



Today's Quote:

The definition of genius is that it acts unconsciously; and those who have produced immortal works have done so without knowing how or why. The greatest power operates unseen.

-William Hazlitt
1778-1830

In The Zone By Zoning Out

By Ralph Simone

I was watching my son's workout with a personal trainer recently and couldn't help but noticing how well he was performing some fairly difficult movements. He was balancing on a wobble board (a very unstable situation), while catching and tossing a weighted ball. I was both amazed and proud as I watched the erectness of his posture, his balance, and the quality of his tosses and catches.

What I didn't notice, at least not at first was that the trainer was engaging my son in a discussion that was unrelated to the task at hand. Therefore my son was allowing his subconscious mind to take over. He was present, yet not consciously thinking about what he needed to do. He was in the *performance zone* by zoning out. He was relaxed and not obsessed or concerned about what could go wrong in the next moment. He was just doing what he trained his body to do, naturally and effortlessly. This experience really got me thinking about when my own performance had been in the zone – operating at a high level of effectiveness without much conscious thought or unnecessary mental interference.

How often do we sabotage our own success by over-thinking what it is we are doing? By anticipating and re-anticipating what might go wrong, we are wrapping ourselves in a blanket of anxiety which prevents our performance from really unfolding.

So the next time that you are about to perform an important task, put yourself in the performance zone by getting out of your head and allowing your body to do the work: *zone in* by *zoning out*.

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Leadership Practice:

- 1. Short Meditation**
- Sit in a comfortable and relaxed position for 5 - 10 minutes literally zoning out, not thinking about anything. If and when a thought pops into your head, just notice it and allow it to float away.
- 2. Breaking the Loop** - When you find yourself stuck in an endless stream or loop of over thinking and analyzing, zone out or break this loop by doing the following. Picture something from your past, hear the associated sounds of that event, and vivify the feeling associated with the recalled experience.



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