

## Interview with Robert Dilts 20.10.2017

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C:

Dear Robert, we are here in Nürnberg and in the seminar that has the topic “Conscious Leadership and Dynamic Teaming and Collective Intelligence”. And as I can see here the people are very inspired and take very deep insights with them. So, if we look at business and considering the rate of illness, depression and burnout rising, what is it that makes leadership really a “conscious leadership” and a teaming really a “dynamic teaming”?

R:

Well, first of all, I think, what makes a leadership “conscious leadership” is that the leader, whoever is in a leadership position has an awareness of what we would say “the holon”. The holon is, we would say, all of the stakeholders. And all of the stakeholders are in any task or project, where there are going to be many different people affected and involved and influenced. Very often, one of the main challenges and one of the main things that either fail or create stress or create problems is because the focus is on only a few of the stakeholders or on one stakeholder or only on the leaders particular point of view.

So a conscious leader is able to be aware of all of the implications of what they are doing. Now with awareness by the way I don't just mean conscious cognitive awareness. In fact, conscious leader have a lot of, we would say, unconscious competency. So, this notion of consciousness is how much of the whole am I able to keep present with me as I make decisions, as I move forward. And this something of course that is challenging. It's not easy. But it is part of what we are being called upon to do in the world today.

You see, all of the stress, the damage, the violence you see is usually the result of unconscious leadership, right? Dictators are particularly a good example of somebody who is basically only concerned with a small part of the whole system, which is trying to get something for themselves and to dominate others. Conscious leaders are working to inspire others, to awaken a collective vision, not impose their vision. And this is where dynamic teaming comes in.

Dynamic teaming first of all, the notion of dynamic is that more and more today, each person has not only just one team you are working with your whole career of your whole life. You have many teams that you are working with, even an individual.

I was just speaking with somebody the other day, she is the vice president of Nintendo, but she also happens to have a malignant melanoma in her brain. So she has her teams she works with in Nintendo - they make theme parks and video games - but she also has to have a medical team, that is helping her. She is here in Europe, in Paris, she also goes to Tokyo, so she is working in many, many, many different teams and each of us in our small way do the same thing.

So, in dynamic teaming the idea is: how can you have very quickly an effective team, that is sharing a vision, that is working cooperatively, in order to achieve something together, that contributes to making the holon better? And even if we think of the idea of somebody's health, like this person of Nintendo, obviously her health affects herself, but also affects her child, her family, her teams, that she works with, ultimately it affects the company. Her health affects the company. So, I think this is part of what I mean by "consciousness": to realize that, all of these things influence each other. And it's obviously a type of a systemic perspective, but it's not an analytical perspective!

So again, the kind of things that we've been learning here are :  
how do we create the kind of state or the kind of practices that make to help us to do that.

C:

Thank you! Yes, those are really very important key factors you are mentioning and there are many misconceptions. So what can people do as a self skill to be more conscious or to be more dynamic? What can they do?

R:

Well, first thing is, I always like to say: because it is complicated you need to simplify. So how do I develop my own consciousness or develop my consciousness as a leader?

I often make the use of this notion of the 3 "p"s: people, profit, planet. Or you can say: people, project, planet. Or something by which you realize, ok, these are the things I have to keep in mind. It doesn't mean that I'm going to be perfect at first, it doesn't mean that I have to be perfect, but it means, being constantly reminding myself, where to keep my attention.

I always like to say, what you see in any team, company, society, person is: whatever you are not aware of, is going to show up as some kind of a problem, as some kind of a resistance. Meaning that is to give us an example, because I coach managers and people working in companies so much, if all my attention is just on my business and profit and I am not paying attention to my own body, not paying attention to my family, I am not paying attention to the planet, those things will start to have predictable problems: my health will deteriorate, my family... - that's why so

many people they have a health problem, a divorce, right? Or as we see the condition of our planet today things are more and more damaged.

So, the first thing is, to also realize: I don't have to be that chief executive of a big international company in order to be a conscious leader, in order to make a positive difference in this planet. You know, I practice myself, simply – you know, in California we've been having 6 years of drought, so when I turn on the shower, I put a bucket, so I collect the water – and when I think then of what people do with fracking, where they are wasting billions of gallons, you might say: what difference does it make? But it does make difference!

And it's a consciousness that makes the difference. And through that consciousness, through my own practice, I want to bring more and more into this holon. So I make a point and turn out the lights when I am leaving home and I am unplugging the computer. It's this notion of being aware that what we do makes a difference.

Because I am not one little separate “me”, I am part of it and what I do makes a difference and also: I am an example.

So I would say, all change and all learning starts with a shift of mindset. So I take on a mindset that first of all, I am part of this, what I do does make a difference, and even through my actions I will be a role model for others. And so again I think that is the first part and to realize, as we say in English: it's a long game. Right? It's not like: if I do this, tomorrow I'll see a result.

Sometimes it takes persistence, it takes consistency and the reason you want to do it, is for your own benefit and as well as for the benefit of others. So this is how I would answer that.

C:

So right. And what I remember now is that you mentioned very often nature and you often say, when you go to the woods or if you go jogging or if you see the sea, this has also an impact on you because we are part of this world also. And you mentioned the body also very much. So sensing the body and nature are both topics I would like that you may be say some words to this still.

R:

I think, when we talk about consciousness and I said, it is not just rational, intellectual consciousness, the type of consciousness a conscious leader needs and the type of consciousness that we need more and more today is a total consciousness. And for me, the body represents what we would call “somatic intelligence”, that is something that my rational mind doesn't know. So the body has a wisdom and it has intelligence – people often speak about the importance of emotional intelligence – if you don't have a body you have no emotional intelligence. And when you put the body into motion I think it begins to, it enhances our - we say “all leadership is about

having a direction and having energy”, right? It’s about going somewhere. So to have energy I need a body. And the more that I care for the body the more that I involve the body, the more energy I have.

I mean, I have practices. You were talking about running. I run every morning because it’s a way of connecting into my body, of engaging my body and also of processing things through my body. You know, I use that as a way and also part of my problem solving. Now, it’s not an analytical problem solving, it’s more an intuitive form of working with these things. But I know the importance of my body not just as a machine, my mind gives instructions to, but as partner in everything that I do. And this: tuning into my body, listening to my body, following what people call “intuition”, listening to the heart, listening to the gut.

Now nature is also part of this. When we talk about “holon”, we are part of something much bigger than ourselves. Nature has been here on this planet a lot longer we have us as humans. So there is also an intelligence in nature. There is a wisdom in nature. And I find, solutions come to me, resources come to me in nature, that I could have never met, sitting in front of my computer. I never get that, unless I get up and I walk and I move and I engage with nature.

That’s what we call “field intelligence”. We are part of something bigger than ourselves. People use sometimes the term “Gaia” to talk about the earth, the life and the intelligence of the planet and the earth. And what I have found, I mean, of course I come from California and I am sure, that sounds very “Californian”, but what I found is, that this is what the best leaders are doing: they are not just analytical, linear focused, dominating egos. Certainly there might be that leaders in leadership positions, but it’s usually not healthy, sustainable leadership. It’s usually some kind of win-lose leadership. And our world has way too much win-lose in it today. Again, this is part of what we are looking for. Part of the dynamic in “dynamic teaming” is that it is not about everybody sitting around and logically analyze something, it’s: we are engaging the body, we’re engaging in relationship, we are creating resonance, not only just between the people in the team, but, again, with nature, with this bigger holon. So these are the kind of things we are doing and I think, not only does it create better performance but it creates better satisfaction and it creates better innovation, it is more generative.

C:

That’s very true. And it creates beauty. So when you see what happened here in the seminar and that the people are really so inspired we thank you so much for your input and your influence and hopefully we can give a contribution together to make this world a better place. So thank you, Robert!