# Discussion Guide

## FOR PROFESSIONAL TEAMS

"Few books speak the language of business and the language of personal growth
as skillfully as this pioneering book does."
—Douglas Stone, coauthor of *Difficult Conversations*

# WINNING FROM WITHIN

## A BREAKTHROUGH METHOD FOR LEADING, LIVING, AND LASTING CHANGE

### ERICA ARIEL FOX

FOREWORD BY WILLIAM L. URY, COAUTHOR OF *GETTING TO YES*

# Discussion Guide
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### ❯ Introduction

*Winning from Within™: A Breakthrough Method for Leading, Living and Lasting Change* is a rich resource for self-reflection and professional development.  With this discussion guide we are seeking to in tact teams to use the book as a jumping off point for reflection, discussion and higher performance.  Your team's engagement with this content could be as focused as a one hour brown bag lunch or as extensive as a six month "book club."

We hope this will enable readers to apply the Winning from Within™ Method to your workplace.  To that end, we have created a set of reflection questions about your own individual profile of the Big Four as well as your team dynamics.  We hope this will catalyze useful conversations between you about your own profiles, performance gaps, and inter-personal dynamics.  We have often used the Winning from Within™ method to provide team coaching to our clients and find that teams can make enormous strides in understanding each other, collaborating effectively and innovating together.

### ❯ Pre-Work

Below you will find a series of targeted questions to prepare in advance of your *Winning from Within™* team session. You might also consider any of the following additional steps as pre-work to convening your team discussion: Taking the Big Four survey, watching the videos in the *Winning from Within™* video library or reading Erica's related blog posts, all of which can be found on the book's website ( www.winningfromwithin.com ).
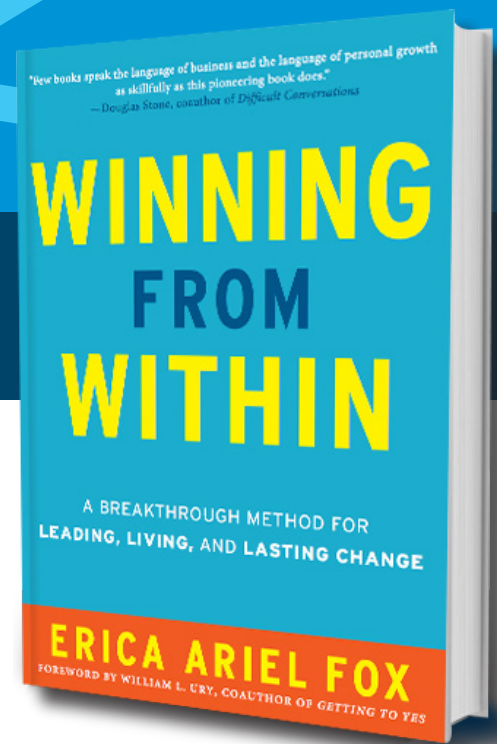
### ❯ Keeping in Touch

We'd love to hear from you as you and your team explore the themes and ideas in the book.  We are eager to learn how you are applying them in your professional lives and how the insights from the book are supporting your team development.  Please feel free to post insights, experiments and breakthroughs you have as you engage *Winning from Within™* in your work place.  We'd love to know about people in your organization who personify the leadership strengths of any of the Big Four as well as hear stories of how *Winning from Within™* is being embraced in your organization.

Please feel free to post pictures, reflections, stories and questions on our LinkedIn site at http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Winning-From-Within-3316037 and to follow Erica as a Linked In Influencer at www.linkedin.com/in/ericaarielfox.

We greatly look forward to engaging with you as you explore *Winning from Within™*.

*Erica Ariel Fox*

Erica Ariel Fox, Author

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Prepare for your next team meeting by having each team member complete the questions below including both the individual and team portions of this guide.
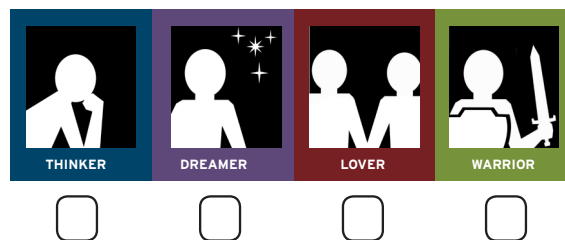
## Individual Profile

### Diagnostic Questions

1. Which of the Big Four inner negotiators do you most often express (mark this below) How do you know when you are expressing them?



| THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
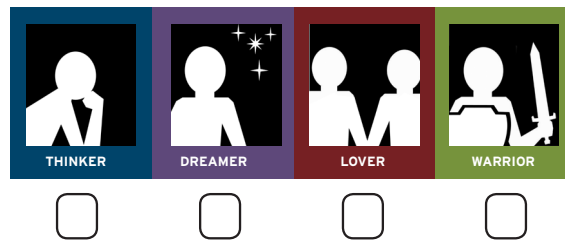
2. What are the benefits of expressing these inner negotiators? For You? For your team? For family and friends? What are the risks?

3. Which of the Big Four do you express least often, or not at all? How do you know when you are not expressing them? (Mark this below)



| THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## INDIVIDUAL PROFILE, CONTINUED

4. What are the benefits of not calling upon these negotiators?  For You?  For your team?  For family and friends?  What are the risks?

5. How does your Big Four Profile serve you?  How does it serve your team?  How does it hold you back?  How does it hold the team back?

### PRESCRIPTIVE REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL ACTION PLANNING

1. Which of the Big Four inner negotiators should you call upon more?

2. In which situations would it be most productive to call upon them more?

3. What concrete steps can you take to access them more easily?

4. How can others help you in taking these steps?

5. Which of the Big Four should you express less?

6. In which situations would it be most productive to express them less?

7. What concrete steps can you take to do this?

8. How can others help you in taking these steps?

## TEAM PROFILE

### Diagnostic Questions

1. Which of the Big Four are most often expressed on this team (mark this below)? How can you tell when they are being expressed?

| THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

2. Which are least expressed on the team (mark this below)? How can you tell when they are absent?

| THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
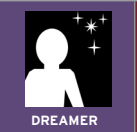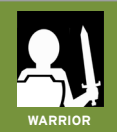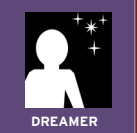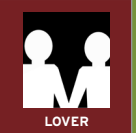
3. Think about each member of your team. Which of the Big Four do they express most? What benefits does this bring to the team? What risks does it entail?

| | THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
|---|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| TEAM MEMBER | | | | |
| TEAM MEMBER | | | | |
| TEAM MEMBER | | | | |

## Team Profile, continued

3. Think about each member of your team. Which of the Big Four do they express least? What benefits does this bring to the team? What risks does it entail?

| TEAM MEMBER | THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEAM MEMBER | THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |
| TEAM MEMBER | THINKER | DREAMER | LOVER | WARRIOR |

5. How does this Big Four profile serve the team? How is it holding the team back?

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### Prescriptive Reflection Questions for Team Action Planning

1. Which of the Big Four should your team call upon more often?

2. In which situations would it be most productive to call upon them?

3. Who would be willing to take responsibility for expressing those missing voices? How might this change impact the team in a positive way?

4. Which of the Big Four does your team access too often?

5. In which situations would it be productive to dial back those voices?

6. Who would be willing to take responsibility for dialing back those voices? How might that impact the team in a positive way?

## SAMPLE ANSWERS TO TEAM PROFILE

*Diagnostic Questions*

1. Which of the Big Four are most often expressed on this team? How can you tell when they are being expressed? (Mark this on the Team Profile below)

   *We have a lot of high warrior energy on this team, especially when we start talking about the budget. You can tell that many of us are expressing our warriors because we get very loud and interrupt each other. You can see it in the body language too – some people have their arms crossed and seem exasperated while other people are waving their hands while they fight.*

2. Which are least expressed on the team? How can you tell when they are absent? (Add this information to the Team Profile)

   *Lover is probably the least expressed. You can tell because people will minimize each other's concerns and won't take time to acknowledge the challenges that other people are facing. I guess there is real a lack of empathy and we don't really talk about emotions on the team. We tend to just express them in our voicetone and body language.*
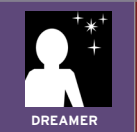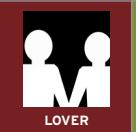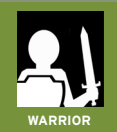
3. Think about each member of your team. Which of the Big Four do they express most? What benefits does this bring to the team? What risks does it entail?

   *Anya brings a lot of the Thinker to our meetings. That's beneficial in many ways but it's especially helpful when she can point out when our ideas might not be feasible or might raise a question in the client's minds. One risk of that might be that we get stuck on criticism and don't let ourselves be free to be creative.*

   *Mauricio brings a lot of the Dreamer. It's beneficial because he sees the big picture possibilities of our organization and stretches us to think big. One risk of that is that we can get sidetracked by the many possibilities and miss some of the more immediate tasks that need to be done. I guess another potential downside is we underestimate the risks and costs of pursuing our vision because we get caught up in the potential upsides and shared aspirations.*

4. Think about each member of your team. Which of the Big Four do they express least? What benefits does this bring to the team? What risks does it entail?

   *Lin does not express much of the Warrior. That can be useful because we have so many warriors on the team that sometimes no one seems willing to follow anyone else. It can be risky when Lin has a good reason to oppose what has been suggested and does not raise that objection.*

   *Jim does not express much of the Lover. That is useful because he often has a very clear head about things and doesn't seem overly influenced by emotion. It can be risky, too, because sometimes we need to acknowledge the feelings we're having about a certain issue and dodging those can cause us to bottle up our emotions, which leads to frustration. I think it costs Jim himself because he often is less connected to the rest of us and doesn't get included in certain decisions or certain social occasions.*

5. How does this Big Four profile serve the team?  How is it holding the team back?

*Our Warrior-heavy profile serves the team by making us task driven and generally efficient.  It also helps us by keeping us very competitive.  It holds us back by leading us to forget about the human side of our business and how our team members might feel about what is going on around the table.  And I think sometimes we lose time in conflict rather then just letting someone make a proposal and 80/20 letting it be good enough.*

*Prescriptive Questions*

1. Which of the Big Four should your team call upon more often?

*We need to call upon the Dreamer more often.*

*I think we have too little access to, and expression, of the Dreamer voice other then Mauricio.  We get so caught up in the day to day operations and the immediate firefighting that needs to be done that we can neglect the big picture.  Mostly I think that's fine.  We don't need to do visioning or strategic planning every meeting.  However, as we are making hard choices I worry that because we don't stay as close to the vision we might make short- term cuts that will really cost us in the long run.  And perhaps this also causes us to be a little more burned out and therefore short with each other because we aren't as actively inspired by, or in touch with, why we are working so hard in the first place.*

2. In which situations would it be most productive to call upon them?

*Well perhaps we should make sure that once a quarter we go back to the year's strategic imperatives and check our success along those benchmarks.  At the same time it might be useful, especially when we are making unexpected choices around funding or resource allocation or scoping to revisit the trade-offs we are making against the big picture.  I think there are also more informal things we can do around employee engagement and sharing success stories that will keep us in touch with our collective aspiration and the breakthrough we are bringing to the industry with our product.*

*Alternate Answer for #2*

*Calling on the Lover would be productive when someone has expressed a deep problem or concern and rather than just launching our own counterarguments we would instead pause to try to appreciate their point of view.  We could get a better sense of the impact on the situation on them and probably whatever they are concerned about is also reflected in the concerns of people in their department.  That would help us have more productive discussions and help people feel like they are part of a team but also help with internal communications strategy as we cascade our decisions.*

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3. Who would be willing to take responsibility for expressing those missing voices?  How might this change impact the team in a positive way?

*This is such a natural for Shari.  She cares so much about our products and the difference they can make in people's lives.  I know with her own team she regularly brings in the voice of the customer and talks about why we do what we do.  I just don't think she has felt like that really belonged in our senior team meetings.  If we change that I think we will find the meetings a lot less draining and contentious and maybe even a lot more efficient.  Keeps us focused on the prize.*

*Alternate answer for #3*

*Larry:  I've been a strong Warrior on this team and I would be willing to try, even for just a week, to bring forward more of my Lover.  I could do that by being more trusting of my teammates.  I think that would have a positive impact by making people more willing to try new things without fear of making mistakes.   It might also help us to de-escalate some of our constant conflict.*

4. Which of the Big Four does your team access too often?

*For sure this would be our Thinker.  We have so many analytical and technical people on our team we can get into a total analysis-paralysis.  Especially as we are in this proto-typing phase.*

5. In which situations would it be productive to dial back those voices?

*I think our innovation process gets bogged down with our critique mode and we analyze to death all of the possible reasons why something won't work or won't bring sufficient return on investment.  I think this shuts down our R&D process from being as innovative as it can be.  Maybe because we all are so seasoned we can stay in our own box and keep thinking stuff through instead of trying newer and more creative approaches.*

6. Who would be willing to take responsibility for dialing back those voices? How might that impact the team in a positive way?

*This would take some group reflection but my sense in advance of these discussions is that if Asutosh and Gary could just offer less analysis to every new idea that gets proposed and let the team engage in some rapid-prototyping to test upside potential we might see a pipeline that looks less like the same old same old.  Its not that we don't need the voice of their experience or rigorous analysis its just that perhaps they would be willing to suspect disbelief a little longer and come in with their best thinking and analysis of the data once the ideas have been incubated a bit further.*