

MASTERS by Winn Claybaugh
David Wagner, 2004



David Wagner is the founder and CEO of Juut Salonspas, the original Aveda salons, and the author of the bestselling book, *Life as a Daymaker: How to Change the World by Making Someone's Day*. Interviewed by **Winn Claybaugh**, David tells how he coined the term *Daymaker* and launched an entire Daymaker movement. As he shows how each of us can make the world a better place, simply by making someone's day, David's message will touch your heart and send YOU looking for ways to be a Daymaker, too.

WC: Hi everyone, Winn Claybaugh here! In this MASTERS classic from 2004, world-renowned hairstylist and author **David Wagner** shares the story of how he coined the term “Daymaker” and launched what quickly became known as the Daymaker movement. Listen in as David tells how every one of us can start making the world a better place, simply by making someone's day. His stories and his message will touch your heart and send YOU looking for ways to be a Daymaker, too. Please enjoy this powerful MASTERS and sign up for our mailing list at MASTERSbyWinnClaybaugh.com. You can also find MASTERS podcasts on your favorite podcast platform.

[Music]

WC: Hi, everybody, this is Winn Claybaugh and, boy, what an amazing MASTERS CD this is going to be, and I know that this is a CD that you're going to want to share over and over again with your staff, with your family, with your customers, because this kindness movement that we are professing and marketing through this MASTERS CD is very timely. And who better to help us continue with this journey than with the man sitting with me right now, Mr. David Wagner. Welcome, David.

DW: Thank you, Winn.

WC: This actually worked out great up here in Santa Barbara—what a beautiful place to be talking about this—and David just barely flew in today. You're going to be speaking this weekend at a conference here. I know Deepak Chopra is one of the speakers. Who else is speaking?

DW: George Zimmer from the Men's Wearhouse. There's other doctors and so on. It's interesting. It's about the global change that we can make in business. So, I'm looking forward to sharing my thoughts, but more so participating and learning some new ideas for myself.

WC: I love it when this type of a message is merged with business: that businesses, doesn't matter how small or how big, businesses have a responsibility to not only

the people that work there but their communities and to the people who come in for their services or product. And when a business assumes that responsibility, amazing things can happen.

DW: Well, businesses are communities.

WC: Right.

DW: And you know how great it is to have work matter in your life.

WC: One of my favorite mentors, Marianne Williamson, used to say that every business is a front for a church, and I don't think that she was talking about a religion as much as she was talking about a place where people can go and they feel loved, they feel accepted, they feel taken care of. And that applies not just to the employees but to the customers in the community as well. A hair salon can be a front for a church; a pizza parlor, a dentist's office.

DW: There's a lot of businesses that have mission statements and—

WC: Right.

DW: —so on. And at Juut, the company that I own, we have a “noble purpose.” And that noble purpose is to change the world by making someone's day. And imagine that as a hairdresser, I saw 10 people a day behind my chair. We have 400 people at our organization that touch 10 people every day. Now, that's 4,000 people in one community. And what the noble purpose is and what their intent is—they get up in the morning and come to work with the intent of making their day so that they go on to make 10 others. So now we're influenced 40,000 people a day by serving tea, booking an appointment, doing nails, and doing a haircut. So they know they're changing the world because of the amount of people that they can influence in one given moment.

WC: I like what you said: that they're actually having that influence by the way that they serve tea and cut someone's hair and treat people and greet people. Because I think sometimes people think that to make a difference means it's got to be monumental. I have to raise a million dollars. I have to devote a thousand hours, I have to do something. And it is as simple as what you're talking about.

DW: I have my day made by sometimes just observing someone. I was sitting having lunch today and I heard one of the waiters tell another waiter, “Life is beautiful.”

WC: *[Laughs]*

DW: *[Laughs]* He wasn't telling me.

WC: Right.

DW: I was just the recipient of this—

WC: Wow.

DW: —great attitude he had.

WC: Right.

DW: So, it is, it's the everyday that—

WC: So, he made your day.

DW: —that's the Daymaking piece.

WC: Right. By way of introduction, David Wagner is no stranger to MASTERS and no stranger to the industry; in fact, a major, major leader in the industry. You were recently president of TSA, The Salon Association, very much loved and respected there. You're the owner of—how many locations of Juut do you have?

DW: There's nine in Minnesota and one in Northern California.

WC: So, 10 locations, Juut Salonspas. You were originally partners with Horst many, many years ago, the original Aveda salons and very, very successful company. Every opportunity that I've had to have any interaction with your company is always, always a thrill. It's always a pleasure, always so well treated. And because of that, long before you came out with the book *Daymaker* and the movement, which we're going to talk about, I was wanting to take your concepts and put them into my company. I think you know this: that every single one of my students, and I've got 3,000 of them across the country, on their nametag it says "Daymaker." And that came from you, so—and sometimes it's that student looking at their nametag and going, "Oh yeah, I'm a Daymaker."

DW: [Laughs]

WC: [Laughs] Thank you, David.

DW: It's the best job description in the world and if they get that, that early on, then their success is going to be much better than had they not gotten that early on in their careers.

WC: Well, you'll be happy to know that a couple of them actually have it tattooed, now. Serious, David.

DW: Is that right?

WC: Yeah.

DW: Wow!

WC: Eric Janssen, who works with me, he's got Daymaker tattooed. His AOL address is daymakereric@aol.com.

DW: That's great.

WC: So, I mean it's—people are doing something with this. And it's—how does that make you feel, to know that you took something, just a simple concept, or it was a way of life for you—wasn't just an idea, it was a way of life for you—and you just started sharing that. And now to see what that's turned into. How does that make you feel?

DW: Well, you know, it was a realization that I had back in 1986, when I was doing hair, and you know, traveling around doing hair shows as a platform artist, and I was in Dallas, actually, and I was doing a show and I just stopped doing the model's hair and I looked at the audience and I said, "God, what if we brought the intention of making our client's day to work? Imagine how much more fun we'd have." And that night, I was flying home and I had my leather pants on and my big rock and roll hair and I was sitting next to this guy and he looked at me like, *What do you do?* because I was sitting up in first class.

WC: [Laughs]

DW: And I said, "I'm a Daymaker." And that's the first time that I had said it. And he said, "You're a what?" and I said, "I'm a Daymaker." And he said, "What in the world is a Daymaker?" I said, "I make people's day." And he looked at me and he said, "Well, you must do it really well," [laughs] because I was flying up in—

WC: [Laughs]

DW: —first class. So, the next day, I went back and I had my card changed from "Stylist" to "Daymaker" and I started handing it out. And it was, you know, clients thought it was cute—

WC: Right.

DW: —and it was kind of a cute thing to do. And then about six months later, there was a client of mine that came in every six weeks for a bob haircut. And this was in between her appointments, so it was just for a blow dry. So, when she came in, I said, "Oh, you must have a social thing going on tonight, or" you know. And she said, "No, I just wanted to look good and feel good." And I said, "Well, great." So, I gave her a great scalp massage and shampoo and we had a blast for a half hour and she gave me this big hug when she left. And it was two days later, when Daymaking really just pierced my soul, I got this card from this client and she said, "Thank you for being there without knowing that you were." The reason that she came in to have her hair done was so that she could look good and the reason she wanted to look good was because she was planning on committing suicide; she wanted to look good for her own funeral. She changed her mind in

our half hour and went home, called her sister, told her what she was going through. And, you know, here I was, reading this, and it's, you know, this was 1986 and it's just like I'm reading it today. And I had this just great sense of, *What if I wasn't there?* I mean, not only physically but what if I would have just blown off the appointment and so on? So, I just started treating every client as if they were the one. And what was ironic about this woman was, I would have never picked her to be the one. She was happy, she was successful, she had a good job, she seemed happy. So, I just started treating every one of my clients as if that were the one. I started incorporating that into my company and into my life. When I became a husband, I became a Daymaker husband. When I became a dad, I became a Daymaker dad. And I started to share it. I stopped doing hair and started sharing with people the benefit of being a Daymaker. And I was traveling around doing seminars and people would always say, "Do you have a book?" And I have a high school education with one year of beauty school.

WC: [Laughs]

DW: I didn't think we wrote books.

WC: Right.

DW: Well, we write bestselling books, I know now. So, I sat down and I wrote this book and it's really—it's not a theoretical book. It's a—I tell people I used to have two theories on raising children. Now I have two children, I don't have theories anymore.

WC Right, right, right.

DW: So, it's my life as a Daymaker.

WC: It's not a theoretical book, it's a how-to book.

DW: Yeah.

WC: It's a manual.

DW: It's my life and what—people are resonating with my stories because they share the similar life stories, whether it's good things that happen or, you know, I've been faced with some tragedies in my life, too. It's how do you wear a Daymaker hat when somebody in your family dies or something tragic happens? And that's gotten me through great times and it's got me through really, really difficult times as well.

WC: Talking about the book, which I've read, which my staff has read, which we sell in my school, by the way. I'm the type that loves how-to lists. Give us some ideas on how to be a Daymaker at work.

DW: Well, it's my favorite place. One of the things that we do, on a weekly basis, is the manager brings in a bouquet of flowers every Tuesday. She gives it to somebody that made her previous week. So, I would bring the bouquet and set it on your station. The next day, you have to give it to somebody else. So, within the week, five different people have had the benefit of having the bouquet put at their station.

WC: And you do this in every location.

DW: We do it in every location, every week.

WC: Wow!

DW: And clients say, "Whoa, who'd you get the flowers from?" "Oh, I got 'em from Winn." "Well, why did you get em from Winn?" "I made his day!"

WC: Oh my gosh!

DW: Yeah and, you know, we've given them to clients. And that's one small thing that you can do. Another thing that is really powerful is we have meetings every month, a total salon meeting. If it's your birthday during that month, everybody goes around the room and says something that they love about you.

WC: Mm.

DW: So, imagine. You know, there's 30, 40 people in the room and we take part of the meeting to just say how we feel about Winn, why Winn is special to us. And gosh, you know, it's one of those things that you look for yearly. One of the things that we do, too, we have small events that we do and then we have large events. And this past year, we had a company picnic, you know, because we're family to a lot of people. So we had a family picnic and hundreds of people came and part of the picnic was having a pet parade. So, people brought their pets and we had a contest on most well-behaved and best trick and all these different things. And we had a dunk tank so people could dunk both Tom Kuhn, my partner, and I. They had tickets—

WC: *[Laughs]*

DW: —that they earned for selling retail that—that we did that. And then one thing that kind of came out of just the community wanting to have fun is one of the staff teaches belly dancing lessons on Wednesday nights in the salon. So it's just, there's all kinds of ways that you can bring that levity into your company.

WC: Right. You talked about ideas between the staff members. What about staff to customers?

DW: Well—

WC: Can staff become Daymakers to their customers?

DW: I think, just really, it's not just the customers but the community at large, where there's a lot of volunteering that we do, whether it's going to shelters, or one of our favorite is Ronald McDonald House, because we're actually able to work on the parents of critically ill children. So, they both come to the salon, where our staff volunteer their time, and go. And we actually—Daymaker Day is April 29 and there's hundreds and hundreds of salons, including your schools were so instrumental in that, too. And what people found was that it wasn't doing huge events, it was as simple as passing out daisies that day, and just reminding—

WC: Right.

DW: —people how kindness really could be shared with others and that type of thing. I think with customers, customers want to do business with people they like and have a generous heart. So, we have a servant's heart and we approach things with what we call heart-centered beauty.

WC: What does that mean, you have a servant's heart?

DW: Well, the easiest way that I can describe it is that a lot of people give what I call “palm up,” where they'll give but they can always take it away. They'll do it if they get the tip. Or they'll do it if you come back or refer a friend or buy product.

WC: I'm nice to you until you—

DW: Yeah, but you—

WC: —tip me.

DW: But, yeah.

WC: Once I got your money, forget about it.

DW: When you give palm up, you can always take it back.

WC: Right.

DW: So, Daymakers go about their life and serve their clients in a way where they're palm down: they give it away without—

WC: Wow.

DW: —any strings attached. And clients know that when you come at it from a servant's heart, or what we call heart-centered beauty, clients respond. They trust you, your recommendation on product, they want to send their friends to

experience the same kind of energy exchange that they had with you. And you know, when you're a Daymaker, business is a lot easier.

WC: David, how do you teach that to a staff member? Let's say you have a new stylist who was raised in thinking you give to get. Can you teach that and how do you teach that?

DW: We try to hire people that already understand it. Some people get by, get in. And I think the easiest way for people to understand it is to experience it. So, when we have educators that are educating them, the educators are educating them palm down, too. So, they're the recipient of it first.

WC: Okay explain that. How do you educate with palm down?

DW: Well, the educators having that heart-centered beauty or that grace, and that treating the student with a reverence and a love for them.

WC: Right.

DW: If they experience, as the recipient, then they see the benefit of giving it to the client.

WC: I have goosebumps because there's a lot of education that is not that way, where it's not compassionate learning. It's basically, "I'm brilliant, you're an idiot."

DW: Well, you know, and that's—you hear it all the time that you hire great people and teach them how to do hair.

WC: Right.

DW: And somebody said one time—I was doing a radio interview with NPR, and they said, "Well, what makes Juut different—"

WC: Right.

DW: "—than your competition?" I said, "Well, I'd have to say that it's that we fire grumpy people." *[laughs]*

WC: *[Laughs]*

DW: Because you know how like attracts like, right?

WC: Right.

DW: Well, misery loves company,

WC: Right.

DW And so do Daymakers. There's people that are in our break rooms that might be having a tough time at home. They want to go to work to be cheered up by their—

WC: Right.

DW: —coworkers, not sit in the breakroom. So, yeah, I mean, like—

WC You fire grumpy people. Do you have any issues doing that?

DW: No, because usually it's their choice.

WC: *[Laughs]*

DW: You know, and it's just not their path.

WC: Right.

DW: So, hopefully they learn a lesson from it and maybe wake up to the benefit of Daymaking. But Winn, our clients expect it and more importantly their coworkers expect an attitude and a compassion in the way that we work together.

WC: Right.

DW: That's—I would be a day breaker to the people if I allowed it to exist.

WC: Yeah, you're not doing that person, the grumpy person, any favor by allowing them to stay in your company. And you're certainly not doing any favor to the rest of your team. Oftentimes, I believe that the rest of the team knows that that person needs to go before we, as business owners, know it.

DW: I think it's a false kindness that we give people.

WC: Right.

DW: And it's like if everybody could vote on who needed to go off the island, who would it be? Everybody knows who they are.

Winn: Right.

DW: So, when we fire grumpy people, it's usually not a surprise to anyone.

WC: Right.

DW: We give people benefit of the doubt. I mean, everybody has a bad day, but when you make it a career, it's an issue.

WC: [Laughs] I've sworn my life to misery and I'm gonna make sure you know about it. So, what is Daymaker Day?

DW: Well, I was fortunate when I was president of The Salon Association, my going away gift, they didn't know what to get me, so they decided that the best thing that they could do was to honor the Daymaking movement and by getting all of their members to participate in Daymaker Day and simply taking that day and doing something significant, big or small.

WC: Right.

DW: So, literally, we had hundreds and hundreds of salons all over the country and around the world that participated in big ways and small ways. It was going to military bases or children's homes, AIDS hospices. Or just giving somebody a free haircut or something at the salon. So, we figure there were probably eight to ten thousand people that got served that day, April 29, that would not have been served otherwise.

WC: Out of all those stories that got back to you about what happened in salons on Daymaker Day, what was your favorite story?

DW: I think it was a woman—we were, it was in Eureka, California, and there was a woman that is 85 years old and still waitressing because she has a couple of grandchildren that she was left with. And, you know, 85 years old, still working at a diner. And this salon sent a limousine to go pick her up, put a tiara on her, she was the queen for the day, had the kids taken care of, and she came in and it was featured in *Salon Today*, actually. So, it was really well received not only in our community but made the front-page paper there and that's the beauty of it.

WC: That's cool.

DW: It's just that simple as finding somebody—

WC: It is that simple.

DW: —deserving that has given of themselves.

WC: That's so easy. So, what is your best advice to salons to help them prepare for Daymaker Day?

DW: Well, the easiest go onto the website, it's daymakermovement.com, and you can read what hundreds of other salons are doing to get ideas. Have a salon meeting, discuss what other salons are doing as suggestions. And they can do it as simple as making each other's day at work, and it doesn't have to involve the clients. Or it might be just going to a shelter or whatever it might be. And on the site, they can see the benefit of doing it. And really the benefit is that when you give palm down like that, you actually get energy. And the beauty of giving is in you get it back tenfold when you do it with grace. And you know, it's never too

late. One of my favorite stories is when I first put the book out, I gave it to my employees first. And it was right after Christmas, one of them called and said, "I have to have coffee with you." And usually when one of our employees wants to have coffee it means they're leaving, but they want to leave the right way.

WC: That's not a good thing. Right.

DW: So, I went and had coffee with her and she said, "You know, I took your book home for Christmas and I gave it to my 84-year-old grandfather. He's been married to my grandmother for 51 years. And he's never been kind to her that anybody can remember, never paid her a compliment in her life. So I gave it to him for Christmas. And he said, "What's this?" and she said, "Well, it's *Life as a Daymaker*. My boss wrote it." She said, "So, Christmas Day, he read it. On New Year's Eve he made his wife of 51 years her first candlelit dinner and gave her a poem written with using her name," like as in my book. And she started crying and I was crying and she said something really significant. She said, "You know what, David? He could pass now and we'd be okay."

WC: Wow!

DW: So it's never too late. You know, all of a sudden, he's 84 years old, and he can walk around proud that he's now a Daymaker. The 84 years might have taken him that long to learn it but all of a sudden he's going to be regarded and remembered for a candlelit dinner. That's powerful.

WC: David, do you have a final message for our listeners?

DW: Yeah, I think where the world's at right now a lot of people think, *Well gosh, I'm one person, what could I do? Can I really make a difference? Or can we, as a group make a difference?* I think we can. I went to New York right after September 11 and I hadn't published the book yet and I was wondering, *Gosh, it seems so trivial now, compared to this daunting task ahead of us.* And as I flew into New York and I was looking down at all the buildings and all the people and I thought, *How am I going to make a difference in New York?* And so, the next day, I was walking down Fifth Avenue—hundreds of people walking in and everybody was in this really solemn, glum state. And then there was this woman, she was like in her 80s, four-foot-nothing, dressed to the nines, angry as could be. Just this scowl on her face and her shoulders up to her ears and I saw everybody was going away from her, and she was walking toward me, and I just went toward her. And I stopped about 15 feet in front of her. And I stood there with what I call my Daymaker posture. I was just—my shoulders were bright, my smile was bright, and I was just going to just lend her some care and compassion. And she stopped. She didn't see me, she felt me. And she looked up at me and her scowl turned into a grin and her grin turned into a smile and her shoulders dropped as if she was saying, *What was I thinking?* And we kept walking. We didn't say a word to each other. I flew out of New York, the next day. I looked down at all the buildings again, and I said, "I did it. I changed New York,

even if it was that one lady.” So I went back, I published the book, and I saw the ripple effect that we can have on a person's life. And there is this state that the world's in right now that I think what's going to bring about global peace is heart-to-heart resuscitation. And that's in a kind smile, it's opening doors, it's letting people merge into traffic. It's all the things that maybe we started taking for granted years ago. So, just sharing yourself and try to live your life by having perfect moments. And those moments are when you can make somebody's day.

WC: Wow. Really quick: how do people buy your book?

DW: Easiest is either amazon.com or they can go right to the website, daymakermovement.com. It's in most of the major stores as well.

WC: Perfect, highly recommend it. Again, not just a great book to read but a manual to live by.

DW: You know, one of my favorite quotes about the book that a reader sent in was that “A celebrity is someone that you want to meet. A Daymaker is somebody that you want to be.”

WC: Wow, that's cool.

DW: That's it in a nutshell.

WC: Well, I think it's great. You were on *Good Morning America*, you've sold over 100,000 copies of this book, you've got this movement happening, and you're making a difference. So, I'm just happy to get your message out there.

DW: Well, and what's great now is that what's come of it, what you've said about making movies and so on, there is a movie project in the works right now. And what I'm really excited to be working on is a TV project where, you know, imagine Cheers not being a bar, but being a high-end salon, working with the guys from Friends, visited by the guys from Queer Eye, and it becomes this really great story—

WC: [Laughs] Isn't that great.

DW: —of Daymakers.

WC: Wow.

DW: And so anyway, I think that the book's done well, but I think that to really get it into society and show people how hairdressers can make a difference in people's lives, film and TV is going to be part of that answer.

WC: I have a feeling that you're not slowing down anytime soon.

DW: No, I've got a momentum—

WC: Promise?

DW: —that I'm really feeling. No, it's not just me and that's what's great about it is that I get to work on the movement with all of these other people. It's not just David the Daymaker, it's the Daymaker movement. And to be part of that and part of the collective is really exciting to me.

WC: Wow. Congratulations.

DW: Thank you.

WC: Again, thanks for your time together today. I always, always know it's gonna be a thrill to be with you, to have you come into my schools when that's happened, to invite me into your company, to see you at events, and it's always, always good. Thanks, David.

DW: You're welcome. Thank you.