

From fear to outcomes: coaching leaders for Agility

Scrum Day Europe 2022

1 December 2022, Amsterdam

'The state of Agile coaching 2021' report

CHALLENGES

Agile coaches were asked to share the biggest challenges they faced in their role. These were thematically analyzed to identify common patterns and issues.

Although there was some variation among types of coaches, four themes were common across all respondents and are shown below.

01

Leadership as a barrier to implementing agility

02

Resistance to change from legacy structures, culture, and mindsets

03

Lack of understanding about agile

04

Remote working and COVID-19



'The state of Agile coaching 2022' report



"The top-down and bottom-up miss the middle."

"Executives tell us to 'be agile' but don't adjust their expectations accordingly."

03

Challenge 03

Resistance from Management / Leadership

The third most prevalent theme concerned leadership either resisting, or not being engaged in, agile transformations. This has a flow-on impact with other levels of the organization having no example to follow. Examples of this included leaders who were directing transformations 'from a distance' without embodying agile practices or mindsets themselves, leaders being seen as 'silent dissenters' who were not supporting transformations, and leaders still sticking to command and control practices which do not mesh with agile practices.

"Not willing to accept change, enforcing old ways on teams."

#1 How can I shift my role from an order taker to an influencer?

You cannot NOT make contracts!

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- What are the deepest hopes for coaching?
- What expectations need to be expressed (of the leader, individual team members, coach, stakeholders, and other)?
- What would make this a great learning experience?
What would make it the opposite?
- What are people's concerns?

POWER

Many coaches have egalitarian values and aspire to every organisation operating through consensus or collective leadership, wanting equal voice and fairness for everyone. This can become disruptive in coaching, as coaches can find themselves at odds with the power system of the team and their organisation.



Who are you as a coach?



<https://unsplash.com/photos/v0H-vn0BixI>

VS



<https://unsplash.com/photos/4xe-yVFJCvw>

Questions/topics to cover in contracting

What Agile coaching is and is not

What is the role of silence, questions, tools, and models; what is the coach's role in giving advice?

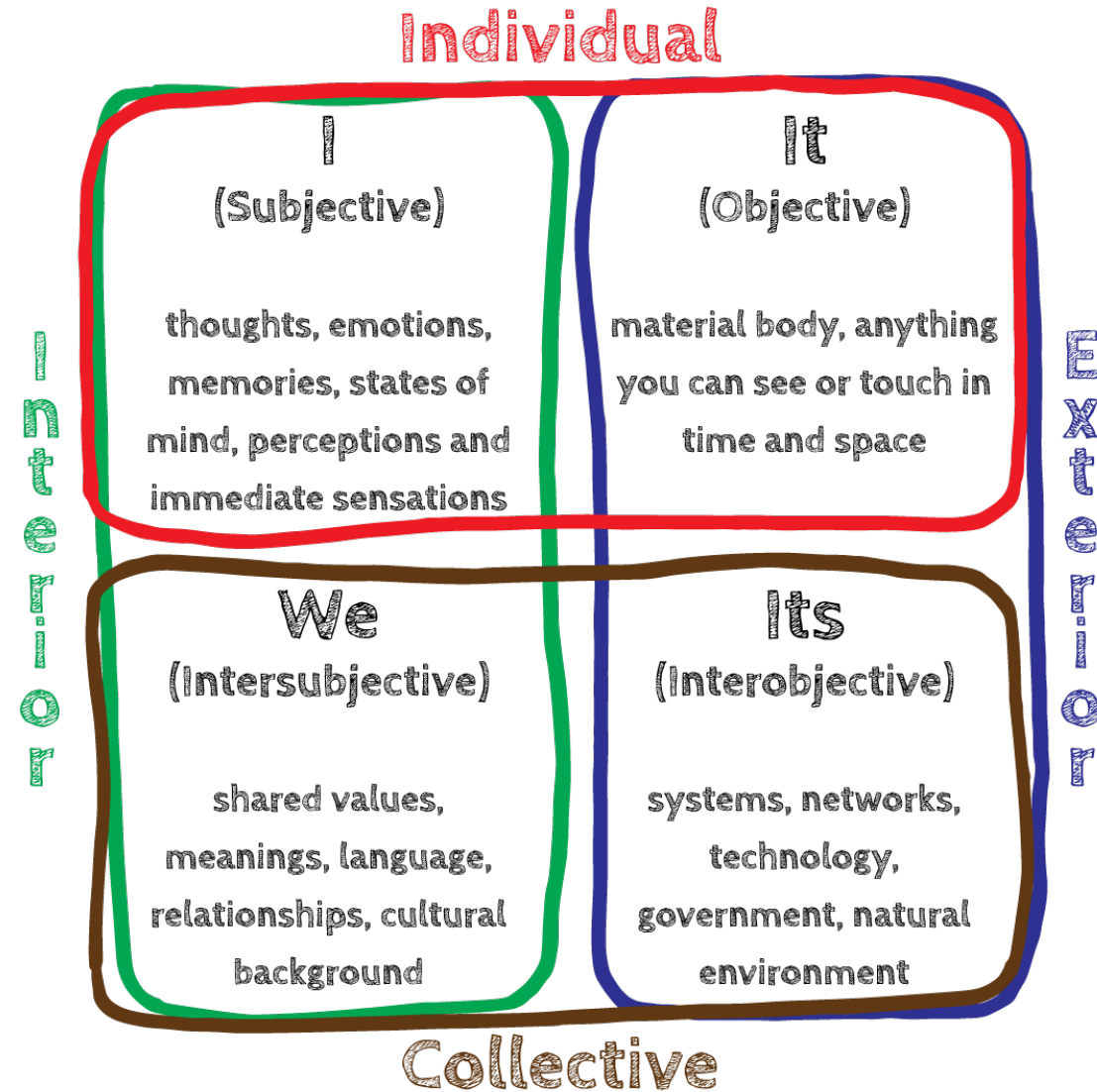
How will we know that our work is being effective?

What 'success' will look like, desired outcomes

How will we be open and transparent with each other?

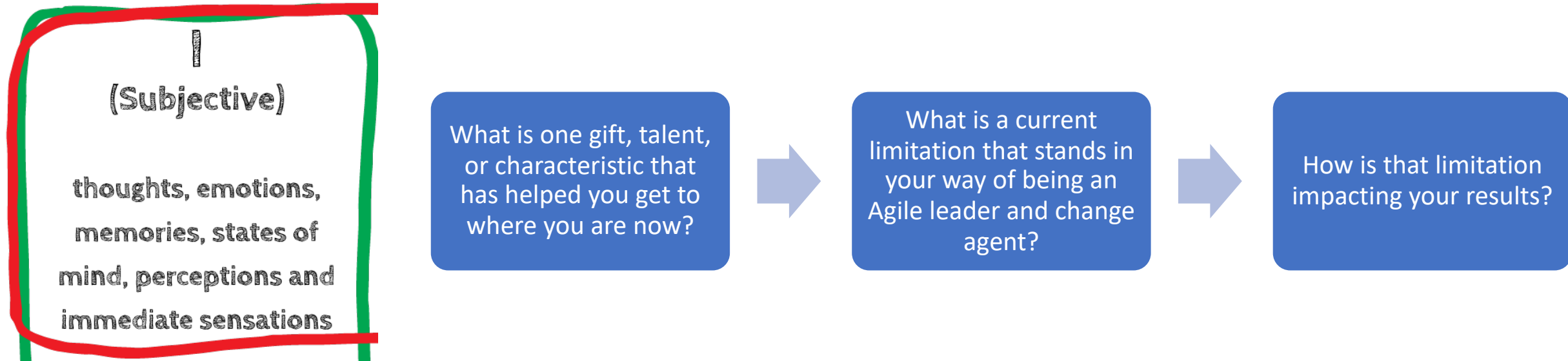
How can we challenge ourselves in service of what is needed from our work?

Ken Wilber 's Integral Model



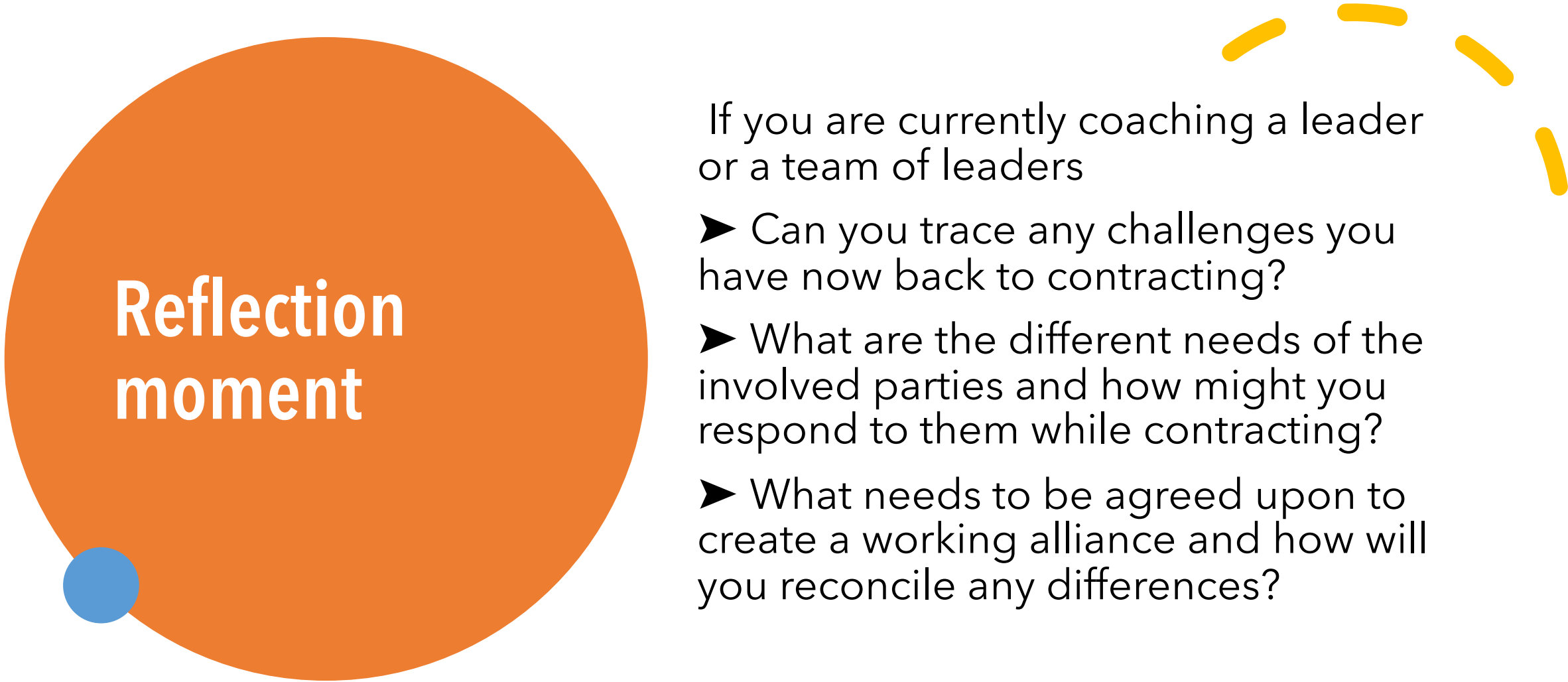
Source: Integral Human Development –Ken Wilber (<https://integrallife.com/four-quadrants/>)

Big questions for leaders



Some areas for Agile coaches to explore

- Looking at the I quadrant, what are the attitudes, feelings, and beliefs about Agile held by senior leaders?
- What is the belief of leaders about why they are going through this Agile change?
- Do leaders have clarity about what they are supposed to be doing differently?



Reflection moment

If you are currently coaching a leader or a team of leaders

- Can you trace any challenges you have now back to contracting?
- What are the different needs of the involved parties and how might you respond to them while contracting?
- What needs to be agreed upon to create a working alliance and how will you reconcile any differences?

#2 How can I engage leaders in conversations that lead to meaningful behavioural changes?

The Mismatch

“When we experience the world as “too complex” we are not just experiencing the complexity of the world. We are experiencing a mismatch between the world’s complexity and our own at this moment.”

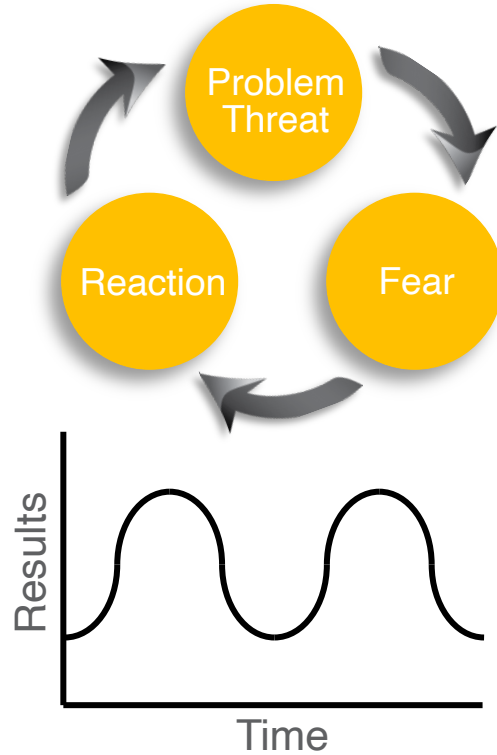
There are only two logical ways to mend this mismatch—reduce the world’s complexity or increase our own.”

Robert Kegan & Lisa Lahey

Two Structures of Mind

Problem - Reacting

Anxiety Containing

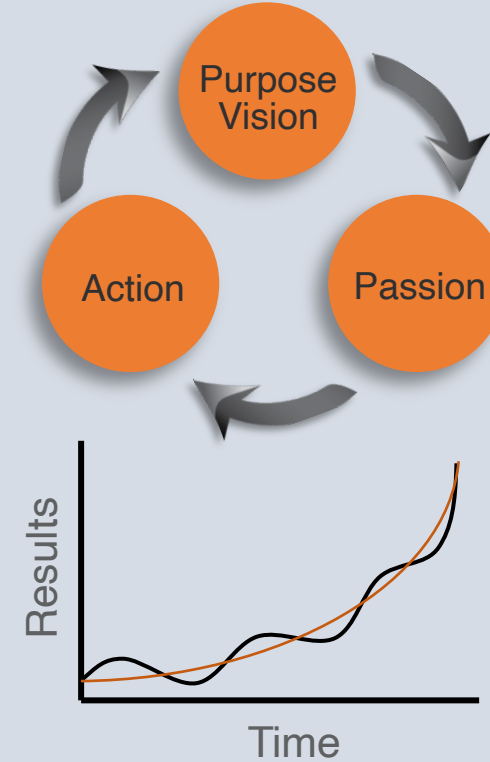


Identity Maintaining

Balancing / Oscillating Loop

Outcome - Creating

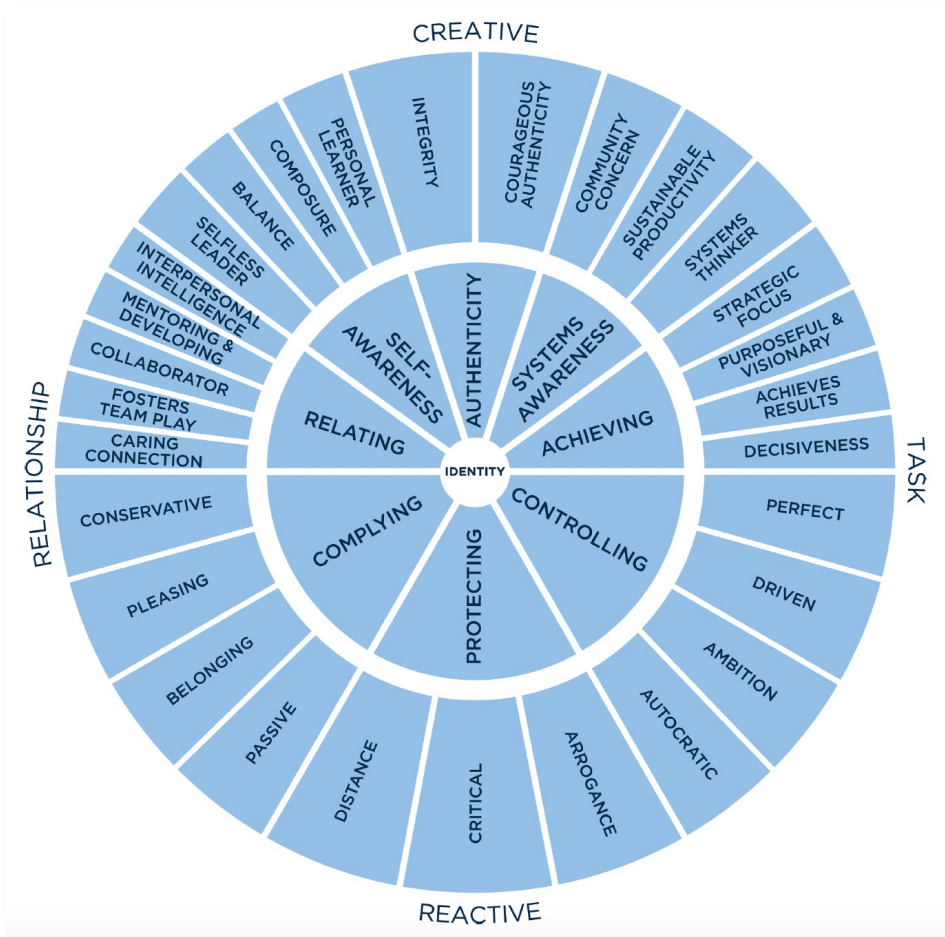
Potential Unleashing



Identity Evolving

Growth / Generative Loop

The Leadership Circle



- Context Matters
- Identity Matters
- Honours and respects: Your profile is exactly what it should be
- There is nothing here that suggests a problem needing fixing
- An invitation to explore, and co-create
- Strengths and Development Opportunities

Create your Story: Creative and Reactive



Reactive:

- The Reactive is running our strengths from a reactive place... a play it safe or "play not to lose" manner
- One's validation (safety, affirmation, self-worth) comes from OUTSIDE of them (from others, from results, from being in the know). "I am looking to you for validation"
- There are gifts, much of it has been well earned and part of one's journey; they have contributed to where a leader is today. One can take advantage of the "gifts" if used with intention
- Will get short-term results (so, it has a place. And can be quite compelling during times of stress or uncertainty)
- Here, we are still able to get results, but it comes from a place of fear, self-protection or risk aversion

Create your Story: Creative and Reactive



Creative:

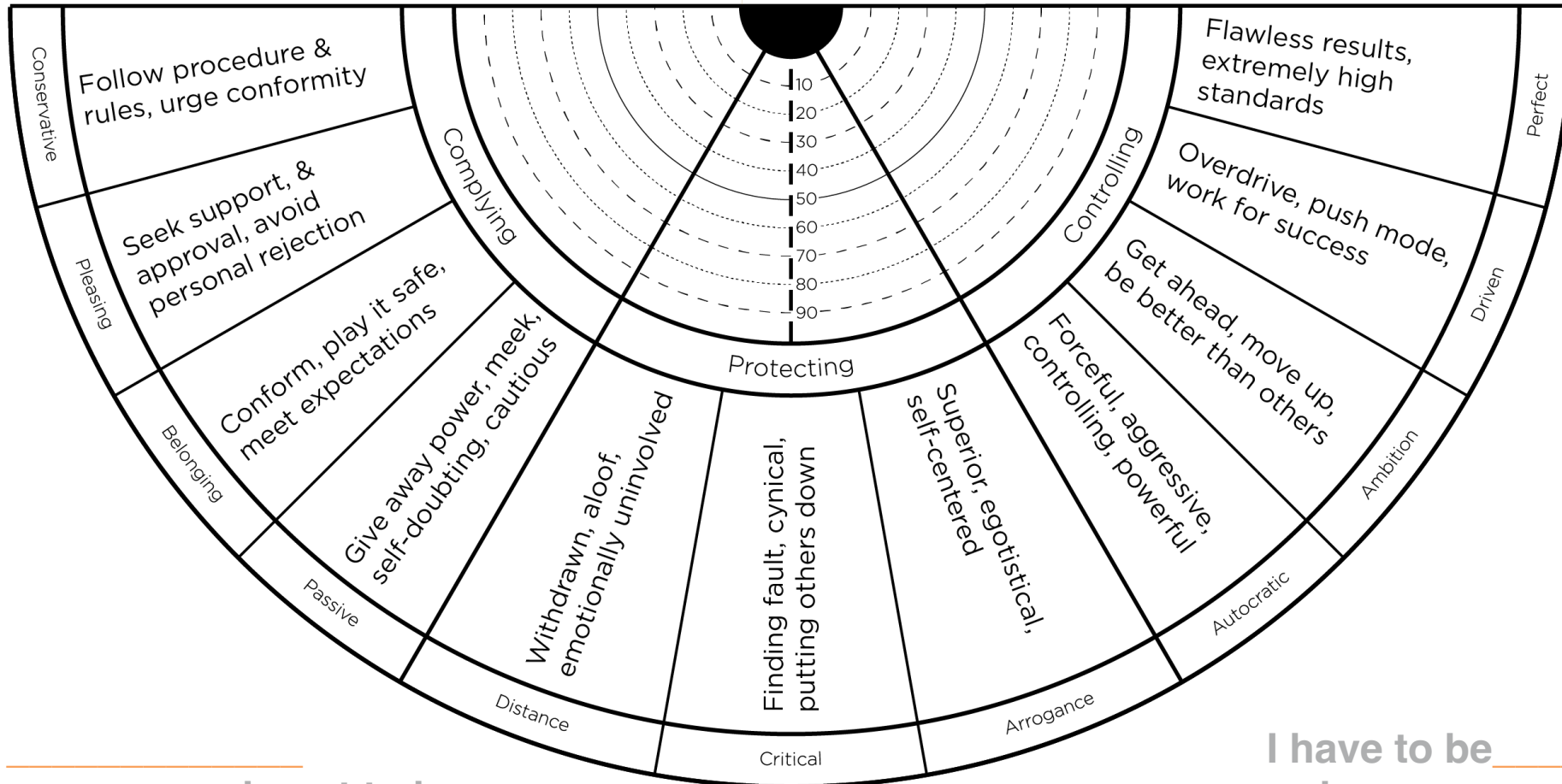
- When Creative, we are focused on Mission, Purpose, things we love and care about
- Focus on long-term impact, truly scaling capacity and capability
- We are working in collaboration with others and in a “playing to win” mindset (Engaging, Inspiring, Unleashing)
- We are mindful of what people want or need in leadership
- Less dependent on the outside for validation
- We can work more autonomously in collaboration without all the fear, aggression or self-protection

What are the first
impressions/
assumptions/ thoughts
that come to you when
you see this LCP?



The Identity Hook

If I am not _____ then _____



To be is to be _____

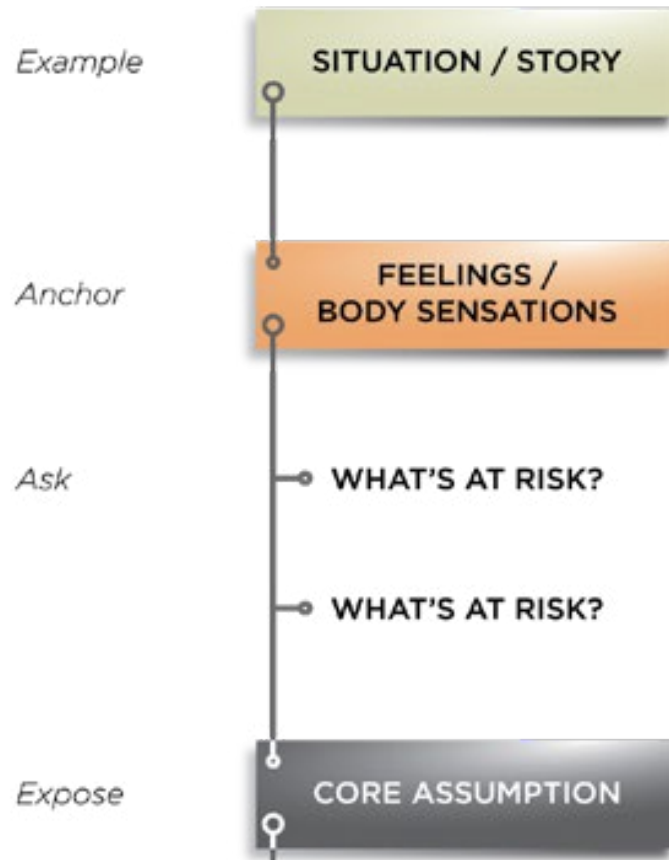
Not to be _____ is not to be

REACTIVE

I have to be _____
or else _____

Tips for a coaching conversation

3 QUESTIONS PROCESS



QUESTION 1

WHEN WORKING AT YOUR HIGHEST AND BEST WHAT IMPACT DO OTHERS SAY YOU HAVE?

QUESTION 2

HOW MUCH OF YOUR CREATIVE SELF DO YOU:

CURRENTLY CLAIM?

PUSH AWAY?

QUESTION 3

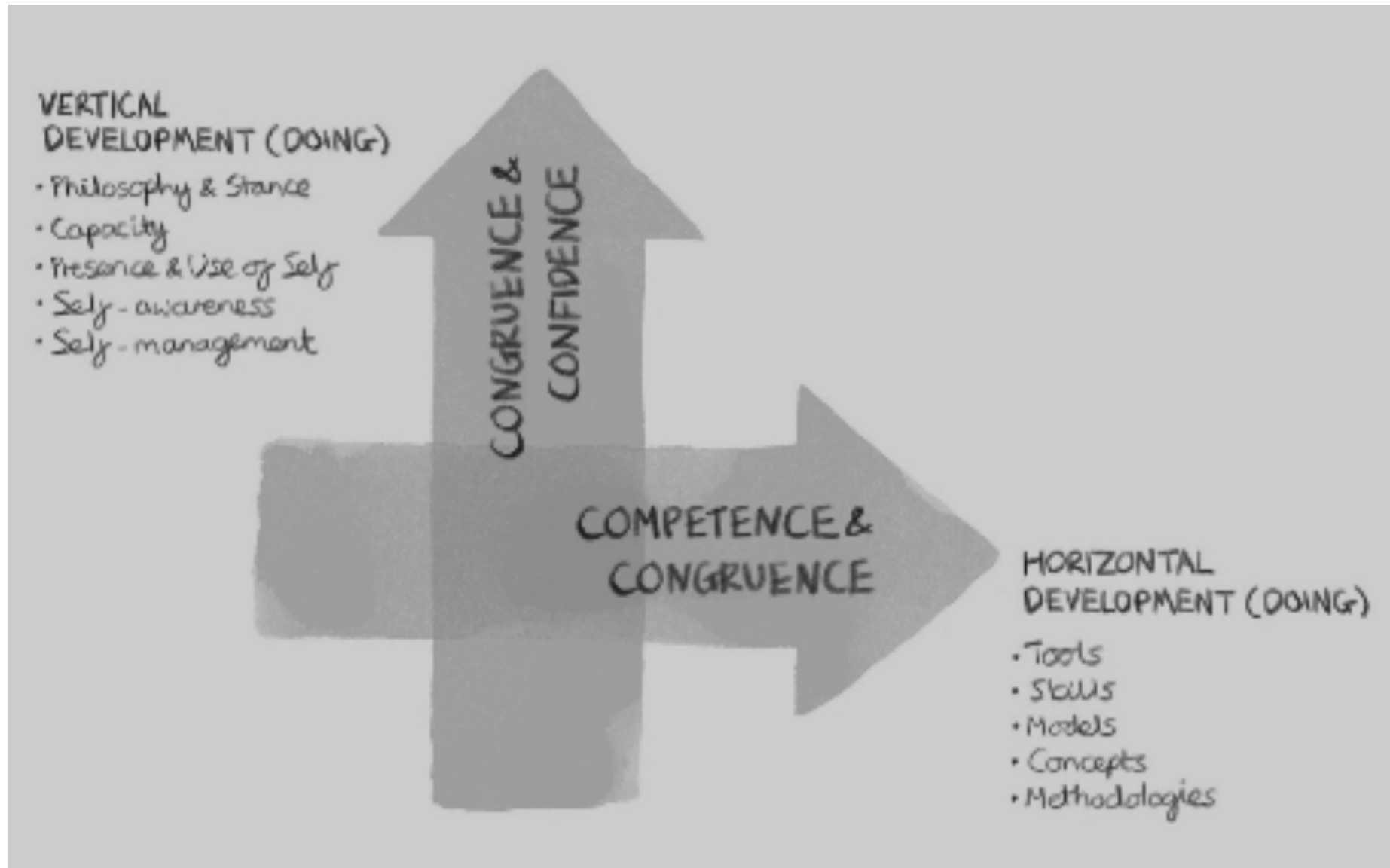
WHAT IS THE 'BIG ASSUMPTION' THAT YOU KNOW YOU MUST COME TO TERMS WITH AND MOVE BEYOND?

#3 How can I increase my effectiveness as a leadership coach?

'What if the problem isn't what you know, but who you are?'

(Nick Petri, 2014)

Vertical development



Thanks!

- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lobus/>
- <https://lobus.works>

