

During a Crisis, Find Your “Inner Zone of Excellence”

by Robert Dilts

During a crisis, we have a choice. Either we find our “**inner zone of excellence**” and re-energize by connecting with the strength within. Or we regress into survival strategies that weaken our position further.

The inner zone of excellence is a key part of what is known as the “**inner game**” of business. The concept of the “inner game” was developed by Timothy Gallwey as a way of helping people to achieve excellence in various sports (e.g., tennis, golf, skiing, etc.), music and also business and management training. Fundamental to the inner game is our ability to stay in a high performance state when confronted with difficult circumstances.



Many challenges will present themselves in our business:

- fear of the unknown (i.e. *what will happen tomorrow ?*),
- dealing with loss (i.e. losing a member in the team) and
- a general sense of vulnerability (i.e. *how can I succeed in spite of unfavorable circumstances ?*).

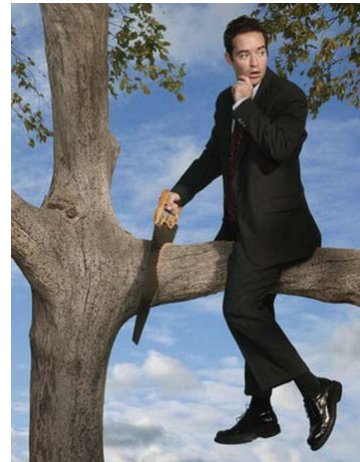
These can plunge us into **unhelpful survival strategies**: attack, escape or rigidity. This frequently results in temporary regression or inertia.

On the contrary, we can focus in our "inner zone of excellence" and feel:

- **No fear of failure or anxiety about achieving our goals**
- **A state of focused spaciousness in the mind** and relaxed readiness in the body
- **Performance coming without effort** and without having to think about it

As an example, I was coaching a man who was a vice president at a major international bank. For a number of years he had been in charge of a large project in which he had invested a lot of time, energy and emotion. However, the top management had recently begun to make changes to the project that the man felt were taking it in the wrong direction and did not match with his values. It reached a point where he scheduled a meeting with the board of directors to try to get the project back on track. If they did not make some key adjustments, he would feel compelled to leave the company.

In a very real sense, his position was on the line and he would clearly need to "play the game" of his career. When he had been in front of the board of directors previously, however, he had always struggled. As he put it, the atmosphere was so "heavy" that he felt tense, contracted, constrained and unable to express himself easily.



By my helping him to practice finding and grounding in his inner zone of excellence, he was able to feel confident and calm and make a clear, compelling and charismatic presentation to the board. As a result, he was able to save his project, his integrity and ultimately his career.

A simple exercise can help you to find your "Inner Zone of Excellence". This exercise can be done on your own by following the 6 steps below:

1. Sit or stand in a comfortable position with both feet flat on the floor and your spine erect but relaxed (i.e., "in your axis"). Check that your breathing is regular and from the belly. (Shallow, short or rapid breathing from the chest would indicate that you are in a stressed mode.)

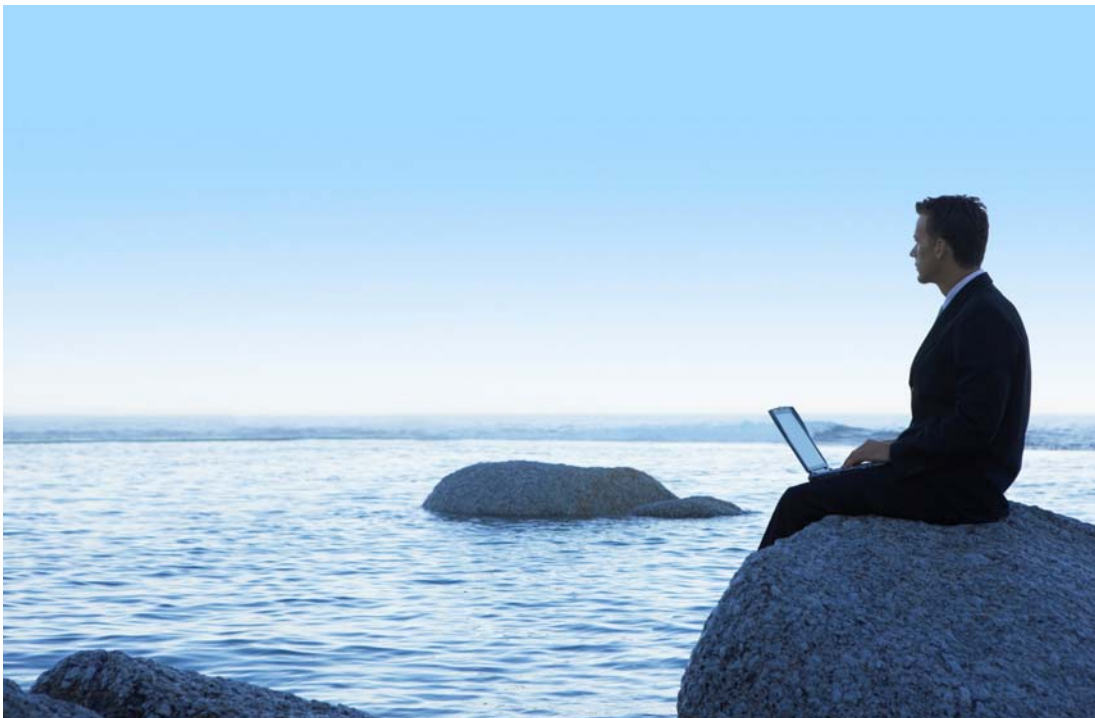
2. Bring your attention to the soles of your feet (i.e., put your "mind" into your feet.). Become aware of the universe of sensations in the bottoms of your feet. Feel the surface of your heels, toes, arches and the balls of your feet.

3. Begin to expand your awareness to include the physical reality (the 3-dimensional space) of your feet and then move up through your lower legs, knees, thighs, pelvis and hips. Become aware of your belly center and say to yourself, "**I am here.**"

4. Continuing to stay aware of your lower body, move your awareness up through your solar plexus, spine, lungs, rib cage and chest. Focus on your heart center and say to yourself, "**I am open.**"

5. Expand your attention to move up through your shoulders, upper arms, elbows, lower arms, wrists, hands and fingers, and up through your neck, throat, face, skull and brain. Bring your awareness to the center in your head, behind your eyes, and say to yourself, **“I am awake. I am alert and clear.”**

6. Staying in contact with the ongoing physical sensations in your body and the three centers, become aware of all the space above you, reaching into the sky; all of the space below you, going into the center of the Earth; all of the space to your left; all of the space to your right; all of the space behind you; all of the space in front of you. Say to yourself, **“I am ready.”**



You can use the opportunity of Robert Dilts presence in Romania, during April 24-26, 2009, in order to directly learn from him this kind of techniques presented in the workshop „Coaching at Identity Level”. It is the best moment to act, before crisis evolves and forces more expensive solutions. Reserve your place on www.dilts.ro to what the media already presents as being the “Coaching Event of the Year 2009 in Romania”.

Tip:

There is an **important 80 EUR bonus** reserved for early birds like you, which reserve their place before February 27, 2009. Therefore, act right now and get all the benefits of this workshop!