

WINNING FROM WITHIN: A SYNOPSIS

This synopsis provides a refresher for those who have read the book or taken part in a *Winning from Within* leadership program. You may also wish to look at two online resources: the [Big Four Profile Survey](#), and a [Companion Guide](#) where we recommend articles, podcasts, and movies representing the *Winning from Within* archetypes.

BACKGROUND

Erica Ariel Fox's aim in *Winning from Within* was to examine the disconnect between what we know we should do and what we actually do. We refer to this as our [Performance Gap](#).

No matter how many leadership tools, models, or skills we learn, we cannot truly be effective as leaders if we are not aligned with ourselves. Without self-awareness and [self-leadership](#), too often we sabotage our good intentions without ever understanding why.

You have to understand your performance gap in order to close it, so behavioral change is impossible without [self-awareness](#). Leadership programs usually cover or indeed focus upon self-awareness without ever defining "self" or "awareness." In *Winning from Within* the self is not one-dimensional. Rather, we contain selves. These different internal voices jockey for our attention – some are stronger, others ignored. Our first objective is to explore [a map of these selves](#) so that we might bring all of their capacities to bear and so that we may negotiate more effectively with competing internal voices.

Self-awareness means knowing what our many selves are up to in each present moment and also recognizing the habitual patterns of our inner voices. These two modes of self-awareness are 1) [state-awareness](#): "How am I doing right now?" and 2) [profile awareness](#): "What are my tendencies as a leader?"

Most of us have long known there are several aspects of ourselves. How often have you heard yourself or another person say something like, "One part of me wanted

to go, but another thought it was a bad idea ...” Neuroscientist David Eagleman describes this concept of **multiplicity** like this: “A person is not a single entity of a single mind: a human is built of several parts, all of which compete to steer the ship of state. As a consequence, people are nuanced, complicated, contradictory.” The performance gap arises when one part makes a plan, and another part refuses to comply. The solution is to negotiate with yourself, mediating a conversation among these parts until they are aligned around a plan.

Neuroscience of personal growth – We’ve also recently discovered the belief that the brain stops growing in late childhood (only to begin its long descent!), is completely untrue. Instead, “information flowing through your mind sculpts your brain, as each thought leaves a trail of synaptic connections in your brain. The brain’s responsiveness is called **neuroplasticity**.”¹ The brain molds itself with every experience (or thought) whether we intend it or not and because of this, thought pathways change. According to one scientist, we might as well call ourselves *Homo plasticus*.

Learning modalities – *Winning from Within* goes beyond traditional leadership programs which often stop at skills and knowledge. In working with our deeper motivations, mindsets and behavioral tendencies, we must do more than engage the part of our brain that deals mostly in facts and acquiring conceptual knowledge. The techniques we use throughout the program (and indeed in what we recommend as coaching tools) rely on experiential, right brain activities to complement left-brain mode learning. Right brain activities include: using our body/somatic experience; art materials to create pictures and sculptures; symbols and innate archetypal energies. Research has shown playful, experiential learning accelerates the neuroplasticity of skill acquisition.

THE BIG FOUR: MAP OF THE SELF

There are many thought leaders who have created different frameworks for identifying the core parts of the self – Freud’s model had three parts, and Joseph Campbell’s had a thousand. In *Winning from Within* we hone in on seven. In researching how we might capture the essence of who we are, these seven aspects

¹ <http://www.rickhanson.net/>

of human nature surface again and again. The Big Four are archetypes of engagement with the world, each with its own set of skills, capacities, concerns, and sensitivities. The Transformational Three operate on your Big Four to facilitate your awareness, purposefulness, and development.

It can be helpful when coaching executives to introduce the Big Four as an executive team: our inner CEO represents the Dreamer and provides strategic direction. The CFO, or Thinker, considers consequences and risks. Our CHRO, or Lover, connects with and considers the needs of people. The inner COO focuses on execution and represents the Warrior. That said, taken too far this metaphor can get limiting. By their very nature, archetypes tap into a well of associations far deeper than what immediately comes to mind with more superficial labels.

<p>DREAMER (Possibilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspirational, sets vision • Dares to pursue dreams • Core strength: Creativity • Core intelligence: Intuition 	<p>THINKER (Perspectives)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical, manages risks • Applies fact and logic • Core strength: Clarity • Core intelligence: Reason
<p>LOVER (People)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relational, cares about feelings • Builds trust, collaborates • Core strength: Compassion • Core intelligence: Emotions 	<p>WARRIOR (Performance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical, takes action • Speaks hard truth, reaches goals • Core strength: Courage • Core intelligence: Willpower

Big Four Profile: Research shows most of us over rely on one or two of these archetypes and tend to overlook one, if not the other two. Knowing these tendencies in yourself constitutes profile-awareness. In addition, if we are to disrupt our patterns to respond more effectively, we need state-awareness to detect which of the Big Four is in play moment-to-moment. It won't always be the case that energies dominant within us remain in the driving seat all of the time; certain people and situations awaken different archetypes.

In many organizations the Thinker is overrepresented, the Lover underrepresented. In balancing the Thinker, it's useful to remember each archetype carries a different

intelligence and to use all four: [intuition](#), [reason](#), [emotion](#), and [willpower](#). The following are signs an archetype is unbalanced:

- **Dreamer** – Too high: Visions rarely go anywhere. Too low: Views problems as impossible barriers, rather than puzzles
- **Thinker** – Too high: Analysis paralysis and won't ever "shoot from the hip." Too low: Overlooks key facts or risks, can't get clarity on complex situations.
- **Lover** – Too high: Often puts the needs of others before own or the needs of the business. Too low: Finds it hard to imagine/plan for the impact of their decisions on others.
- **Warrior** – Too high: Pushes others too hard, executes too fast. Too low: Finds it hard to hold their ground or struggles to get things done.

TRANSFORMATIONAL THREE

The aim of *Winning from Within* is to rebalance the Big Four and activate neglected missing parts. Without this balance of the four, we end up with Dreamers who cannot execute, Thinkers who fail to consider the effect of their decisions on others, Lovers who value feelings over facts and Warriors who forge ahead without stopping to consider consequences (or even sometimes where they are going!).

But how do we accomplish this? How exactly do we detach from the voices in our head to gain sufficient distance and perspective? We need to know where on the map we are and how to navigate through that. Cultivating that awareness is the job of the Transformational Three. As the name suggests, these three are at the very heart of coaching and transformational work. They operate at a higher level than the Big Four. If the Big Four are your Inner Top Team, the Transformational Three are your Board of Directors, providing oversight, accountability, and direction.

As coaches, we take the stance of one of these Transformers in prompting our client to notice what is happening (Lookout); to make an informed decision on how to act (Captain); and to put their goals and experiences into a broader perspective, linking it to their life's work or learning journey (Voyager).

Transformer	Awareness tool	Essential nature
The Lookout	Perception	... notices in a neutral way what's going on with our inner state

The Captain	Presence	... makes decisions on how to behave, based on information from the Lookout <u>and</u> in taking into consideration the external situation
The Voyager	Path	... adopts the long term view and is concerned with our growth and development over a life time, it pushes us to evolve and is related to the growth mindset.

There are three steps to change our patterns to expand our Big Four profiles:

1. **Detect & Describe:** Stay close to data, describe the internal state or interaction. This is the job of the Lookout
2. **Disrupt:** Imagine other ways to act, consider new patterns. This is the work of the Captain.
3. **Design:** Create an action experiment that challenges a current mindset, including the feeling of "this will never work." This is the learning task of the Voyager.

The Lookout

The Lookout has an **inward focus** and is critical to a leader's self-awareness. Its job is to report to the Captain on our inner experience. It watches the Big Four in action to see them for what they are: impulses, suggestions, possibilities that we may or may not follow. The Lookout helps us know, at any given moment, "This is your Lover feeling those strong emotions, not you" or "That was your Warrior speaking there, not you." By observing ourselves in this way, stepping away from the inner dialogue, the Lookout allows us to be at a point of choice in how we behave.

The Lookout has a vital role during what we can call an "**amygdala hijack**." It notices when we're centered and when we are not. When our "buttons have been pushed", the stress hormone cortisol floods our bodies, interfering with clear thinking. We go into reactivity. If we don't find a way to diffuse the moment, we jump to defensive behavior (fight, flight, freeze). It's the job of the Lookout to notice that rush of cortisol, to press "pause," interrupting our urge to act out against the perceived threat. **Mindfulness meditation** is a core Lookout tool.

Chris Argyris, the pioneering academic who researched "learning organizations" and the dynamics of what he called open-loop learning, argued that to learn we must go beyond solving a specific problem to understand the underlying

assumptions that inform our thinking patterns. One of the tools we borrow from his approach (known as Action Science), is the [two-column case](#). We use it to examine challenging interactions we have had with another, to see our patterns and to consider what we might do differently.

Challenging situation we have faced:	
Left column: reflect and note down what you were really thinking and feeling, but did not say	Right column: write what you and the other person actually said
Later, we re-use the columns ...	
... using the left column, reflect on what the missing archetype might have said; start to engage the Captain	...scanning the right column with the Big Four in mind to discover which archetype was present or absent

The Captain

The Captain is the aspect of self that weighs up factors and decides how to act. In a VUCA world, it is vital to develop the Captain. It embodies the wisdom, values, and character demanded of leaders. It gives us the fortitude to move through adversity, chooses our course of action to close a Performance Gap and is our wisest self during stressful encounters. The Captain is associated with developing gravitas and presence.

The Captain has a heightened self- and [situational-awareness](#). It watches all around, with both an inward and an outward focus. It receives and filters information from the Lookout about our inner experience, and it tunes into what's going on around us. Unlike the Lookout, the Captain does not remain neutral. The Captain takes the available information and then steers the ship, so to speak.

Voyager

The Voyager develops our capacity and our identity over time. It takes us in new directions and keeps us moving forward, overcoming the fears that limit our potential. Of the Three Transformers, the Voyager takes the broadest view.

Carol Dweck, a professor of psychology at Stanford, has researched and helped popularize what we now call the [growth mindset](#) – an idea at the heart of leadership development and personal growth. What she observed is that people tended to

display either a fixed or growth mindset. The latter makes us resilient and helps us achieve far more in life. People who see their talent and abilities as fixed believe they're good at something or they're not. Hence, they long to be recognized for how smart they are rather than how much effort they put in. They view failure as evidence of a limit to their abilities, and they shy from challenges that might set them up to expose themselves in this way. They live smaller lives.

Those with a growth mindset see things very differently – they fail, they grow. They seek challenges; they *want* to learn. They do not see their talents or abilities as fixed, but rather ever-expanding for as long as they continue to stretch themselves. Such an outlook belongs to the Voyager within us. Not only does the Voyager see failure as a chance for growth, it's also interested in where that growth fits into our life story, the narrative we tell ourselves about where we have been and where we want to go.

All living things have a deep Voyager instinct to grow and adapt. Our Voyager was operating before we were born. The same intelligence that knew how to shape our bones and grow our flesh also guides our development as a leader. Because it is so deeply rooted, the Voyager can be the hardest of the archetypes to access directly. We start by sensing it, learning to trust the subtle hints of where our curiosity and interest take us next. We examine the trial and errors of our life to notice where we derive the most meaning and energy. These are clues about how to take our life forward.

The Voyager resonates with each of our Big Four. All four of the following refractions of Voyager prompt us toward personal growth:

- The Dreamer-Voyager gets excited about the inspiring possibilities of who we could become.
- The Thinker-Voyager notices patterns in our behavior, identifies unquestioned assumptions, and hypothesizes new ways we might operate.
- The Lover-Voyager cares deeply about our well-being, empathizes with our pain, looks for ways to heal and support us.
- The Warrior-Voyager is dedicated to our integrity, holding us accountable to our deepest values and commitments.

PRE-READING AND OTHER MODELS

The pre-reading *Embracing Ourselves: The Voice Dialogue Model* by Hal and Sidra Stone also explores working with different internal selves. In comparison with *Winning from Within*, both approaches:

1. Offer a map to navigate our internal parts
2. Rely on archetypes to label and describe those parts
3. Believe that to be in balance and to operate at our highest abilities; we must embrace all aspects of ourselves, including and especially parts we have disowned
4. Involve the internal part of us that acts as a witness or Lookout – simply observing without judgment what’s going on inside of us

Also, there are similarities in the maps each use. For example, there’s resonance between *Winning from Within* archetypes and Hal and Sidra Stone’s parts:

- The “pusher” is part of what we call the Warrior
- The “pleaser” relates to what we call the Lover
- “The playful child” subtype relates to the Dreamer

In coaching executives, we often pay considerable attention to the Thinker given the predominance of this archetype in the corporate setting. *Embracing Ourselves* is particularly helpful in shining a light on the many favored strategies of the Thinker – for example as the voice of the Critic or Judge (or Skeptic or when less balanced, Cynic).

While both models inform our self-understanding, and offer ways to coach others, *Winning from Within* has been devised specifically with the corporate world in mind; it offers a more manageable number and a neutral set of archetypes. *Embracing Our Selves* helps us deepen our understanding of voice dialogue as a technique and is an excellent exploration into the nature of primary and disowned selves.

Another comparable model: Egon Zehnder’s work on spotting an individual’s [potential](#) offer, another four-part model with similarities to the *Winning from Within* Big Four. Curiosity links to the Dreamer; insight to the Thinker; engagement to the Lover; and determination to the Warrior. Also, potential relates to the Voyager – both concepts are concerned with how we approach what we don’t yet know how to do.

WINNING FROM WITHIN: EXAMPLE COACHING QUESTIONS

Balancing the Big Four

- Dreamer – discovering a better future: *What is possible? What's one possibility you are excited about?*
- Thinker – gaining clarity: *What are the known or know-able facts of the situation?*
- Lover – connecting with feelings/relationships: *Who are you grateful for in this situation? Use the metaphor of weather to describe how you are feeling ...*
- Warrior – moving to action/taking a stand: *What are you doing/not doing in this scenario? What 'hard truth' might you need to state?*

Becoming Wise: The Transformational Three

<p>Lookout DETACHED (neutral)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which of the Big Four is currently activated? • Which is absent? • Which do you use most frequently, in what situations? • What voice is loudest? What voice has given up? • Are you feeling triggered/reactive? If so, which tendencies are exaggerated and unhealthy right now?
<p>Captain DECISIVE (judgment)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your purpose in this situation? What's the best outcome? • Are you moving too quickly? Is this the best choice in this moment? • When do you feel most in control of yourself/your emotions? • What might your wisest self suggest in this situation? • How might you include more of the Big Four to get to the best outcome?
<p>Voyager DEVELOPMENTAL (journey)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might you take this challenging situation and work with it to make an opportunity for you? • How would you title your life story? • What have been the critical crossroads in your life? • Where have you experienced major loss/disappointment and deep fulfillment? • Please describe a long term dream, vision or desire you hold.