

## Interview with David Banner, author of *Frameshifting: A Path to Wholeness*

Today, Tyler R. Tichelaar of Reader Views is pleased to be joined by David Banner, who is here to be interviewed about his new book “Frameshifting: A Path to Wholeness.”

*David Banner is an enthusiastic author, mentor, and educator. He has chosen a life that is always open to new experiences, both professionally and spiritually. His varied work life has included jobs with NASA, the military, entrepreneurship, and in education. During that time, he has authored six books and countless articles about transformational leadership, ethics and integrity in business and related topics. Among his books is “Designing Effective Organizations” which takes a spiritual look at business management. Recently, David retired as a university professor and just completed his new book “Frameshifting: A Path to Wholeness” which he is here to discuss today.*

**Tyler:** Welcome, David. I’m glad you could join me to talk about your new book. To begin, let me ask you what you mean by “Frameshifting”? Will you define it for us?

**David:** I define frameshifting as any experience that causes a person to expand their definition of who they are, i/e/. their identity, and to realize their interconnectedness to all of life. In our common reality, we operate from a relatively fixed set of beliefs, attitudes and values. Anything that can shake this up and get us out of our “comfort zone” of normalcy is, in my view, a good thing. Anything that causes us to look at things from a different perspective will have positive ramifications; being stuck in ANY perspective causes us to think that we have the answer, that we are “right.” What we fail to see is that any perspective is partial, and it is limited by the beliefs, attitudes and values that we adopt. So frameshifting is any experience that causes us to move out of our “normal” paradigm or frame and see a broader view.

**Tyler:** In general, how does Frameshifting lead to wholeness?

**David:** Life itself is whole and interconnected. We see this from quantum physics and from modern biology. No one in contemporary science argues with this. But we are still in the grip of the Newtonian mechanical view of the Universe from the 17th century; in this paradigm, we are separate from the whole, we are adrift in a hostile Universe and we need to use our minds to figure out how to survive. When we make those assumptions and adopt those beliefs, we create a self-fulfilling prophecy. We create a world that seems hostile to us humans and we create an apparent need to use our clever wits to survive. But a mind disconnected from the larger whole, from the intelligence of the Universe, is basically a stupid mind. We produce effects, largely unintended, by acting as if we were separate from the whole.

So, by re-connecting to that larger whole, that underlying spiritual reality, we act from that awareness and our actions will be informed by the awareness of our connection with the whole; therefore, the things we do from that expanded frame will be life-enhancing, not destructive.

**Tyler:** I’m most interested in your discussion of how people can achieve “higher stages of consciousness.” Will you explain just what you mean by that phrase?

**David:** Ken Wilber, one of my mentors in transpersonal psychology, distinguishes between changes in states of consciousness (what I am calling frameshifting) and changes in stages of consciousness (levels of maturity in awareness). States are transitory, they come and then they go, but there is an indelible trace of that experience that stays in one's consciousness. A stage shift is a movement, relatively permanent, into a higher perspective. Examples of stages are egocentric (where the perspective is "what's in it for me"), ethnocentric (the perspective of what helps or supports our tribe or nation), and whole-centric (what supports all life on the planet). Clearly, people who remain "stuck" at either the egocentric or ethnocentric stages of consciousness are going to do things that are destructive to the welfare of the whole planet.

Wilber sites research that shows that frequent changes in states can facilitate changes in stages, and that is what I am arguing in the book. By inviting frameshifting experiences into our lives, we "grease the skids" for shifts in stages of consciousness so that we can see a broader perspective of reality. As a matter of practical concern, if we don't get more folks into the higher stages of consciousness, human life on this planet may be in peril.

People at any stage of consciousness are not "wrong"; from their beliefs, attitudes and values, what they see is perfectly logical and defensible. George W. Bush, from his frame, sees a dangerous world out there but what he does with that viewpoint (from my frame) puts our nation at risk. This ethnocentric perspective sees the world as one of good and evil, and we are the "good guys" and the Islamic world, the bad guys. I can understand Bush and his viewpoint, but I do not agree with the actions he takes from that frame.

**Tyler:** Will you also define for us what you mean by unspoken limiting beliefs? Can you provide us with an example of such a belief?

**David:** Let us say that, when you were a child, you were told over and over, that you were stupid. Eventually, you formed a belief that you are stupid. The thing about a belief is that we constrict our perspective to essentially "prove" our beliefs. This is the famous "self-fulfilling prophecy." So, we act stupid, we fail tests, etc., all the while having an IQ of 135!!!! This is an example of a negative belief, but we can adopt positive beliefs, too. Say you were told as a child that you could do anything you wanted to with your life, that the "sky is the limit." Well, a person with that belief is much more willing to try new things, to "go for it" in life, etc. You get the idea.

Beliefs are typically invisible to us; they are like water to a fish. They are literally the medium we "swim" in. They also create our experience of personal reality. So, a big step in personal awareness is to ask the question: What would a person have to believe to be having this experience? This will help you uncover your unspoken limiting beliefs.

A belief is something you assume to be true. That doesn't make it true; if you jump off a skyscraper and don't believe in gravity, you will still be killed. But beliefs are powerful forces in shaping our assumptions about life and our behavior.

**Tyler:** You also talk a lot about the ego. What do you really mean by the ego and how does it limit us?

**David:** Since we are all born into a world that is peopled by folks who have adopted the separatist paradigm or frame, we get socialized into believing it, too. Our parents tell us it is a dangerous world out there, that we must beware of strangers, etc. The ego is a false identity, a limited perspective on who we are. We literally made it up! Egos are not "bad"; they simply are partial and when we act from our ego identities, we necessarily produce dysfunctional consequences since we cannot see the ramifications of our actions from the larger perspective of the whole. Plants and animals don't have egos, so they naturally act in response to the cosmic pulsations of life. We, however, do have frontal lobes in our brains and we can choose to be out of alignment with the cosmic rhythms...and we have largely chosen that path throughout recorded history. As Eckhart Tolle, the author of "THE POWER OF NOW" has argued, we must now relinquish the narrow ego identity in favor of an identity in the whole of life or extinguish ourselves and possibly all life on earth.

**Tyler:** David, is the ego then completely selfish, or since you mention dysfunction, is the ego based in fear and self-protection?

**David:** Yes, it is, since it is a distortion of the true state of unbroken wholeness with all of life. The ego is based on fear and it needs fear to sustain itself. That is why most folks have a sense of unease and anxiety right under the surface; the ego is disconnected from the energy that runs the cosmos (some call this God) and therefore is naturally insecure! With the ego identity, you cannot get to a permanent sense of ease and contentment. The good news is that this doesn't have to be your identity! You can choose to have an identity with the force that animates the Universe; instead of being a little wave in the ocean, you can BE the ocean!

We don't realize it but the ego identity is a CHOICE; a habitual choice, but a choice nonetheless. It takes a lot of energy to keep this ego identity alive; it needs struggle, conflict and unhappiness to keep itself alive. This is why we need sleep at night; we have to recover from keeping out the state of oneness, which is our natural state!

**Tyler:** I understand the ego's biggest fear, according to your book, is its own destruction. Why does the ego resist being destroyed when the result can only be greater harmony with others?

**David:** The ego is afraid for its own demise, since it cannot survive if it is integrated into the whole of all life. It can only survive separate from everything else...and it knows it! That is another source of the fear that animates its identity. So, the ego is very clever and it will use its bag of tricks to survive at all costs. It does not know, since it has a limited perspective by nature, that being part of the cosmic whole would be a huge blessing. It sees wholeness as a threat to its existence...which it is!

**Tyler:** David, I have read other books about the ego—Sigmund Freud comes to mind, or Gary Renard's "The Disappearance of the Universe." Do you feel what you are saying about the ego is different from what has been said previously, or is your book just showing how to apply previous theories about the ego for the individual to improve his life?

**David:** The word ego is used by a number of different authors and their definitions vary. What I mean by ego is an identity that sees itself as separate from everything else, as alone in a hostile Universe, and in need of mental cleverness to survive. Freud, Renard and even anthroposophy (Steiner's work) all see the ego somewhat differently. And, given that, I do feel my book is primarily about experiences and exercises I have found that loosened the grip of the ego identity on my consciousness.

**Tyler:** David, I understand the book is about one man's personal spiritual awakening? Will you tell us a little about that awakening in your life and what influenced you on that path?

**David:** In the Preface of the book, I talked about some of the frameshifting experiences that propelled me into a spiritual path early on. One of them was reading Ram Dass' "BE HERE NOW" (1970). After years of exploring the major religions of the world and coming up feeling empty, I read this book and it literally transformed my life...here was something that sounded true! I had been raised Episcopalian and the tired dogma of the church just turned me off. In the ensuing years, I have had a number of frameshifting experiences, some in seminars and workshops, some in just living life, that have profoundly affected my view of reality and of my personal identity. So, as I see it now in hindsight, a spiritual awakening is a frameshifting experience that opens your eyes into a new reality and identity.

**Tyler:** Obviously then, frameshifting and your views are not based in any specific religion, but what would you define then as your form of spirituality, or what a spiritual awakening actually is? Would you maybe share one of those frameshifting experiences and what it taught you that affected your view of reality and personal identity?

**David:** No, I actually discuss in the Preface of my book my "religious dilettante" phase where I attended a number of religious services, e.g., Baptist, Unitarian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, Ba' Hai, Unity, Christian...you name it, I tried it. And I came away unsatisfied with all of them. I realized that spirituality was an inside job!

The book is about a number of frameshifting experiences I have had over the last 40 years. Here is an example: I trained to get a Black Belt in Aikido, a self-defense form of martial arts. One of the exercises you learn before you begin a practice is this: you visualize your "one point" (the geographical center of your body, about 2" below your navel and 3" inside). Then you expand your awareness to include your whole body, the room you are in, the city, the state, the region, the country, continent, the planet, the solar system...your awareness continues to expand to the farthest reaches of the Universe. Then you slowly come back all the way to your one point. After doing this a few times, you can never again believe that your body ends at your skin!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Tyler:** What benefits have you experienced as a result of your spiritual awakening?

**David:** I am more empathetic with the perspectives of others, I have greater compassion than I ever have had, I am grateful for my life virtually all the time and I experience very little stress. All of this, I believe, is the result of defining myself to be a spiritual being having a human experience, rather than as an isolated ego identity struggling to survive in a hostile world.

**Tyler:** David, there are many self-help books out there already. What do you think makes "Frameshifting" stand out among them?

**David:** To my knowledge, this is the only book that shows some specific experiences a person can have to consciously shift their frame of reality. There are a number of seminars and experiential workshops out there that offer this possibility. What I attempt to do in the book is show the reader where to find such experiences and the likely result of availing yourself of them.

**Tyler:** Would you provide us with a specific example of how frameshifting works? Can you give us a picture of someone who is egocentric (selfish, greedy, etc) and then what experiences or decisions he might make that would lead him to being ethnocentric and then ultimately whole-centric?

**David:** By frameshifting, I mean an EXPERIENCE of yourself as larger than just a skin-encapsulated ego with a body, mind and emotions. These experiences, I believe, are cumulative ,i.e., they build up over time and they tend to propel one into higher stages of consciousness. As Ken Wilber states, changes in states of consciousness (frameshifting experiences) act as a “lubricant” for shifts into stages of consciousness, e.g., ethnocentric and whole-centric.

**Tyler:** Thank you for joining me today, David. Before we go, will you tell our readers about your website and what additional information may be found there about “FrameShifting: A Path to Wholeness”?

**David:** The web site is [www.davidkbanner.com](http://www.davidkbanner.com). Don't go to [www.davidbanner.com](http://www.davidbanner.com); this is the site of a rapper!(smile). In my site, you can order the book, see what other seminars I offer, read a synopsis of the book, and order my earlier book (“DESIGNING EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS; TRADITIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL VIEWS”) which is today the only spiritual textbook on organizational theory that I know of. I have a blog on the site and will eventually have a newsletter for those who are interested. If you have questions about me or my work, feel free to contact me on the site.

**Tyler:** Thank you, David. I'm sure you've opened some of our readers' eyes. Thank you for giving us such good information and especially the hope not only for better personal lives but a better world community.

**David:** Thank you, Tyler, for this opportunity to let your readers know that a larger identity is available, one that is connected to the whole of life and, therefore, is much less fearful and contracted than the one they are used to!

[Read Review of Frameshifting](#)