

Dean Eric Smith

Keynote Speaker | Executive Leadership Coach | Forgiveness Development Pioneer

Plenty of speakers talk about burnout. Dean Smith goes after what causes it.

Dean Eric Smith is a keynote speaker, Executive Leadership Coach, and the pioneer of a discipline he calls Forgiveness Development: the practical work of helping leaders find and release the Hidden Emotional Overhead quietly draining their capacity. For 20 years he has spoken on forgiveness, and for 14 years, as a certified high-performance coach, he has worked with executives and high achievers, turning one of life's most misunderstood ideas into a measurable leadership advantage.

His authority on the subject was not earned in a classroom. When Dean was twelve, his mother was murdered by his stepfather. For years he carried that weight the way many leaders carry their own, silently, insisting he was fine, while it eroded his clarity, his patience, and his presence. Decades later he made a different choice. He forgave the man who killed his mother, sat with him face to face, and ultimately helped him forgive himself. That journey became the award-winning documentary *Live to Forgive*. It is also why his message lands with a credibility no theory can manufacture.

What Dean discovered is that the weight holding him back is the same hidden bottleneck on leadership everywhere. Unresolved resentment, conflict, and regret never appear on a balance sheet, but they show up in decisions, in candor, and in how much capacity a leader has left at the end of the day. So Dean built the E.D.G.E. Forgiveness Development Method, a rigorous, secular, evidence-based framework that gives leaders a repeatable way to set that weight down and lead at full strength. Not therapy. Not inspiration that fades by Monday. A discipline they can actually use.

Audiences feel it right away. Dean has a rare gift for making a room laugh one moment and go quiet with recognition the next, bringing genuine warmth to heavy material without losing the business point. He speaks to executive teams, healthcare and clinical leaders, and conference audiences across North America, drawing on a Master's in Organizational Leadership, years inside the healthcare industry, his ongoing work coaching physicians one-on-one across the country, and his book, *The Forgiveness Habit*. Dean has spoken to leaders and teams affiliated with AstraZeneca, Boehringer Ingelheim, Optavia, and the Gluten Intolerance Group.

Offstage, Dean is a husband to his wife, Molly, a proud father of two teenagers, and, by most accounts, a pretty funky beatboxer.