

From: L. Michael Hall

I sat down in a restaurant in my hometown last week with a young couple. The guy I knew. In fact, I have known him all his life. He was 2 years old when I first moved to Colorado, the son of some people with whom I became friends and have remained friends all these years. Several years ago I met him again, now for the first time as he had become a young man. It happened when I went to a "Real Estate Group" in town. The group had invited me to come and speak to them about Real Estate, and lo and behold, there was a full grown man where I once only knew a little boy who had played with my daughter when they were children. Now he works in an engineering firm, draws customized blueprints for people, and I recently discovered that he will be getting married this October.

Now years and years ago, I had taught his dad NLP (wow, talk about an induction that makes me feel old!). In fact, his dad attended some of the first sessions I ever did when I first created and ran "Western Colorado NLP Training Center." Now this young man kind of knew something about NLP, but not really. His interest was more on the order of "Rich Dad; Poor Dad" a book and he and others read together in a study group. Then he heard about my new book, Inside-Out Wealth.

But this post isn't about wealth creation, nor modeling wealth creators, nor NLP, it's about coaching. That's because he asked about the next training I'd bring back to Colorado and I told him it would be the Meta-Coach training in 2011. He asked where I was going this next week, and I said Hong Kong for Meta-Coaching. So he wanted to know what this strange thing is, this "Meta-Coaching."

Now I hardly ever explain Meta-Coaching to someone who has never even heard of the field of Coaching or NLP or self-development. Distinguishing Meta-Coaching from other Coach training programs, that's a subject I am ready to go with and have a full list of bullet points to cover. But someone who doesn't even know that there's such a thing as Coaching— now that was a stretch. So I talked about the helping professions, therapy, training, consulting, then coaching. Then talked about the most successful people hiring at top dollar Executive Coaches or Personal Coaches. That's when he turned with a genuine puzzling look on his face and said:

"If these people are so successful; so committed to their own growth and development; so far along the road of developing their best potentials, why can't they just coach themselves and save all that money?"

Ah, for a truly innocent question! And a question that asks the obvious in the most curious and sincere way. "Ah, self-coaching ... that is the most advanced form of coaching of all." I said. And I left it at that, just waiting for the follow-up question.

"It is? But why? What's so hard about coaching yourself, especially if you are committed to yourself and your growth?" Don't you love such dumb, innocent, to-the-point questions? And that was precisely the question I wanted.

"Because of blind spots, that's why. We all have them and even the most psychologically healthy person on the planet, the most self-actualizing person, has blind spots and needs someone who will challenge them, confront them, and not let them sell themselves short or fail to confront them. And this is especially true of the most successful and effective of people because our greatest blind spots hid in our greatest strengths."

That got him, and her too! "What? I don't get it she said." "How could that be?" he added.

"That's because when stresses come, when pressures arise, we all tend to play to our strengths and it is so easy to over-play to your strengths and especially if you have been highly successful in your strengths."

They still did not get it. And since that was the very day when CEO Hayworth was forced to resign from BP, I used him as an example.

"I bet he would be a real bear in a board room negotiating with top level executives, don't you think? I bet his go-at attitude and his ability to shoot straight and think in terms of his shareholders would make him a real powerhouse."

Yes, their heads were nodding.

"And that very strength was his weakness in terms of handling the public and the media. When people needed to hear his 'heart' about the death of 11 people and the loss of thousands upon thousands of jobs

due to the oil spill, he comes out and says he just wants his life back! ... His strength of operating from first-person and fighting for himself and his company was his very weakness in terms of managing public relations! We are most tempted at our strengths."

And that's why he really needed a Coach — an Executive Coach — and I bet he didn't have one when he most needed one. They got it but they wanted more, "any other examples that you can think of?" they asked.

"How about King David in the Bible. Now there's a real go-at it type of guy. A guy even when a kid ready to grab some stones and run out and slay a giant! And this was his strength as a leader of men. But later in life when he was in the palace and he saw Bathsheba, he did the same thing. He jumped into things and ended up having sex with her and having her husband killed before he thought things through. His strength was his weakness. And that's why we need a coach.