WINNING FROM WITHIN: A Breakthrough Method for Leading, Living, and Lasting Change
By Erica Ariel Fox

“Practical introspection and guidance toward making lasting improvements, not by focusing on behavior or personality type, but by integrating all the parts that make us who we are.”

—Publishers Weekly

Life is a series of negotiations – from hashing out the terms of a new business venture to struggling with a stubborn teenager. And while books abound on negotiation strategy, the chief focus has been how to overcome the objections of the other person; surprisingly little has been written about the internal obstacles we face in these often-intense interactions. These split-second, internal negotiations with ourselves dictate what we say, how we act, and, ultimately, the success of our careers, business deals, and relationships.

In her new book, WINNING FROM WITHIN: A Breakthrough Method for Leading, Living, and Lasting Change (Harper Business; hardcover; September 24, 2013), Harvard Law School negotiation lecturer and leadership expert Erica Ariel Fox argues that the ability to achieve mastery over how we interact with others comes from understanding our “inner negotiators” – the multiple aspects of our selves that compete for the lead voice in any negotiation. When left to their own devices, these negotiators – Dreamer, Thinker, Lover, and Warrior (see attached) – will battle each other for center stage and sabotage our good intentions.

“By understanding yourself and the common traps you fall into, you’ll learn to turn breakdowns into breakthroughs, and you’ll stop planting your own mine fields,” writes Fox.
WINNING FROM WITHIN is the third in a series of books originating from Harvard Law School’s Program on Negotiation (PON), the world’s leading think tank on making deals and resolving disputes. In the first book, Getting to Yes (1981), William Ury and the late Roger Fisher changed the negotiation game by introducing the famed “Harvard Concept,” which separates the people from the problem. In the second book, Difficult Conversations (1999), Doug Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen addressed what to do when you can’t separate the people from the problem, because the other people are the problem. Now, in WINNING FROM WITHIN (with a foreword by William Ury), Fox builds on the work of her mentors and colleagues and explores the final component – what to do when you are the problem.

The key, according to Fox, is to find your “center” – a mental and emotional place of perspective, calm, and self-control. When you lead your life from this center, you are mindfully aware of how your inner negotiators dictate your reactions and choices in your interactions with others. Combining insights from psychology with practical applications from business, WINNING FROM WITHIN offers a method for tapping into your center, sorting out your four primary negotiators, and then employing the right mix of approaches as appropriate for each interaction. By reconnecting all the parts of yourself and engaging them as you navigate high-stakes interactions – from business deals, client calls, and team meetings to family arguments, landlord disputes, and parent-teacher conferences – you will get better results at work, more of what matters to you most in life, and feel good about the result.

Include examples of performance gap (see reading notes)

When life hands you a situation,

At the hub of your wanting, thinking, feeling, and doing, lies the core of who you are. We can call that core your Being, your center, or your center of well-being. They all point to the same essence – something true about you that’s deeper than your thoughts, your emotions, your desire, or your impulses to take action. Your center is home to an essence in you that lives in a state of well-being. As it is for your cat when they sit by the window, well-being is available for you when you tap into it. When we’re centered, we feel the ground beneath our feet. We see challenges in front of us, but know we have the resources to figure things out. When we fall off-center, we feel like a hero from “The Avengers.” Just a minute ago, we were the sane, world-renowned scientist David Banner. Then something knocked us off balance. The next thing you know we’re turning green. We’re the size of a giant. We’re The Incredible Hulk, destroying everything in our path.

empowered to make your own choices rather than live at the whim of your neural patterning.

None of your Big Four should go it alone. Part of getting out of your own way means that you stop letting one or two of your Big Four lead every conversation, meeting, or negotiation that you have. Once you have access to all four, you empower your inner Captain to choose which
voices to bring out and when. Leading wisely and living well requires your ability to deploy the inner negotiator best designed to hit your target in any given situation. That’s your Captain’s job.

WFW starts with a focus on what’s happening inside of you. That’s because what’s happening in there will directly produce what happens out here. Teaching you tips and tricks for new behavior, that you’ll implement from your original internal landscape, won’t get you much better outcomes than you got before. Do the mindset work. Behavior change will follow. WFW fosters transformation and lasting change precisely because it weaves the two of them together.

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Erica Ariel Fox teaches negotiation at Harvard Law School, and is founder of the Harvard Negotiation Insight Initiative (HNII) and the Global Network for Negotiation Insight and Exchange (GNNIE). A highly sought-after advisor, Erica works with senior leaders around the world with her partners at Mobius Executive Leadership, and she is also a Senior Advisor to McKinsey Leadership Development. Mixing nearly two decades of experience with business leaders and a personal touch, Erica brings a unique voice to the conversation about leading wisely and living well. A member of the Core Faculty for the American Institute of Mediation and a board member of the Harvard Mediation Program, she received her undergraduate degree from Princeton University and her law degree from Harvard Law School. She lives in Boston and Amsterdam.
The “Big Four” Inner Negotiators

DREAMER – The Chief Executive Officer
Creates possibilities – sets strategic vision, gives direction

THinker – The Chief Financial Officer
Clarifies perspectives – analyzes data, manages risk

LOVER – The Vice-President of Human Resources
Cares about people – feels emotions, manages relationships

WARRIOR – The Chief Operating Officer
Catalyzes performance – takes action, reaches goals

Just as it would be in a top team, each aspect of leadership is needed for high performance. When sitting around a conference room table, these leaders bring their own vantage point, mandate and attributes to the conversation. If anyone missed the meeting, the team would make decisions that lacked a vital perspective. Without the CEO, they could miss the bold vision that’s essential to an innovative strategy. No CFO, and the budget collapses. Without HR, the right people don’t get hired or developed. If the COO’s absent, it’s all talk and no action. In WINNING FROM WITHIN, Fox reveals that the very same dynamic is at play with our own Inner C-suite, or “Big Four.” When we are missing a critical voice, or a vital perspective, we are constantly inhibiting our own high performance, both in business and in life.

Whether you’re leading a team or running a household, the sides of you expressed by these inner negotiators are all critical. Ideally, you have the Big Four operating within you in balance. Then you can call on each one when the time is right. In reality, very few of us have easy access to all four. We tend to use one or two of the Big Four a lot, and we mostly ignore the other ones. Self-mastery involves a process of gathering all four of them together, and practicing how to use their strengths to balance each other. WINNING FROM WITHIN enables us to audit our own inner monologue and get a snapshot of how we operate in key interactions. It then provides a tested method for developing the key aspects of leadership that each reader has left behind.

WINNING FROM WITHIN includes many anecdotes both from Erica’s family life as well as her work with clients all over the world. She also examines public exemplars and myths that help illustrate the critical skills and characteristics of each of these Big Four. Fox illuminates how the Big Four get in our way through two-column portrayals of real-life client dialogues. In these examples, Fox captures both what was said in the conversation, as well as the internal monologue that was hampering that person’s ability to have an effective interaction. After helping readers identify their unique profile of inner negotiators and understand how those tendencies trip them up, Fox maps the aspects of mindfulness necessary to widen their range and experience true freedom of choice in their behaviors day to day.
An interview with Erica Ariel Fox, author of WINNING FROM WITHIN

Q: You are a negotiation lecturer at Harvard Law School, but this book is really about having better interactions in every area of your life. Can you explain the connection?

Q: How did you come to realize that the biggest obstacle in most of our interactions is ourselves? (Hint: can you talk about the previous two PON books? And/or share the tie story?)

Q: Can you explain the “performance gap” that your method seeks to bridge?

Q: You write that getting your “Big Four” inner negotiators to work together is key to bridging this gap. Can you share a success story of such an inner negotiation in practice?

Q: You coach executives and senior leaders through this process. What’s the connection between the WINNING FROM WITHIN method and leadership?

Q: How can people apply these ideas in their personal lives?

Q: What is the one thing you hope readers will take away from your book?