

## Episode #4: How to Succeed Without Suffering

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### **CANEEL:**

Welcome to Allowed. I'm your host, Caneel Joyce. Thanks for joining today. Today we're going to talk about how to succeed without suffering. How can you do this? We can do this by identifying your zone of genius, to think before you listen about what are you here today to learn? What do you hope to get out of this experience that we're sharing today and how do you hope to be different?

On the other side, I'd like to begin by sharing a story, a story about my own personal life and where I really kicked off the journey of recovering my own zone of genius after pushing it into the shadows for such a long time. And I did this through a process of pain and hard work and recovery and especially for me, listening to my body. After that, we will get into some hands on exercises that have been proven time and again with my clients and many others all over the world to help people identify their zones of genius.

And I'll also give you access to a free resource to take this exercise further and push your zone of genius into your own daily life. You are allowed to love all parts of yourself. You are allowed to kick ass so much more easily than you might know and you're allowed to reach your full potential and be healthy and happy while you're adding tremendous value to the world and having the impact that only you can have. Now let's begin the show.

Before we dive in, I want to reiterate something that I shared in the last episode, which is that my group coaching program is going live soon. The support of a group is just so powerful in helping us heal and grow as humans. I personally have grown tons by being in a group coaching setting and the window for registrations is going close on December 15th so please get your registration in ASAP.

Go to [Caneel.com](https://caneel.com) and apply and register there and we're really excited for the cohort that's turning out for this program and the content and exercises that we have planned. The richness and juiciness of a container like that that really can support your growth. So those listeners who are curious about what would it look like for me to grow in a group setting and

to be challenged to improve my communication, my power, my presence, my self-understanding and self-awareness, my ability to be in speak strategically and just my groundedness, my joy. If you're curious about those things, check it out at Caneel.com.

Very exciting to be kicking that off again and thank you to my listeners and my clients and community for really, telling me that this is what they want and it's something that I've been wanting to reignite for a while and it helps so much when I get your feedback. So thank you. And yes, it is here, it's available, but the window does close December 15th , so please go to Caneel.com and get your registration in.

Okay, now welcome to Allowed. Let's begin. So picture this, it's the year 2005. We're all still going to dance parties all night long in San Francisco. But I'm living across the Bay in Berkeley with my fiance and I'm working on getting my PhD in Organizational Behavior at the business school. How in the world did I end up there?

I asked myself so many times and I still am baffled at it. This was not a fun experience for me. I found that about six weeks into the program after reading about 500 to 600 pages of scientific research articles a day that I was really not a good fit for this program. It seemed like it was a program that really was well suited for those who love sitting down and doing a bunch of work that is a very solitary and analytical and has a certain kind of hard-ass quality to it.

This is a very, very quantitative program at the time and quantitative skills were never my top skills. I'm very, very grateful for what I learned in the process, including how to think more analytically and rigorously and how to think more quantitatively. Um, but also especially what I learned from all of the heartache and the suffering that went into this program experience for me.

So I'm sitting there in my cold little apartment at a big, cheap IKEA desk in a really, really uncomfortable, extremely cheap office chair, which probably I found in somebody's trash can. They didn't keep the heater on in my building throughout the day. And so in the winter it was extremely cold building, was about a hundred years old and very, very drafty. I was not in charge of the heat so I would sit bundled up and I was studying, I was studying really to save my own identity, to save my own ego and to fulfill what I thought was the story I needed to fulfill in order to receive love, acceptance, and belonging.

I come from a very academic family and I can't even tell you how proud my family was of me when I got into this elite program. I was pretty blown away myself and it was really important to me to follow through on this six year experience, even though I found it so

challenging. The thing is is that I was blaming myself for this program not being a fit for me. I gradually watched my myself become anxious and depressed.

I began developing aches and pains. I began developing insomnia and I even saw my own mind become more and more ADHD as I was pushing it into activities that did not come naturally, didn't bring me any joy. And because of that didn't seem to add much value into the world. Fast forward as a little foreshadowing, I ended up becoming very successful at the end of this program, after I began to resolve some of some of the ego issues that were there.

So I'm sitting there studying for about 14, 15 hours a day and I decided, "wow, I'm studying so much right now." I'm getting ready for my comprehensive exams that I also need to balance this out with some pretty intense exercise. I've never been a great runner. I really enjoy running, but every time I run, I find that I get injured in some way. It just doesn't seem to suit my body. I decided I'm going to train for a race. So when I was done studying for the day, I'd hop up and I would go out into the Berkeley Hills and the south part of Oakland over there by the Claremont hotel, beautiful area, and I'd run. About two weeks into this training program for my race, I noticed that my back was clicking right around my hips. Every single time I took a step.

Fast forward about three weeks later, I noticed that I couldn't feel my right leg. And then my right foot was icy cold all of the time. And when I'd fall asleep at night, it was after hours of struggling to get comfortable and to feel at ease in my own body. But still the numbness remained about three weeks after that, I could no longer walk. I didn't know what was going on, but I knew I was in a lot of pain and I was beyond devastated. I was so frustrated. I had just had a paper accepted to present in Hawaii at a conference. I was so excited about going to that on, you know, on my fellowship's dime when I was a very poor student and I couldn't even walk down the block. So that just wasn't going to happen. I couldn't make it through sitting through a whole entire class.

I certainly couldn't sit and do, you know, do my studies as I was supposed to. And this was a massive wake up call for me where I, I was just faced with the inevitability that I had to renegotiate my life. I had to go to all of the professors who I already felt were disappointed in me. Probably a lot of that was projection on my part, my own insecurity.

But I had to tell them that I can't come to class. I can't come to Colloquium. I'm not going to go to that conference. I'm not going to work on this paper. You may not see me for a while until I get this resolved. Getting a result took a really long time. Um, back pain is very

complex and often has a real deep emotional and social and spiritual component to it. I didn't realize this at the time and so I pursued, you know, all of the traditional approaches.

I went to physical therapy twice a week. It took me about 40 minutes to walk three blocks to physical therapy. I used to cut through the back of a hospital and through the front cause it was a little shortcut. I just found all the shortcuts to make it as slow and as short as possible. I remember once I was carrying a paper down the street with my fiance, who's now my husband Roy, and I couldn't, I found that couldn't even hold the paper without it creating like imbalance in my body and a lot of pain.

So this was a super challenging thing. So I pursued the physical therapy. I went to the doctor, I had an MRI done, I had cortisone shots and I started doing chiropractic, which was the first time in my life I'd ever been to a chiropractor. I went to acupuncture, I had all different types of massages. I took loads of supplements and vitamins. I was trying everything.

And it wasn't until I read Dr. John Sarno, his book called, "Heal Your Back", which is a fantastic book. Then I began to understand that my back pain might not just be physical in nature. So I was aware that I'm a hyper mobile, I have a hyper mobile body. I'm super, super flexible in all of my joints and so I am prone to getting injured without feeling it at first. Uh, but everything came out clean on the MRI. There was no herniated disc, there was nothing. So it still felt very mysterious.

And Dr. Sarno's book explained that in order to heal your back, you need to heal yourself physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. And as I worked through those layers, I slowly began to get better. The first lesson I learned from my back pain was that I needed to be in charge of my life, which like, "Holy moly," can you imagine a greater gift at age 25?

I needed to say "no". I needed to draw boundaries. I needed to stand for, you know, I understand what I need, even if it doesn't make sense to you, it's not going to work for me to let it get to me. I also understood that you can listen to what experts say, but if it's not working for you, keep figuring out what will and keep at it. And then this thing about how my emotions were connected.

I remember when I distinctly, in an embodied way, felt what Dr. Sarno had been talking about in those chapters of the book. And it was while I was, uh, so my husband and I moved to, actually, this is right before we got married. My fiance and I moved to Amsterdam for six months. A cold, damp city, perfect place for a person with horrible back pain. And, uh, we were having a hard time there.

It was a depressing kind of winter. You know, we're both from California, not really used to the cold and the constant rain. And it happened. We got there on January 3rd. We didn't leave until June, but it snowed that year in Amsterdam until May 2nd. So the darkness, the short days, the cold, the low, heavy, dark clouds, all of this just contributed to this like greater and greater depression for me.

And I remember one night he and I got into a fight and what I love to do when I get in fights, is I go and I get in a hot bath and I just lay there and I calm myself down, I tune out, you know, and now I realize I'm just heroing myself and avoiding the problem oftentimes, but it's in a certain way effective just to get myself grounded again. And I found that night as I laid there in the bath, feeling so hurt and angry and sad and just completely like I, I don't have any power over this situation.

I felt the anger in my hands and in my chest and in my stomach. And then I traced it as I noticed myself pushing my anger down and literally the pain moved from my chest to my belly, to my back. And then it stayed there. I was pushing my emotions into my back. I was pushing my shame into my back, my self-disappointment, my fear, my, my sadness. My feeling that I am not enough. And all of that was living down there unprocessed. And I noticed how much I was just holding onto it.

Then I said, well, "what would happen if I just let it keep going?" And I just very, so slightly, opened up the inside of my body. I don't even know how to explain how to do that, but I felt it then begin to grow. And then it dissipated. And it felt like the layers of an onion were like unpeeling inside of me. And I remember having the thought like, "Oh, this is what it's like to do your work. This is what it's like."

And that moment marked a real turning point for me as I reconnected with my own intuition about what was going to work for me and what wasn't. It began to remove some of the mystery and some of the need to understand all of the different variables. And if you know me, you know I'm a rabid researcher and so you can't even imagine how much I was learning about back pain at the time. I realized that all of that understanding in my head wasn't giving me the answers and that the answer was going to come from listening to my body tell me, guide me into what it needed to do. But in order to do that, I needed to be willing to listen and I needed to be willing to let it talk and let it, let it have space.

I couldn't keep just shoving my emotions in. This really kicked off a journey of me redesigning my entire life. When we moved back to Berkeley, I drove home. A friend of ours had been holding our car for us. We had a stick shift, Audi station wagon. Outdoors-y. Yeah, loved it. And went to go pick it up, drove it back down from the Hills to our place. And even though I had come back from Amsterdam like way, way better. Within those 15 minutes, I had sciatica again and I couldn't feel my foot. So okay, the car's contributing to this. Let's get

rid of the car and I will never be so grateful. You know, the way that my husband showed up for me in this time was, um, he really, you know, he really paid his dues here and so it was his car, but he said, "okay, let's get rid of it. Let's change."

And so we, we got a car that really worked better for my body. Also, I would sit on chairs throughout the house, or I'd sit on our couch or, you know, cheap foam couch. And I felt like, "Oh, as soon as I sit here, I start feeling that tingling pain." So we got rid of the couch and we began, you know, I remember we bought this couch on Craigslist and we brought it home. We realized it totally smelled like dog.

So my husband went and he rented one of those steamers and he like steamed it three or four times in a row. He was like obsessed, got that thing clean. And then we suddenly had a couch that we could sit on. So that I also realized that the days where I had a lot of sitting to do, like a lot of working at a computer, especially at a little laptop, which I had my, my neck looking down or if I had to go to a long class or sitting in a plastic chair, like worst thing of all, I would feel bad.

But the days where I was up at the whiteboard teaching, facilitating brainstorming sessions for a client, um, you know, running design sprints, running errands, cleaning, like those days, my body felt good and I felt like the more of those days I could string in a row, the better and better my body was feeling. So I decided, "okay, I need to find a job where sitting is not the main component of my job and where my job is to move." So if I can't sit and do a bunch of stuff at a computer, I need to arrange it that I don't have a bunch of homework after I go to those meetings. How can I show up and have presence be my career? And it just so happens that, you know, I was born a performer. I was raised on the stage, I was acting from age four on and it's been my biggest passion that like that was me going back to me.

It was me going back to using my body, my expression, my voice, and my presence in the moment to show up. And that's really where my value was coming from anyway. It wasn't from me sitting in a chair. And it can be that, you know, for you, your body is saying the exact opposite thing and that going meeting to meeting to meeting is super, super draining, but that you feel great after four hours of deep thought and writing, you know?

Or it could be that, you find that on days where you're only working with your verbal brain and you're not doing anything tactile or building something or even anything quantitative. These imbalances will show up for you and not just in, "I'm unhappy," because honestly we can't really trust that that might just be coming from ego, but it'll show up more in your energy and your presence and your body.

I basically started the process of looking for the career that was going to suit me and it took years. It took about at least 10 years until I was on a path where I was like, "now I'm doing what I'm going to do for the rest of my entire life." And that's, that's where I am now. So now I've done a lot of work around identifying my Zone of Genius, which was a concept I knew nothing about at the time. And I've been fortunate to go through many, many exercises to identify this and found the work so powerful and enjoyable and self-affirming and freeing, um, to learn that I can spend most of my life doing things that give me life. And that when I do things that give me life, it gives life to others. I don't need to push myself to do the things that are draining my life because it's not going to add value.

Even the things where I was in my Zone of Excellence, things I was doing very, very well that I learned to do very, very well doing. Only those things really would push me into this whirlwind of burnout, overwhelm, depression, overwork, burnout, overwhelmed, depression, just again and again and again. That was my cycle, so really just getting out of I need to do what everyone thinks I should do.

For me was one of the biggest shifts. It wasn't easy, it wasn't a path to riches, it wasn't something everybody liked and interestingly, it was something that when people heard what I was trying to do and live in my Zone of Genius, I got a lot of resistance about that from people. A lot of anger, a lot of judgment, a lot of how can you do that? Life doesn't work like that. Okay, well when you're willing to do it and you do it, if life isn't working that way for you, you're clearly not willing.

So that's why it's an experiment that is really worth trying and if you feel called into this work, I'm going to guide you through an exercise so that you can begin to identify your Zone of Genius. If you don't feel so called, I actually encourage you still to do it because this can at least help you get clear on, um, how much time am I doing on activities that I could easily move off my plate, delegate, minimize, um, what are the activities that when I do them too much might be sending me into burnout. It's a really massively increasing problem these days in organizations. You know, and also I think in in families. Certainly when I was stay at home momming, I got really, really burnt out.

So what is Zone of Genius? Zone of Genius is one of the four "Zones of Being" as I call them. And these four are, Zone of Genius, Zone of Excellence, Zone of Competence and Zone of Incompetence. I'll briefly tell you what each of these is and you might recognize this in yourself. Let's start with Zone of Incompetence at the very bottom. In my zone of incompetence, I am doing activities that I do not enjoy that drain my sense of being alive, that I'm not good at, that I find hard and where I don't create a lot of value.

You know for me as I mentioned before, quantitative skills are my strength only in certain ways. And one of the things I'm worst at is doing math out loud, especially in the morning. If

somebody asked me to add up a couple of numbers or the worst thing would be subtracting seven from like any number. I don't know why that's hard for me but it is.

So that's one where I'm gonna make mistakes most of the time. Another one is calendaring and doing project planning. Someone else should do this. I should not do this stuff. Which is so funny cause I used to think I wanted to be a project planner. I think I was just so desperate for the structure that would give me. At this point in my career, I'm so well supported by having two exceptional project plan oriented people on my team, Alayna and Heather, and these are things they're super strong in. So that's my Zone of Incompetence. I'm not great at it. I'm not enjoying it. It's really hard for me and I'm not adding much value.

The second zone, is the Zone of Competence. And this is the stuff where you get by. You might not love it. You probably don't hate it. It's not enjoyable, but it's not necessarily super hard. Um, you're not the best in the world in it, but it doesn't really usually matter too much. You can get by and afterwards you feel kind of like, man, like you certainly wouldn't want your life to be filled with this stuff.

So for me, it's paying my bills, managing my mail, washing the dishes. Sometimes I accidentally leave a little grease somewhere that I was just not paying attention to. Um, but you know, it's fine. I kind of enjoy it. I kind of don't, it's fine. Even, you know, driving your car or it could be things like managing, managing people, giving feedback, writing long form using social media. It can also be big things like speaking, you know, being vulnerable in front of a large crowd of people instead of a small group.

And it doesn't mean that in all these areas we can't grow. But if you're tapping in and you're realizing this, this is something that doesn't really give me life, it doesn't really create a lot of the impact I want to create and I'm not naturally inclined to do it anyway. That's my Zone of Competence and I really want to minimize the amount of time. So my Zone of Incompetence, my goal is to completely eliminate it. My Zone of Competence, I know I'm going to probably just to get through life, need to be there about 5% of the time, hopefully less.

Okay. The third zone is the Zone of Excellence and this zone is most high achievers favorite zone to play in. This is the one where we learned a long time ago that when we work really hard, we can earn gold stars from people. By gold stars, I mean approval from the outside of any kind. So people give us praise, we get rewards, we get status, we get paid. And a lot of these skills in our Zone of Excellence, in my observation, tend to be things that we honed while we were in school.

And in the United States at this stage, school is at least public school, it tends to be something that helps people to become more average, more normal, more acceptable. And you can excel in these very specific ways that the society really wants us to excel in, it doesn't mean that they're the only valuable ways, but they're ones that are often highly valued inside of organizations.

So we push ourselves really, really hard to get good at them and then suddenly we're great and then suddenly we're excellent. And we have spent so much of our life learning to be excellent in this, that we get really hooked. We love that feeling of like stress, pushing. Um, success and then rewards. It's an extremely addictive cycle.

The issue is even though we might really like doing these activities, we're very, very good at them and they are creating a lot of positive impact in the world, if we really focus only on doing those things, we are going to burn out. We're going to get overwhelmed. We might get oversubscribed too. We might put pressure on ourselves in order to keep doing them as much as we are doing them.

And in general, the process of getting more successful looks like harder, faster, more, which is exhausting over time. But like I said, lots of rewards offered in this zone. So it's a great zone to have in your back pocket. But how I'd like you to start thinking about it is how could I use those things I'm excellent at that really give me a lot of access and clout in the world, how could I use my Zone of Excellence as a buttress to support me living in my Zone of Genius primarily?

What's the Zone of Genius? The Zone of Genius is that zone of being where I am naturally great at something and it may be something super subtle, you know? For me it's creating environments of trust and inviting others into vulnerability and growth by kind of mirroring that myself and that's something that took a while to really put a fine point on, but it is something I'm naturally gifted at and I have been naturally gifted at that through my whole entire life.

The second element of Zone of Genius is that I really, really enjoy doing it. I love doing it. I would pay to do it, I would pay and if I, you know, if I could do it, yeah, almost all day long, I would end that day just full of life.

The last thing is I effortlessly create value. I effortlessly create a positive impact on the world. It may be one that is highly valued in a monetary sense by society, but often it's not often. It's something that is connected to our humanity, our creativity, our artistry, and how do I know that I'm in my Zone of Genius? Is I experience myself in flow, that highly creative state where I lose track of time and I even lose track of self a little bit. I get so immersed in what

I'm doing because I just intrinsically love it so much. Um, and it feels like there's a deep relationship between me and that activity and what I'm giving to the world that I am, I'm unattached to outcomes and my focus is on, I want to learn and I do want to be as great as I can, but I'm not comparing myself to others.

I'm comparing myself to, um, it's more, it's more of an intuitive process. Like how I know what great is and I'm going to pursue that on my own. In my Zone of Genius, I am fully present. I'm not thinking about the past or the future in, I'm kind of worried, anxious ways. I'm not feeling I need to clamped down on myself and pushed myself really hard to go. I may be pushing, but I'm pushing from myself. I'm not pushing myself, so I may be putting in a lot of effort, but it's effortless to put in that effort. I don't have to, you know, whip myself or give myself a bunch of little rewards along the way or convince myself of some scary story that people won't like me if I don't do it or that I won't be safe in the world if I don't do it or whatever. It's much more intrinsically motivated in that.

So those are the four Zones of Beings: Zones of Genius, Excellence, Competence, and Incompetence. What I love about this model is that unlike other kind of performance oriented, success oriented personal growth models where the focus is on how can you do what you're doing and do it better, um, how can you do it more? How can you do it harder and bigger and faster? Like I said, that can really lead to burnout or we're super successful and we're unfulfilled. We have the sense that we're not living up to our full potential.

So we keep buying into this idea that if we just learned one more thing and we pushed ourselves harder, we'd have that sense of fulfillment. These are all myths and they're really deeply rooted in scarcity, scarcity mindset that says, I am not enough. I am not enough unless I do more unless I do, I'm better. Zone of Genius, on the other hand says, it's about your state of being and you'll know when you're there because you will feel it. It'll feel like the sense of ease and deep engagement at the same time called flow presence. I'm here to affirm that you are not missing anything. Just imagine with me for a moment that you are and always have been enough. You have always been enough.

Imagine that you've always been enough in every way. You've always been smart enough, brave enough, creative enough and that all of what seemed to be your shortcomings right now have all been there for a reason. Maybe it's for your own learning. Maybe it's for somebody else's, and it doesn't mean you haven't faced challenges, but you've been enough to make it through every single one of those challenges and that's allowed. You do not have to suffer to succeed.

Now that we've covered what the Four Zones are, let's take in and find out what yours are. I'd love you to grab a pen and paper, hit pause if you need to and come right back. This exercise will take about 15 minutes. At [Caneel.com/podcast-4](http://Caneel.com/podcast-4), you will find worksheets that

can guide you through this. Or you can just hand draw this yourself, which I'll guide you through. You'll also find a link to a webinar that I offered guiding people through this exercise hands on. So if you want to have me walk you through it on video and listen to the Q&A that happened after, you can access it there too.

So I want you to get a piece of paper and um, draw a big line through the middle of the paper so that there's a top half and a bottom half. On the top half of the page, at the very top of that, give it a title and have it say Zone of Genius. On the bottom half of the page, give that section a title Zone of Excellence, and then make three big columns, equal sized columns. So you've basically created a box with six squares across the three columns. Each of those columns has a title as well. The left one is be, "B E", the middle one is do, "D O", and the right one is have, "H A V E". and what I'd like you to do is go through each section here.

I'm starting with the middle column, "do", and I would like you to ask yourself for each of these Four Zones, what are the activities where you find yourself in this zone? So we've got Zone of Genius, Zone of Excellence on the back. You'll make the same diagram, Zone of Competence and zone of Incompetence. And what are the activities where you find yourselves in these Four Zones of being.

In your Zone of Excellence, this is where you're in flow. You're naturally creating value. It feels easy to work hard. It's not hard. You're not suffering any way, you're feeling extremely present, intrinsically motivated. You would actually pay to do this activity. It gives you so much life. What are the activities you're doing there and in the Zone of Excellence, what are the activities where you're really, really strong in them? You're one of the best and you're one of the best, not just because you were born with some natural skills but but also because you worked really, really hard to become the best and you continue to work very hard to become the best.

You might in this zone still feel like, "I'm not necessarily given life by this, but I really, really do enjoy it. I create positive impact but sometimes if I do these activities exclusively, I do get burnt out and overall I feel like these activities themselves are not what define me. They're not what give me, um, a sense that my time on this world is highly valuable. I'm feeling a little bit of a lack of fulfillment despite the fact that I'm great at it, it's valuable and I really love doing it." This is my Achievement Oriented Zone.

Then on the back, your Zone of Competence, this is the zone where you're good enough at it, you don't hate it, you don't really like it, and it leaves you as kind of "meh" feeling. So these are things that kind of need to get done, but they don't necessarily create a ton of value for you or anybody else. It's kind of hard to live without doing any of these activities.

And then lastly, Zone of Incompetence. And these are things where you really don't like doing it. It's hard for you to get yourself to do it. It's hard for you to do it well. It doesn't give you any life. It really drains your life. You find it irritating or boring and you're likely to make errors and not create a lot of value. That's your Zone of Incompetence.

So for each of those defined, what are the activities that you're doing in each of those? These would be verbs, usually with an "ing" at the end. For example, you know, in my Zone of Genius, as I mentioned, one thing I'm doing is I am opening up space for people to feel safe, being vulnerable. I'm creating environments of high trust so that people can learn and transform and I'm performing.

I'm expressing a human emotional experience and I invite others into feeling that experience in my Zone of Excellence. The activities there for me would be writing, singing, being a leader, using computers, doing design work. These are all things that are in my Zone of Excellence.

In my Zone of Competence, you'd find things like remembering names and faces after only one time, cleaning my house, and doing statistics. I'm good at it, but I'm not great. It's not super fun for me. I'm not pulled to doing it.

Then lastly, in my Zone of Incompetence, you'd find stuff like doing math problems out loud, creating project plans and sticking to them, running, playing any ball sport. These are all things in my personal Zone of Incompetence. You have your own, really think about what are those activities where you feel that way? Then I'd like you to look at the column on the left, the first column where you wrote the word "be", and this question is how are you being when you're in this zone. And the state of being would be something like your state of presence, whether you're very present or very non present.

You know you're non present, when you're stressed out, anxious, thinking about the past and the future, more than the present, when you're really, really in your head. That would be a state of presence. Another way of being might be words like, I'm being open, I'm being creative, I'm being tense, I'm being hyper-focused, I'm being scared. I am being inviting, I'm being alone. All of these would be states of being.

It also might include your values and your mindsets and your beliefs, those also fallen state of being. So what are the things that you're valuing when you're in this zone? What are some of the beliefs that are really driving you, motivating you, and what's the mindset that you're in overall? You know, for instance, I might find myself in some zones and being in a scarcity

mindset. In others, I might find myself in more of an abundance mindset. In some, I might be in a growth mindset where my motivation is to learn and only to learn.

Whereas in a fixed mindset I might have an orientation that I can never get better at this I have to push myself really, really hard. Um, my motivation might be more to succeed. So I'm in an achievement oriented mindset. So these are all in the "be" columns. So figure out how are you in each of these zones of being as you imagine yourself doing these activities that can really help and really encourage you to feel your body. What are you feeling in your body when you close your eyes and imagine yourself doing these activities? What's that like? What's that experience?

Lastly, we're going to go into the third column, the one on the right hand side where you wrote the word "have" and here, I'd like you didn't look at what are the results that you have when you do the activities in this zone, what are the results you get in the world and these would be the impact that you have on yourself, others and the world.

This would be the rewards or punishments that seem to come to you. These are the results and outcomes that you experience when you are coming from that zone, when you're doing those activities in that zone and do that for each of these four areas.

So in my Zone of Genius, one of the things in my "have" column, one of the results that I have is I have people who weren't willing to open up, become willing to open up. I have really good sleep. I have a career that feeds my body. Whereas in my Zone of Excellence, where I used to live most of my life, as most high achievers do, I have burn out. I have money, I have lots of money. I have a really jam packed schedule. I have stress and I have a title in an organization, I have status.

In my Zone of Incompetence, it's like I have errors all over the place. I make mistakes, I'm confusing to people. You get it. So that's in your "have" column and give yourself time to really think about each of these activities. For some of you, this may take only 10 minutes and for others you may want to spend as much as 45 minutes or even an hour on this. I find that most of my clients can get through it in about 20 minutes and it's also good to just go with your gut on this.

This is a map that the more you become attuned to what these Four Zones are for you, the more refined you'll be able to be, the more accurately you'll be able to, um, describe each of these zones and what you're doing and having and how you're being in each of these zones. So this is, you know, this is your first draft, but it's going to be a really, really good map. Even

if this is the first time you've ever learned about this concept, so just go for it. Keep that pen moving.

And you've got a clear map of what are you doing in each of your Four Zones of Being, what are the results you're having and how are you being in each of those? Just take a moment to notice like how radically different those zones feel to you, how different the results are that you have, and then notice too, like how much of your life are you spending in each of these zones today currently?

Like if you're really, really honest with yourself, how much of your life are you really spending your Zone of Genius versus your Zone of Excellence? How much is still in your Zone of Incompetence that's part of your daily life or that you're even responsible for to others, and then what are the stories that you've been telling yourself about what it would mean to change that mix.

Stories that I've heard and I've told myself are, if I'm living only in my Zone of Genius, I will go out of business. People will not like me. My employees won't trust me. My teammates will resent me. I can't possibly make a living doing those things. In my Zone of Excellence, like not wanting to move things up from competence into excellence. I might have stories about, it's not worth my time to invest in getting better at that activity.

Zone of Incompetence. This is my favorite one. I've got so many people who just say this, "it just is how it is." Everybody has to do these activities. Who am I to think that I can outsource this? Who am I to think that I would ever be able to create the opportunity where there's a real synergy there and where delegating this thing actually pays off for everyone. Where it's a win for all. Who would I be if I didn't suffer through these activities and my some pre-madonna?

And I'm here to say no. What you're doing by shifting out of your Zone of Incompetence and moving up that ladder so that you're living primarily in your Zone of Genius, that is an act of tremendous service. It is courageous. It is bold. It is freeing. It is freaking exciting as you can ever believe. It feels good. It is nourishing. And when you walk around like the beam of energy that you're going to be, when you're living up there in that zone, good things will begin to happen. Naturally. Good things will come to you because you will be so magnetic that people will want to support you and you will so much more easily find the opportunities that really want you engaged, the opportunities that are going to really, really pay back for you.

So this is not a selfish act in any way. In fact, who are you to tell yourself that you are not allowed to do these activities? Who are you to say that you've got the grand master plan, your gifts are here for a reason. I really love this concept that I learned from a speaker, the author of "Transformational Speaking." Her name is Gail Larsen and I did a four day intensive speaker training with her in Mexico City this past summer, sorry, in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico this past summer. And she teaches about that each of us is born with an original medicine. This is an indigenous concept that each of us is born with an original medicine, that if we were to die, the earth would never have that medicine ever again. And it's something that is needed. So our job is to surrender to it and let it come through us and let the world have those gifts.

Thank you so much for doing this exercise with us for identifying also if you did some of the fears and the stories in your head they're using to limit yourself and thank you for envisioning what life might look like and feel like and the impact you might have if you were to live primarily in your Zone of Genius.

Now if you're on the go, walking around or doing dishes or you're commuting, maybe you didn't have access to a pen and paper, you just didn't have the time right now, but you're still here listening. Awesome. So now you've got a preview. Go to [Caneel.com/podcast-4](http://Caneel.com/podcast-4) and you can download these exercises including a video that will help walk you through how to use them. Like I said, you can also easily do it just on pen and paper with this podcast alone. But please go to that website.

And also if you sign up for my mailing list and I will email you every time I have a new episode come out so that you can be alerted to other podcasts that are coming up, are connected to this topic. Other things we'll be covering are how do you actually do the work of shifting your life and designing your life into something that reflects you living in your Zone of Genius that really supports you being there? How do you create a living that way? And we'll also get to hear some stories of people who have gone through life changing experiences of redesigning their life and living in that zone. So it's going to be a great ride together.

I've got a course actually launching around Zone of Genius. It's an online program that I'll be facilitating live and guiding you through a bunch more exercises and going way deeper into this and we will be launching that in January, so come and apply to that as well at [Caneel.com](http://Caneel.com).

I want to take a moment before you go to answer a question sent to me from one of my listeners, one of you, my fearless listeners, and the question is, "is the Zone of Genius an innate talent or is it learned?"

Zone of genius is definitely an innate talent. These are gifts that we're born with, but our whole life is a journey of learning how to leverage them and how to love them. Like so many of us learn other messages such as those talents of yours. Those are not okay here. Those are not allowed. Those are inappropriate. They are too big, they are too subtle, they are too soft, they're too crazy, they're too hard, they're too bold, whatever. And we get these messages and we onboard them and I find for many of us this becomes what are our 20s and 30s are about is being driven by those messages.

And then somewhere along the way we begin unraveling those until we finally are left with the essence of what we were born with to begin with. Our talent and the journey of personal growth is really the journey of recovering and re-loving and reclaiming those talents and then figuring out how to work with them and bring them out into the world in a way that supports you and has the impact that you are here to have on the world.

Next week on Allowed, we have a special episode in anticipation of the coming holidays, and this is about how to bring your Zone of Genius into your family life. Please also do us a big favor. We really appreciate all of the amazing reviews and ratings that we've received so far, and we're moving on up in the charts and this means that the world is going to be a better place. So please go onto iTunes and rate and review this show. Leave us a brief review in the review.

I'd actually love for you to use that as an opportunity to help me serve you better. So leave some feedback, ask some questions, request some show topics. Tell us what's been challenging you lately. I read each and every one of those reviews and then we bring that material into this show. In fact, almost all of the activities that I'm up to these days from my course, to this podcast are things that my clients and community and my audience have specifically requested. This is really great creative juice for me. Thanks for helping me learn to be better. Thanks for helping me serve you more and I'll see you next week.