

# Unfear Newsletter

## Chaordic: Balancing Chaos and Order in the Unfear Transformation

Dear Reader,

Chaos. It's all around us. It makes us feel like we've lost control, which inspires fear and pushes us to cling to order. Yet, most people don't realize that chaos isn't inherently bad. It just denotes change. Degradation, changes for the worse, increase chaos. But so do positive transformations. Over-fidelity to order leads to stagnancy, a deadly condition for any business. But too much chaos leads to, well, pure chaos. What's needed is a balance.

Dee Hock, the late former CEO of Visa, coined the term "chaordic" to describe a workplace with an ordered system that harnesses the creative potential of chaos. All unfear transformations are chaordic. They use boundaries (usually goals and a vision) to guide the transformation. But within those boundaries, everything can change. Chaos, creativity, and innovation flourish.

Let's use a small scale example to illustrate. Imagine you have worked for a decade in a large organization in a competitive industry, living in a major city. You work long, joyless hours and want a change. But you hold a fear based belief that you're on the only path to success. And you have a fear of the chaos that would result from radical changes. Chances are, you'd take the same job with a different company and hope life will improve.

In a chaordic approach, you would recognize that the old definition of success hasn't served you. You would search for a more authentic definition of success in all facets of your life. What's your ideal job and income? Social circle? Work/life balance? Where do you live? What makes you fulfilled? What principles and values do you seek to uphold? The answers to these questions and the prioritization between competing answers become the boundaries, the order, the anchor points you can build a life around. Within those boundaries, you would let chaos reign. Get creative. Consider career changes, starting a company, moving, starting a family, returning to school, whatever might be needed. Life is not linear, and some of what you try will fail. As long as you maintain the boundaries and keep learning and adapting and trying new things within it, you will have created a chaordic unfear transformation of your life.

### Consider the Butterfly

Consider the butterfly. They go from hairy worms to delicate, jewel-like creatures. A beautiful metaphor for transformation, yet few people understand what happens in the cocoon. First, imaginal cells—cells that the caterpillar has carried its entire life—liquify the caterpillar. The insect becomes a living soup, and the imaginal cells form the nodes around which the butterfly body coalesces. But the caterpillar's antibodies can't recognize the new creature, so they destroy the nascent butterfly. This process repeats. With each repetition, more cells convert to butterfly cells. At last, it reaches a tipping point, and the butterfly is born. We, like the caterpillar, carry the potential to transform our entire lives. To activate that potential, we must embrace a degree of chaos and become soup before emerging in our next form.

### Worth thinking about

In what areas of your work are you overemphasizing order? What do you gain from doing this? What opportunities might you be preventing?

### Take it to go

Pick an area where your adherence to the "tried and tested, safe and simple" approach holds you back. Explain the situation to a friend or colleague. Then, together, discuss the chaos you want to manage. What boundary conditions will keep the chaos at a manageable level? Within those boundaries, what new possibilities exist? What is a low-stakes way to test those possibilities?

### Questions?

Please contact us and schedule a call if you are interested in applying Unfear to improve your team and organizational culture and effectiveness. We'd love to hear from you.

[CONTACT US](#)

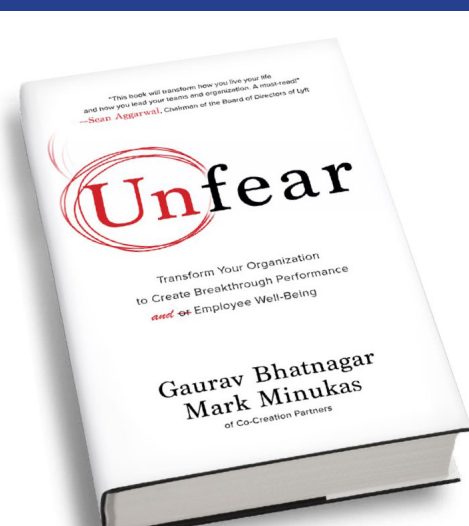


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