversations allows underlying tensions to escalate, inviting disruptive forces like "wetiko" to wreak havoc.

Hence, investing significantly in not only training and coaching but also establishing daily practices that permit open reflection, expression of concerns, and on-the-go learning opportunities. These endeavors enhance individuals' confidence in consciously steering relationships, not just fostering higher productivity, but also facilitating personal growth.

"My experiences across numerous companies reveal a widespread lack of skills and awareness in fostering healthy relationships."

3-Spiritual Practices

I would like to share Steve Taylor's research findings, which reveal the most common triggers for transcendent experiences. These experiences, highly sought after by spiritual practitioners, occur when individuals feel a sense of connection beyond themselves.

Taylor's research shows that while spiritual practices like meditation trigger these experiences 22% of the time, other activities are often more effective. This includes the process of deconstructing our old self or aspects of it (a part of shadow work), and connecting with nature, which is the most successful trigger. Other activities like dancing, listening to music, engaging in sexual activity, or using drugs can also induce transcendent experiences.

What's fascinating is that while we often regard these experiences as extraordinary, they are in fact deeply human and were a commonplace aspect of the lives of hunter-gatherer societies. This highlights how modern life has led us to lose touch with integral elements of our existence, such as the soul, spirit, and nature, to the point where reconnection with these forces is perceived as extraordinary.

Transcendent experiences offer numerous benefits, both psychologically and spiritually, which can profoundly impact an individual's life. Some of these benefits include:

1. **Enhanced Well-being:** Individuals often report a heightened sense of well-being and inner peace following transcendent experiences. This can lead to reduced stress, anxiety, and depression.

2. **Increased Empathy and Compassion:** Experiencing a sense of oneness with others can enhance empathy and compassion, improving interpersonal relationships and fostering a sense of community.

3. **Greater Self-Awareness:** These experiences can lead to deeper self-reflection and understanding, allowing individuals to gain insights into their own behaviors, thoughts, and emotions.

4. **Sense of Connectedness:** Transcendent experiences often involve a feeling of connection with something larger than oneself, whether it's nature, humanity, or the universe. This can reduce feelings of isolation and increase a sense of belonging.

5. **Spiritual Growth:** For many, these experiences contribute to spiritual exploration and growth, helping to refine or redefine their beliefs and values.

6. **Perspective Shift:** Experiencing transcendence can alter one's perspective on life, leading to a greater appreciation for the present moment and a reassessment of what is truly important.

7. **Creativity Boost:** Such experiences can stimulate creativity, inspiring new ideas and novel ways of thinking.

8. **Resilience Building:** The inner strength and peace gained from these experiences can enhance resilience, helping individuals cope with life's challenges more effectively.

9. **Altered States of Consciousness:** These experiences can provide insights that are not usually accessible in normal states of consciousness, offering unique and potentially transformative perspectives.

Transcendent experiences are essential to our well-being and can significantly enhance creativity, well-being, and value creation in a business context. Therefore, it makes sense to encourage spiritual practices such as meditation, mindfulness, yoga, spending time in nature, reading and studying spiritual text, spiritual retreats, art and creativity etc.

The integration of these activities into your routine depends solely on your creativity and the interests of those involved. However, it's crucial to not only discuss their significance but also to actively participate in them yourself. This demonstrates commitment and sets a positive example.

"Transcendent experiences are essential to our well-being and can significantly enhance creativity, well-being, and value creation in a business context."

Personal Transformation

Ah, the heart of a soul-designed organization: personal transformation. What a beautiful notion! I'm quite certain that as many people as there are, there are equally varied definitions of what these two words encompass. So, let's pinpoint what they signify specifically within the context of soul-designed organizations.

As you've journeyed through this book, you might have noticed my use of words like "soul," "shadow," "domestication," "conditioning," "true self," and "authentic." They all converge at the heart of the definition of personal transformation. They speak to its essence.

At its core, personal transformation isn't about adding to or enhancing ourselves in any manner. It's more like peeling layers of an onion.

We're born with a unique DNA blueprint that encapsulates our potential. However, this potential is significantly shaped by our ancestors, the society we're part of, our upbringing, and the myriad environments that envelop us. We're an amalgamation of different energies influencing our moods, thoughts, emotions, and actions.

In the realm of personal transformation, the crux is to discern which of these energies emanate directly from our soul, which are imprinted upon us, and then acknowledge and subsequently work with all of them—the good, the bad, and the less desirable.

The objective of personal transformation always leads to some form of liberation, resulting in distinct and beneficial actions in service to the whole—ourselves, our communities, and the world at large.

Personal transformation isn't a pursuit merely to feel better. It's not about seeking someone or something to rescue us, as no external force possesses such power. It's not seeking refuge in spiritual, religious, or any other ideologies just to alleviate the pressure we feel. It's not about excessive meditation, strict diets, sheer will, or discipline.

Personal transformation begins with facing every facet of ourselves, allowing them to be, accepting them, and ultimately integrating all our parts. It involves learning to manage these different facets and later releasing those that don't serve us or others. Subsequently, it's about aligning decisions with what remains—our soul. Then, the cycle begins anew.

This journey of personal transformation is lifelong. It should be gentle, patient, and heartfelt. It's an incredibly courageous journey.

"Personal transformation begins with facing every facet of ourselves, allowing them to be, accepting them, and ultimately integrating all our parts."

How to Initiate Personal Transformation?

If you're aiming to foster a passionate and resilient team or organization, emphasizing and affirming a commitment to comprehensive personal development within your sphere of influence is key. Creating a secure and open environment is crucial, and leaders' dedication to personal development is the most rapid and effective method to establish such a setting.

Initiating this could take many forms. Here are a few suggestions to consider:

1-Leadership Development

Regardless of where you stand in your personal development journey, what truly matters is recognizing the profound influence you have as a leader or any figure of authority shaping the environment and culture within your team or company. If you seek to make this influence transformative, the path to achieving that is by embodying a Transformational leadership style. Yet, becoming this leader demands your dedication to the path of transformation. Without that commitment, you risk being bound to your habitual modes of thinking, feeling, and acting, effectively becoming a captive of your own limitations.

True personal transformation requires being an "open system" rather than a closed one. While it might feel vulnerable, growth seldom happens without vulnerability. I'm sure you understand this well in the business realm. Seeking breakthrough results rarely comes from playing it safe. It involves taking calculated risks or sometimes simply taking a leap. Risks are still risks, but they often lead to innovation and progress.

As a leader, you have the privilege and responsibility to set the stage for personal development. Without your personal commitment and communication, it's challenging to foster effective personal development within your company.

There are multiple leadership development approaches out there—some incredibly beneficial, others not so much, and some that contradict the principles of soul-designed organizations. When selecting a leadership development approach for yourself or your team, ensure it isn't confined to a singular methodology or provided by individuals who haven't devoted themselves to ongoing transformation.

What should you keep an eye out for when seeking the right approach to leadership development?

- Instant results or promises of quick fixes should set off alarms. True personal development is a lifelong journey, not a sprint to the finish line.

- Avoid programs fixated on one idea or concept—those honing in solely on strengths, categorizing personalities, or revolving around positive psychology. Diversity in approach is key.

- The absence of real-life, on-the-job assignments should make you skeptical. Practical application and experience solidify your learning and drive it home.

- Be cautious of approaches solely reliant on tools and techniques; these often have limited value and may end up being used manipulatively. Embrace the need to expand consciousness for different and lasting results.

- Assessments can be helpful but not if they lead to self-judgment or excuses. They should encourage constructive dialogue and support development, focusing on attitudes or energy levels instead of fixed personalities.

- Look for leadership development programs that involve individual coaching sessions, enabling safe exploration of shadow aspects. Choose your coaching professionals carefully.

- Educate yourself and your team on deeper psychological content, understanding concepts like ego, its mechanisms, and needs.

- Seek an approach that encompasses the whole person—mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects. Incorporating bodywork can be invaluable, tapping into the wisdom and memory contained within our bodies.

- Personalize the approach. Share your concerns, fears, and aspirations with both the service provider(s) and your team. Engaging in this dialogue initiates the personal transformation journey.

"Progress in personal transformation isn't about becoming something "more." It's more about deconstructing the existing self to realign decisions and actions with your genuine essence, your soul. "

Leadership development within soul-designed organizations is a profound commitment. Leaders wield significant influence over others and the collective culture they inhabit. Embracing the path toward soul-designed organizations means investing in your personal growth and that of others. This journey isn't all sunshine and roses; it's about unraveling our true nature and aligning our decisions with our core being.

Progress in personal transformation isn't about becoming something "more." It's more about deconstructing the existing self to realign decisions and actions with your genuine essence, your soul. Signs of progress often emerge when you find yourself feeling a bit lost (not to the point of dysfunction, though—seeking professional coaching or psychotherapy is very recommended). As your conditioned ego falls apart, making way for a more authentic self, you enter a learning phase, where insecurities arise, and mastery might seem a distant goal.

Remember, personal development requires a gentle, compassionate approach. This journey, when approached with tenderness, reveals its playful and rewarding nature.

2-Individuation

In soul-designed organizations, aspiring to Adulthood is a fundamental aim. Today's society doesn't present a formal initiation into Adulthood; we find ourselves navigating this territory on our own.

We may assume we've entered adulthood based on typical societal milestones—finishing school, starting a job, having a family, and managing daily responsibilities. Even if we resist the conventional paths, we might still be avoiding true Adulthood. Instead, we tend to replay conditioned behaviors, seeking distractions when life gets challenging, be it through work, pleasures, or even excessive stimulation.

Some might perceive themselves as decent or rational beings, with an image to maintain or strong opinions to uphold, but this doesn't equate to being an adult.

To truly embrace Adulthood, it's about becoming an individuated and highly conscious being, intimately aware of our inner and outer worlds. It involves recognizing our complete self, including shadows and gifts, and understanding our interconnectedness with others and everything around us. This awareness enables us to consider others' needs and the environment, fostering responsibility and deeper connections.

Initiating Adulthood in the workplace could transform dynamics—dramas would dissipate, individuals would take responsibility for both themselves and collective achievements, and relationships would thrive as sources of inspiration and connection.

Humanity seems poised for this transition, craving a more meaningful existence. The quest for purpose and meaning may end when we unearth our buried souls, leading to a more natural emergence of these elements in our lives.

So, what does individuating mean?

The individuation process, as conceptualized by Carl Jung, refers to the psychological journey toward self-realization and wholeness. It's about integrating all aspects of one's personality, both the conscious and unconscious elements, to become a fully realized individual.

The process of individuation involves becoming aware of different components of a person, acknowledging and reconciling the conflicts and tensions within oneself. This includes recognizing and integrating the shadow elements—those parts of ourselves that we tend to reject or deny—into our conscious personality.

By confronting and acknowledging these hidden aspects of the self, one can achieve a more balanced and harmonious integration of their personality.

Ultimately, the goal of individuation is to move towards a state of psychological wholeness, embracing all facets of oneself and achieving a sense of inner balance and fulfillment.

Take a moment to visualize a world where a significantly higher number of people radiate inner balance and fulfillment. How might this transformation impact your business?

How can companies support people in their individuating process?

Maybe you're among those who argue that managers aren't responsible for handling psychological issues or that business isn't meant to be a form of psychotherapy. I confess I held the same belief many years ago, and I rarely encountered managers who didn't share this view.

But denying the facts won't change the reality we face. Society tends to draw out the worst in people in far too many situations, often without them realizing that life could be different—that it doesn't have to be a constant struggle, competition and fight.

It's pretty straightforward. If you aim for a better life for yourself and wish the same for others, that's reason enough to incorporate deep personal work into your team or company. It's not just a good deed; it's the beginning of a revolution in how companies are led. Eventually, when the hidden potential is unlocked, your business will thrive.

Introducing the individuation process or the initiation into Adulthood can be one of the most beneficial steps you take within your current developmental efforts. The return on investment is guaranteed.

How do you embark on this transformative journey?

Initially, expecting most people to immediately embrace this concept might be a bit naive, but patience will be rewarded.

For our Western mindset, education often serves as the starting point. The ego yearns for understanding. Consider a series of lectures or basic training sessions on topics like ego dynamics or brain functionality to ignite curiosity. Gradually, integrating support groups led by a coach or therapist can allow people to explore their patterns and address personal issues. Investing in team or individual coaching, especially tailored to enhance interpersonal relationships, can yield significant benefits. Workshops on setting boundaries, recognizing fear-based beliefs, and addressing the inner critic can work wonders. Teaching constructive self-expression of one's needs can act as a gateway to deeper inner work.

As momentum grows, more profound and spiritual elements can be introduced. This might involve delving deeper into levels of consciousness, introducing the soul aspect, helping individuals connect with themselves through body therapy (our bodies crave for the soul), exploring shadow work, and learning to attune to their soul's voice.

It's crucial to initiate discussions about your intentions. Conversations about ego, soul (or our authentic gifts, if the term "soul" triggers discomfort), shadow work, our shared pains to some extent, and making everyone acquainted and comfortable with these terminologies is key.

One of the primary objectives is to prepare as many individuals as possible to embark on shadow work. That's where the magic unfolds! Shadow work

involves recognizing and acknowledging the neglected parts within ourselves, those facets we don't feel comfortable with, and then transforming them into gifts. Within every shadow lies a gift, our soul's expression. It's akin to unearthing a diamond from the depths of the earth.

This entire process is about delving into the pain rather than skirting around it, a key element in spiritual bypassing. Initially, it's not the most pleasant journey, but having a supportive environment within our living and working spaces makes it far more manageable and effective. It's essentially about the liberation of an enormous amount of energy that we typically use to conceal our neglected aspects from both others and ourselves.
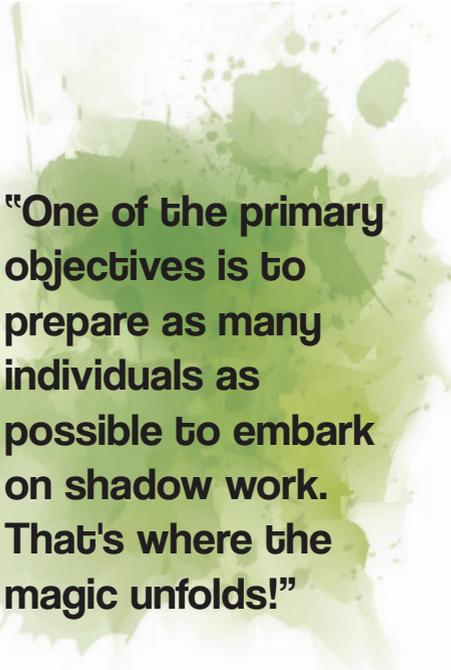
"One of the primary objectives is to prepare as many individuals as possible to embark on shadow work. That's where the magic unfolds!"

Let's consider an example

Suppose you've internalized an unconscious belief that you're not smart enough. This belief likely stems from a coping mechanism to avoid the pain of feeling inadequate, often rooted in childhood experiences. You strive to achieve multiple degrees, possibly even earning a PhD. You might start regarding those without similar credentials as inferior or idolizing individuals with similar qualifications, saying something like, "They know the answer; they have a PhD."

Despite all these accomplishments and accolades, you'll find that a persistent sense of dissatisfaction remains.

These feelings of inadequacy can manifest in your behavior. You might be overly insistent on having the last word in a debate, resisting any views contrary to your own. Or, in moments of uncertainty, you might refrain from sharing your concerns or insights, avoiding asking for help even when you know others could provide valuable input. This can lead to criticizing others or belittling them for their mistakes or lack of knowledge.

Consider the energy spent concealing these perceived "flaws" from others and from yourself. How many opportunities are missed because of this energy invested in unproductive blaming and shaming yourself or others?

When you're prepared to confront this shadow, remarkable transformations can occur. You might develop a genuine compassion for those who share similar shadows or for those who require additional time and effort to learn. You'll display a sincere interest in others' perspectives, earning trust and respect in return, even stepping into a mentoring role. Most importantly, you'll feel at ease, no longer compelled to defend your views or protect your self-image. The release of this energy is transformative – imagine how freeing that would be!

It's in this state of being that you're truly living from the foundation of your soul. You become compassionate and supportive, abandoning the need for dominance, and instead, embracing equality and understanding with others. You could tap into boundless creativity, mastering the art of channeling self-doubt into collaborative brainstorming and exploring numerous alternatives with your unique perspective.

And the best part is, you'd have a surplus of energy available! Engaging in shadow work significantly contributes to our well-being at work. It truly is the path to expressing our soul. We need to go into the dark to bring our souls to consciousness.

Remember, our soul isn't some abstract concept floating above or below us. It's our core essence, something we were born with but often forget because it wasn't nurtured during our upbringing.

Note:

Read also the concept of spiritual bypassing to prevent inadvertently falling into its trap.

3-Soulful Job Design

This book primarily delves into the relational, psychological, and cultural aspects involved in cultivating soul-designed organizations. While the organizational design isn't the sole focus, its importance cannot be understated. For a soul-designed organization to truly thrive, we must also consider how we structure our teams, the hierarchical arrangements, and the processes that shape the company's systems.

Here, let's talk about job design. Often, we're slotted into specific roles with definitive professional titles. It seems organized and structured, but it's a colossal waste of human potential! When hiring for a particular skill set, we're not recruiting automatons; we're welcoming living, evolving beings. Regardless of awareness, there's an inherent force within us, driving our growth—age, occupation, and conditioning notwithstanding.

When individuals lack a higher purpose that ignites their passion or serves a deep curiosity, you're bound to witness drama. Energy needs a direction! So why not tap into this awareness and create roles that are more fluid, allowing people to explore, experiment, and see the possibilities for learning, playing, and creating value in myriad ways?
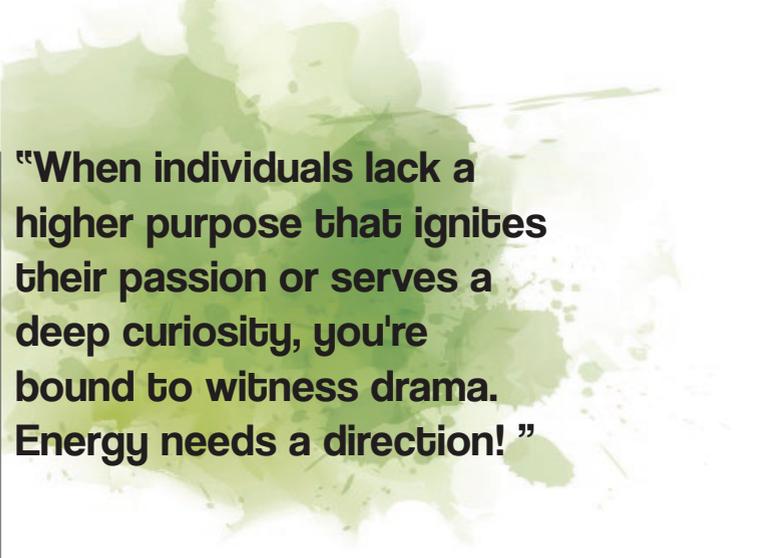
"When individuals lack a higher purpose that ignites their passion or serves a deep curiosity, you're bound to witness drama. Energy needs a direction! "

People yearn to express themselves

In my personal experience, I've traversed five entirely different careers. From sales to a brief stint as an executive assistant, then transitioning to HR and later briefly exploring marketing, moving into business development, and finally, embarking on the path of a solopreneur. My journey is consistently evolving in alignment with my deconditioning process and arising interests.

For me, being stuck in the same role for years is akin to stagnation. It's the same for countless others. People yearn to express themselves. When they can't do so at work, they often channel that energy into activities outside of work. Unable to express or explore, they resort to endless distractions: excessive indulgences or binge-watching series on platforms like Netflix.

Many individuals settle for less because that's what they've been conditioned to accept. Yet, companies have a tremendous opportunity here—to invigorate, support, and encourage their teams to explore new paths. Playing it safe isn't playing it safe at all; it's simply playing it safe to stagnate, to suffocate the spirit of growth and evolution.

Craft job roles around an individual's passions and dreams

Formulate with them a vision of who someone could evolve into. This type of motivation is unparalleled. To achieve this, we must excel in transformational conversations—those deeply personal dialogues that explore beneath the surface. Furthermore, guiding individuals to uncover their latent interests, possibly with the aid of a coach, is a valuable step.

Provide numerous safe opportunities for individuals to stretch beyond their comfort zones. Offer chances to assist on projects aligned with their interests, assign stretch assignments, involve them in strategy discussions, and inquire about their desired roles and how to support their exploration of something new.

In essence, be inventive in supporting individuals to break free from monotonous work. Through multiple experiments and learning experiences, individuals will accumulate more knowledge, understanding what truly suits them and identifying areas that demand further professional development. True self-awareness comes from direct experience.

There is no development without novel experiences

Consider this example. Why not transition an HR expert into a sales position or allow them to shadow their sales colleagues? Such an approach could deepen HR's comprehension of the challenges faced by the sales team, leading to more effective support. It might even uncover a natural sales aptitude within the HR individual due to their exceptional people skills.

This is just a straightforward example, but the potential is limitless. The essence is in creating a space that doesn't confine individuals by their professional roles but rather fosters an environment for exploration, learning, and diverse self-expression. This shift is achievable in any company provided there's a willingness to challenge the status quo and experiment with diverse approaches.

This approach enlivens the workplace, creating a multifaceted environment for diverse experiences and learning while offering avenues for collaboration and self-expression.

In the realm of soul-designed organizations, encountering our shadow selves often arises when faced with novel experiences. These challenges allow us to see and accept these hidden aspects of ourselves, unlike when we're stuck in a routine, doing the same things each day.

SPIRITUAL BYPASSING

What I notice is occurring today and is also becoming a huge market is so-called spiritual bypassing. I strongly recommend a great book on this topic "Spiritual bypassing" by Robert Augustus Masters. Below I quote the author.

"Spiritual bypassing, a term first coined by psychologist John Welwood, is the use of spiritual practices and beliefs to avoid dealing with our painful feelings, unresolved wounds, and developmental needs. It is much more common than we might think and, in fact, is so pervasive as to go largely unnoticed, except in its more obvious extremes.

Part of the reason for this is that we tend not to have very much tolerance, either personally or collectively, for facing, entering, and working through our pain, strongly preferring pain-numbing "solutions", regardless of how much suffering such "remedies" may catalyze. Because this preference has so deeply and thoroughly infiltrated our culture that it has become all but normalized, spiritual bypassing fits almost seamlessly into our collective habit of turning away from what is painful, as a kind of higher analgesic with seemingly minimal side effects.

Spiritual bypassing is a very persistent shadow of spirituality, manifesting in many forms, often without being acknowledged as such. Aspects of spiritual bypassing include exaggerated detachment, emotional numbing and repression, overemphasis on the positive, anger-phobia, blind or overly tolerant compassion, weak or too porous boundaries, lopsided development (cognitive intelligence often being far ahead of emotional and moral intelligence), debilitating judgments about one's negativity or shadow side, devaluation of the personal relative to the spiritual, and delusions of having arrived at a higher level of being. (…) It has been easier to frame spiritual bypassing as a religion-transcending, spiritually advanced practice or perspective, especially in the fast-food spirituality epitomized by faddish phenomena like The Secret. Some of the more glaringly facile features, such as drive-through servings of reheated wisdom like "Don't take it personally" or "Whatever bothers you about someone is really about you" or "It's all just an illusion", are available for consumption and parroting by just about anyone.

Spiritual bypassing is largely occupied, at least in its New Age forms, by the idea of wholeness and the innate unity of Being – "Oneness" being perhaps its favorite bumper sticker – but actually generates and reinforces fragmentation by separating out from and rejecting what is painful, distressed, and unhealed; all the far-from-flattering aspects of being human. By consistently keeping these in the dark, "down below" (when we're locked into our headquarters, our bodies and feelings seem to be below us), they tend to behave badly when let out, much like animals that have spent too long in cages.

The trappings of spiritual bypassing can look good, particularly when they seem to promise freedom from life's fuss and fury, but this supposed serenity and detachment is often little more than metaphysical valium, especially for those who have made too much of a virtue out of being and looking positive."

These sentences, also from the book, are crucial to remember when trying to live in accordance with our soul:

"True spirituality is not a high, not a rush, not an altered state."

"Most of the time when we're immersed in spiritual bypassing, we like the light but not the heat. If we really want the light, we cannot afford to flee the heat."

"Any spiritual path, Eastern or Western, that does not deal in real depth with psychological issues, and deal with these in more than just spiritual context, is setting itself up for an abundance of spiritual bypassing."

So, be aware of spiritual bypassing and not fall into its trap. It's just another way Wetiko is playing its game.

Spirituality should not serve as an escape from life's difficulties; instead, it should illuminate and embrace these challenges. By engaging with our soul, we gradually become intimately connected with all aspects of ourselves, fostering a deeper sense of self-awareness and acceptance.

Vibrant Working Environments

A vibrant working environment serves as the stage where the magic of your business unfolds. It's not solely about the physical space, which is undeniably crucial, but also about the intentional approach to conducting business and the ways in which everyone relates to each other. This holistic perspective is key to fostering a thriving and dynamic workplace.

Three Elements for a Vibrant Work Environment

1-Reinvention Capabilities

To ensure that an organization consistently stays ahead, it's crucial to effectively create or respond to changes. In the modern business landscape, management predominantly revolves around change management.

This was the theme of a small LinkedIn research I conducted among managers, where it became apparent that a majority face challenges with these change management endeavors.

I asked them three questions:

1. What are, in your opinion, the best areas for companies to invest to thrive in a disruptive environment?
2. What do you need to implement changes/transform your business?
3. What are the biggest internal challenges you are facing when you want to implement changes?

For the first question, most respondents believe that to prosper in disruptive environments, investments should be made in developing leadership capabilities, fostering agile and innovative cultures, and transforming business models and systems. 52% think all these areas are crucial, while others prioritize leadership development (25%), cultural development (16%), or business model transformation (7%).

The second question's responses showed that 53% believe a combination of factors like courageous leadership, supportive culture, transformation know-how, and supportive systems (like budgeting and risk management) is vital for success. Others emphasize the importance of courageous leadership (16%), a supportive culture (14%), supportive systems (9%), or expertise in transformation (2%).

Regarding internal challenges in implementing change, 42% of managers cited a lack of employee accountability and responsibility as the main issue. 38% pointed to inadequate leadership skills, and 19% identified the company's inability to implement change due to resistance or lack of know-how. No respondents mentioned employee exhaustion or inadequate HRM systems as major challenges.

However, one individual offered a written response, stating: *"First treating people as human beings is the precondition for evolving the company. All other activities are less important."*

"We might possess the most advanced reinvention tools and processes, but without addressing human factors – the main focus of this book – no methodology will be truly effective. It's clear that the success of any change or reinvention effort hinges on our ability to integrate these human elements effectively."

The results from this survey offer several insights into current perceptions and challenges in the corporate world, particularly in the context of thriving in disruptive environments and implementing change:

1. **Holistic Approach to Change:** There's a consensus among managers that success in a disruptive environment requires a multifaceted approach. This includes developing leadership skills, nurturing an agile and innovative culture, and transforming business models and processes. The fact that a majority believe all these areas are crucial indicates an understanding of the interconnectedness of these factors.

2. **Leadership and Culture as Key Drivers:** The emphasis on leadership capabilities and organizational culture underscores their perceived importance in driving change. Managers recognize that courageous, visionary leadership, coupled with a supportive and adaptive culture, is critical to navigating and thriving amidst change.

3. **Employee Engagement and Accountability:** The identified challenge of lacking employee accountability and responsibility suggests a gap in engagement and ownership among team members. This could point to issues in internal communication, motivation, and possibly the alignment of individual goals with organizational objectives.

4. **Need for Enhanced Leadership Skills:** The concern about inadequate leadership skills, including vision, focus, and interpersonal abilities, highlights a perceived need for stronger leadership development programs. This suggests that organizations might benefit from investing more in training and supporting leaders to effectively guide their teams through change.

5. **Implementation Challenges:** The difficulties in implementing changes due to resistance or lack of know-how indicate a need for better change management strategies. This includes not only planning and executing change but also addressing employee resistance and enhancing organizational capacity for change.

I am firmly convinced that expertise in change management or reinvention is critical. Adopting a reinvention mindset and practices as integral to our business approach is essential.

However, as both the survey results and my experience indicate, a more holistic and human-centric approach is necessary to maintain relevance in business. We might possess the most advanced reinvention tools and processes, but without addressing human factors – the main focus of this book – no methodology will be truly effective. It's clear that the success of any change or reinvention effort hinges on our ability to integrate these human elements effectively.
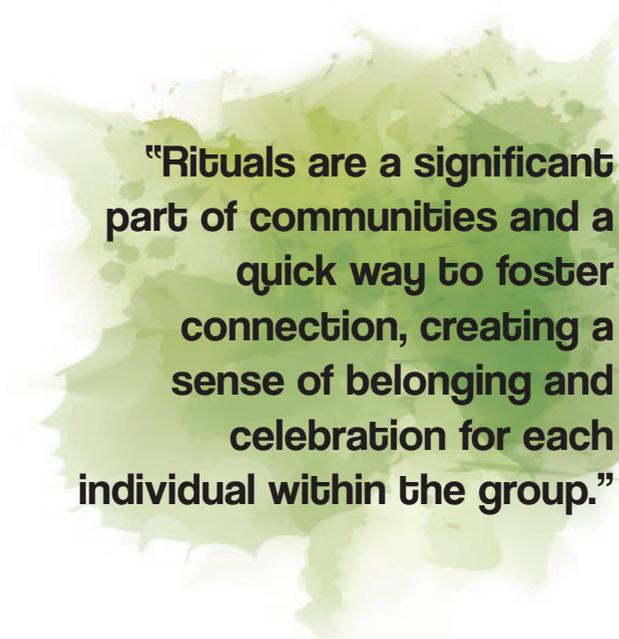
"Rituals are a significant part of communities and a quick way to foster connection, creating a sense of belonging and celebration for each individual within the group."

2-Rituals

Rituals pack a powerful punch! They're like the seasoning that flavors our lives. In our personal journeys, they mark moments that matter, weaving together the stuff that makes us who we are and binding us to others. They're the threads that connect us to our roots and our beliefs, keeping the ties strong between generations. In communities and cultures, they're the glue that holds traditions, ceremonies, and celebrations together, making sure everyone feels part of something bigger.

Even in the workplace, rituals bring people together. They're like the secret handshake of a team, creating unity and reinforcing what the company stands for. These shared routines bring a sense of comfort and consistency, kind of like the familiar smell of home-cooked meals. They help shape our work identity and create a shared language and rhythm.

No matter where they're found, rituals have this magical way of making life feel grounded, significant, and deeply personal. They're the heartbeat of what we do, bringing meaning, belonging, and a sense of connection into our daily lives.

Never underestimate the power of rituals!

Thinking they're a waste of time would be a colossal mistake. Instead of relegating them to a yearly office party, try integrating them into your everyday work life. We all have our daily rituals. Consider what kind of rituals you could incorporate into your team's routine.

You might think about shaping formal procedures that strengthen relationship building. Maybe a conflict resolution ritual could make a difference, or

perhaps you'd like to structure meetings as a ritual with a warm-up involving somatic exercises or establish a shared intention in line with your values. You might even want to develop a unique team slogan to be used at every meeting.

And when it comes to projects or complex tasks, think about creating rituals for each phase. How will you kick off the project? How will you celebrate its completion? These rituals help people gear up and enhance their motivation and commitment.

The possibilities are endless to infuse your daily work with rituals that bring people together, infuse meaning into everyday tasks, celebrate success, and acknowledge individual personalities. Rituals are a significant part of communities and a quick way to foster connection, creating a sense of belonging and celebration for each individual within the group.

3-Beauty in the Environment

I recall a particular day when I entered the business premises of a potential client. The building, striking in its novelty and vastness, greeted me at around 4 p.m. The lobby was nearly empty, save for the receptionist and the three individuals I was scheduled to meet. As I stepped through the door, a distinct sensation overtook me. My body tensed, and a chill ran through it, prompting a curious thought: "Why aren't there any flowers here?" The office space was dotted with expansive glass enclosures, each outfitted with the latest technological equipment. However, the walls were barren, devoid of any artwork or floral arrangements, presenting a sterile tableau of walls, glass, and technology. Each office resembled a row of aquariums, impersonal and uniform.

This thought crossed my mind: "It's akin to a concentration camp." Why would anyone conceive such a lifeless space? I wondered about the employees' feelings in this environment. And where was everyone? Later, I learned that most had already left or were working from home. It made sense to me then; such an atmosphere must be stifling for them.

I am convinced it's no coincidence that the business culture is deliberately impersonal. As we now understand, our environment significantly impacts us. So, what kind of influence is intended by such a setting? This, of course, is a rhetorical question, as I'm sure you already grasp the implications.

Beauty represents the pinnacle of human values, embodying the expression of the soul. So, what's the simplest method to exclude the soul from business? Create an impersonal environment.

In soul-designed organizations, we prioritize beauty, recognizing that our environment, including the physical aspect, influences our emotions and attitudes. The setting in which we work holds significant importance.

So, infuse your workspace with colors and flowers, create outdoor working areas where feasible, and offer the flexibility to work from anywhere if the nature of the job permits. Design varied spaces to cater to both privacy and collaboration. Personalize and decorate your offices in line with the preferences of your employees. This change is among the simplest yet very impactful ways to positively influence people's moods, fostering a sense of welcome and respect for them as individuals, not merely as cogs in a machine.

"Beauty represents the pinnacle of human values, embodying the expression of the soul. So, what's the simplest method to exclude the soul from business? Create an impersonal environment."

In a Nutshell

1. **Soul-designed organizations revolve around the concept of authenticity and truth, fostering an environment that embraces the full spectrum of human experiences. These organizations encourage open and heartfelt dialogues, allowing individuals to express their true selves constructively, find their roles, and break free from self-limiting behaviors.**

2. **The core principles of soul-designed organizations are to infuse every action with a commitment to healing, Address workplace drama, and Respect Natural Rhythms in People and Initiatives.**

3. **The four pillars of soul-designed organizations are heart-centered leadership, personal transformation, community building, and vibrant working environments. Each pillar plays a crucial role in fostering an organizational culture that values authenticity, creativity, constant reinvention, and human connection.**

INVITATION:
Let's Awaken Our Souls Together

"In losing our sense of Soul, we have trivialized our existence. Our industrial accomplishments are simply leading us deeper into a meaningless world, a meaningless, but not an innocent or a harmless world. Nor can all our inventions or our medical formulas keep at bay the deep anxieties to which we are subject. Nor can our massive military expenditures keep us secure. We are frightened, both personally and in our communities, by the least threat to life or security. We seek protection through ever greater control over other humans and over the natural world that we inhabit. Yet adequate security ever eludes us. We are threatened, as never before, by natural elements such as the atmosphere, the water, the soil, and various living forms that we have abused. We are threatened by the enemies we have made with the very efforts that we have made toward national security. Not knowing how to relate to the natural world, we are uncertain in our relations with the human world." (Thomas Berry in the foreword to Soulcraft).

As you turn the final pages of this modest tome on soul-designed organizations, I invite you to embrace an uplifting truth: humans are not inherently selfish. We are, at our core, deeply interconnected beings, harmoniously woven into the fabric of the natural world, which forms an essential part of our being. Throughout history, our wild, unbridled essence, our very souls, have been tamed and subdued, leading to catastrophic consequences. Our society has been deeply scarred by Wetiko, a psycho-spiritual virus that has led to a surge in mental health issues, organizational struggles, and a devastating impact on our planet.

Despite very few standout companies, the dominant mindset operates under the paradigm of the "Taker" society, which fails to contribute to the overall well-being of people and the preservation of the environment. The world we inhabit often instigates anxiety or prompts us to evade reality, perhaps retreating into a comfortable "spiritual" bubble, both scenarios placing us in a passive role.

Let's challenge this by profoundly reevaluating the principles guiding our lives and leadership. It's time to nurture a world that's more attuned to our souls, transcending mere kindness. This journey is about being authentic, about each of us contributing our unique talents to elevate global consciousness.

Let's cultivate soul-designed organizations and start singing the song of free spirits, deep connection, and celebration!

I can't wait to hear what you think! If you want to explore the themes presented in this eBook, get in touch. By bringing our heads and hearts together, we can bring more Life into our world!

YOU ARE WELCOME TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUL-DESIGNED ORGANIZATIONS AND BECOME A CO-AUTHOR!

Join me quarterly for an invigorating discussion on Soul-Designed Organizations, open to all who are interested. These sessions are not just talks but collaborative platforms to delve deeper into the concepts presented in my book. Our goal is to collectively explore and refine the characteristics of Soul-Designed Organizations. Through these discussions, we aim to gather insights and shared perspectives that will contribute to an enriched, updated edition of the book. This is your chance to be more than a participant – become a co-author in shaping the next chapter of Soul-Designed Organizations! Secure your spot in our upcoming discussions and be a part of co-creating a world imbued with soulful designs in business.

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Resources

1. Steve Taylor;
   The Fall: With Afterword

2. Paul Francis;
   Rewilding yourself: Discovering your Soul's Deep
   Roots Through Shamanic Practices

3. Robert Augustus Master;
   Spiritual Bypassing: When Spirituality Disconnects
   Us from What Really Matters

4. Susan Steinbrecher, Joel B. Bennet;
   Heart-Centered Leadership: Lead Well, Live Well

5. Paul Levy;
   Undreaming Wetiko: Breaking the Spell of the
   Nightmare Mind-Virus

6. Gabor Mate;
   The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness & Healing in a
   Toxic Culture

7. Janet Hagberg;
   Real Power: Stages of Personal Power in
   Organizations

8. Bill Plotkin;
   Soulcraft: Crossing into the Mysteries of Nature and
   Psyche

REINVENTION PARTNER

Reinvent with the heart