Coming back to yourself

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Change is tough!
...but it seems so straightforward

SOURCE: Grant (2003)
“Just be yourself”

• For all but the most self-actualised, this is a most disconcerting suggestion!
• Acting in accordance with the self is a substantial developmental challenge
• Some people go their whole lives without ever clarifying who they “are”
• As utilising your strengths is a movement towards greater authenticity, we should not assume this will be an easy road to take
Different types of development

**Vertical Development**
Involves a change in perspective 
(e.g. WHY we do things)

**Horizontal development**
Involves a change in approach 
(e.g. HOW we do things)
A fundamental human challenge

• For most people the transition from “other-authorship” to “self-authorship” is a key developmental challenge
• Using our own values, interests & preferences as a basis for action can leave us feeling riddled with anxiety & tension
• Other people don’t like it much!
• Deciding to use your latent strengths may not be greeted with universal enthusiasm
So what’s required?

- Completing a strengths inventory is a good way to raise awareness but it’s not a silver bullet
- Things we need to facilitate the development of a more congruent, authentic professional identity include:
  - Time
  - Space
  - Support
  - Perseverance
Helpful supports

- Having others to support your efforts is critically important
- Not just anyone - trust is vital
- Could be:
  - Executive/leadership coach
  - Mentor (formal or informal)
  - Peers
  - Spouse, family and/or friends
Life can be disruptive

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Arousal

- Low
- High

Performance

- Low
- High

Zone

- Recuperation Zone
- Performance Zone
- Overwhelm Zone

Life can be disruptive
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We need to get on the balcony...

- Being able to take a perspective on ourselves is vital for successful behaviour change
- Need to get on the balcony & watch our “dance”
- This disrupts automatic, habitual behaviour & allows us to choose what we want to do next
It’s about “best fit”...

• Becoming more aware of your strengths has the potential to achieve a better fit with your environment – or even change that environment
• Small steps are best
• No need to be reckless or push too hard
• It’s a life’s worth – there’s still time!
Positive Psychology: 
How to build on your signature strengths

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Thanks for listening 
Any questions?