

How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Eclipse

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Eclipse is a software platform comprising extensible application frameworks, tools and a runtime library for software development and management. It is written primarily in Java to provide software developers and administrators an integrated development environment (IDE).

(source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eclipse\\_\(software\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eclipse_(software)))

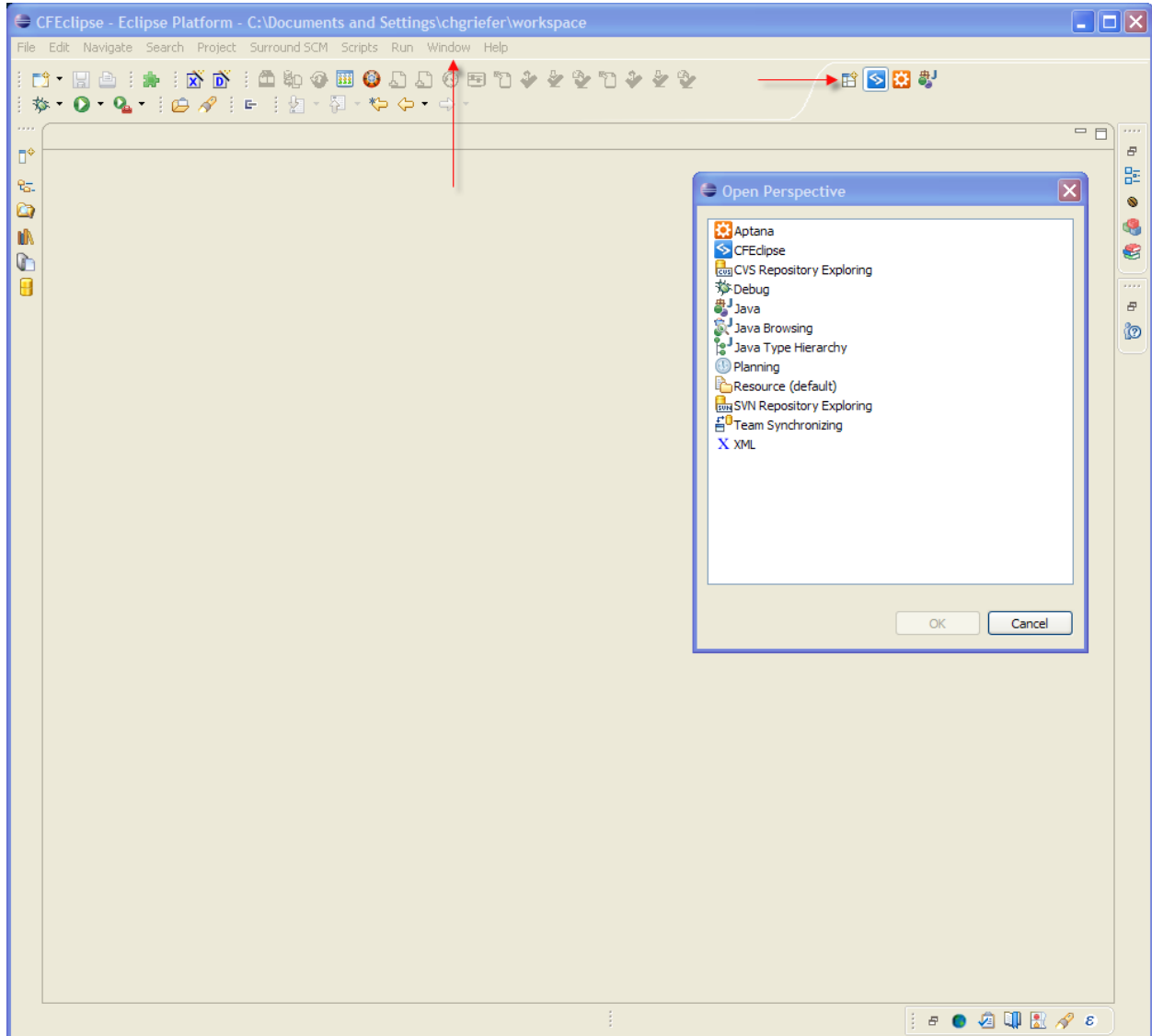
Terminology:

**Workspace:** A **Workspace** is a location where Eclipse saves information about the currently installed version's configuration. If you run multiple versions of Eclipse (e.g. Eclipse 3.3 and Eclipse 3.4), it's recommended that you use multiple workspaces (distinct directories for each version).

**Plugin:** Eclipse can accommodate a variety of coding environments via various **Plugins**. Some of the more popular **Plugins** include (but are not limited to):

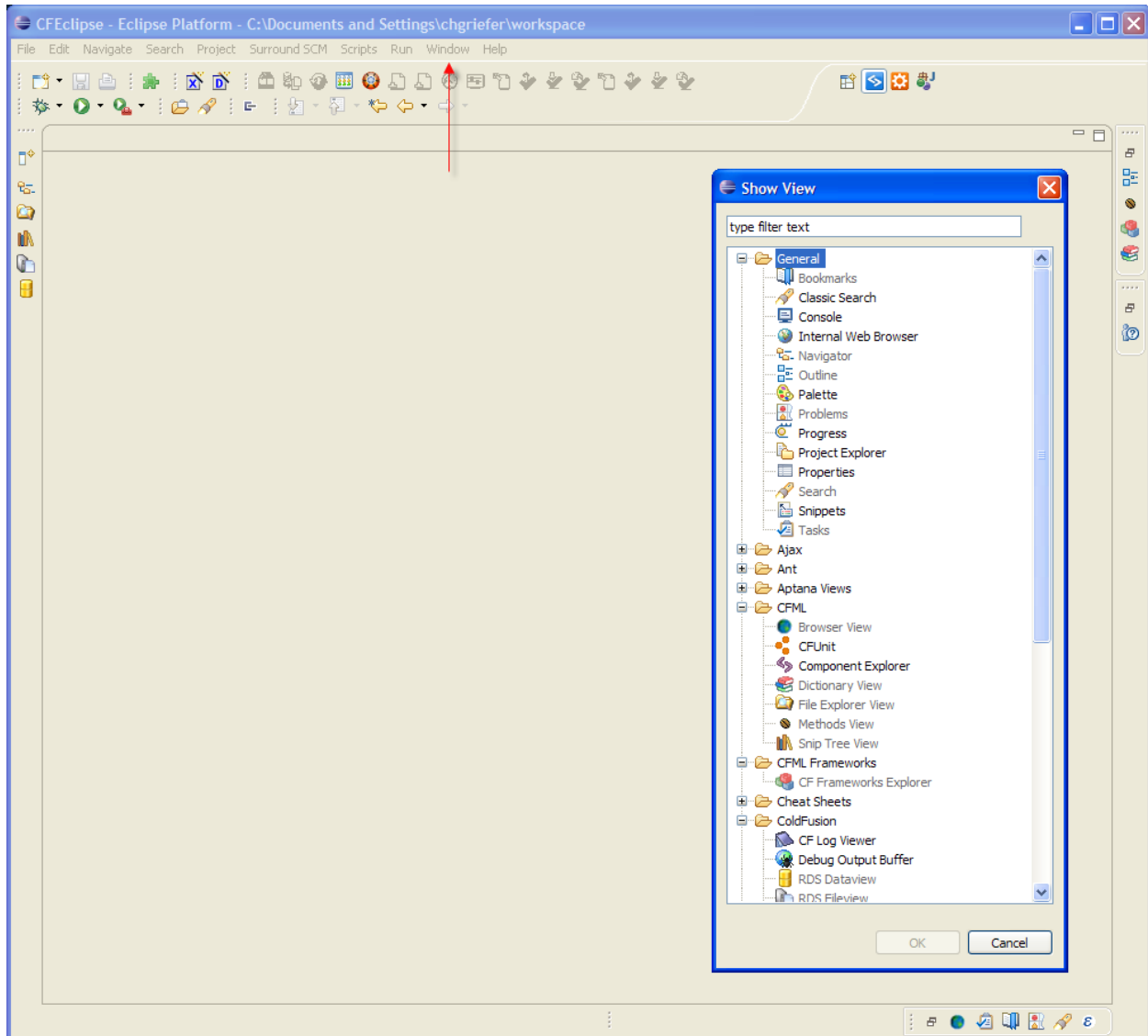
- CFEclipse (<http://www.cfeclipse.org/>) – tag completion, tag insight, help files for ColdFusion development
- JSEclipse (<http://labs.adobe.com/technologies/jseclipse/>)
- Aptana (<http://www.aptana.com/>) – useful for JavaScript and CSS development
- MXUnit (<http://mxunit.org/>) – Unit Testing framework
- Subclipse – Integrate Subversion functionality into Eclipse
  
- More plugins can be found at <http://www.eclipseplugincentral.com/>

**Perspective:** A **Perspective** determines the visible actions and views within a window. Examples of **Perspectives** would be the CFEclipse Perspective, the Aptana Perspective, or the Java Perspective (among others). **Perspectives** can be accessed via Window -> Open Perspective, or via the 'Open Perspective' icon in the Perspective tab (top right in the screenshot below).

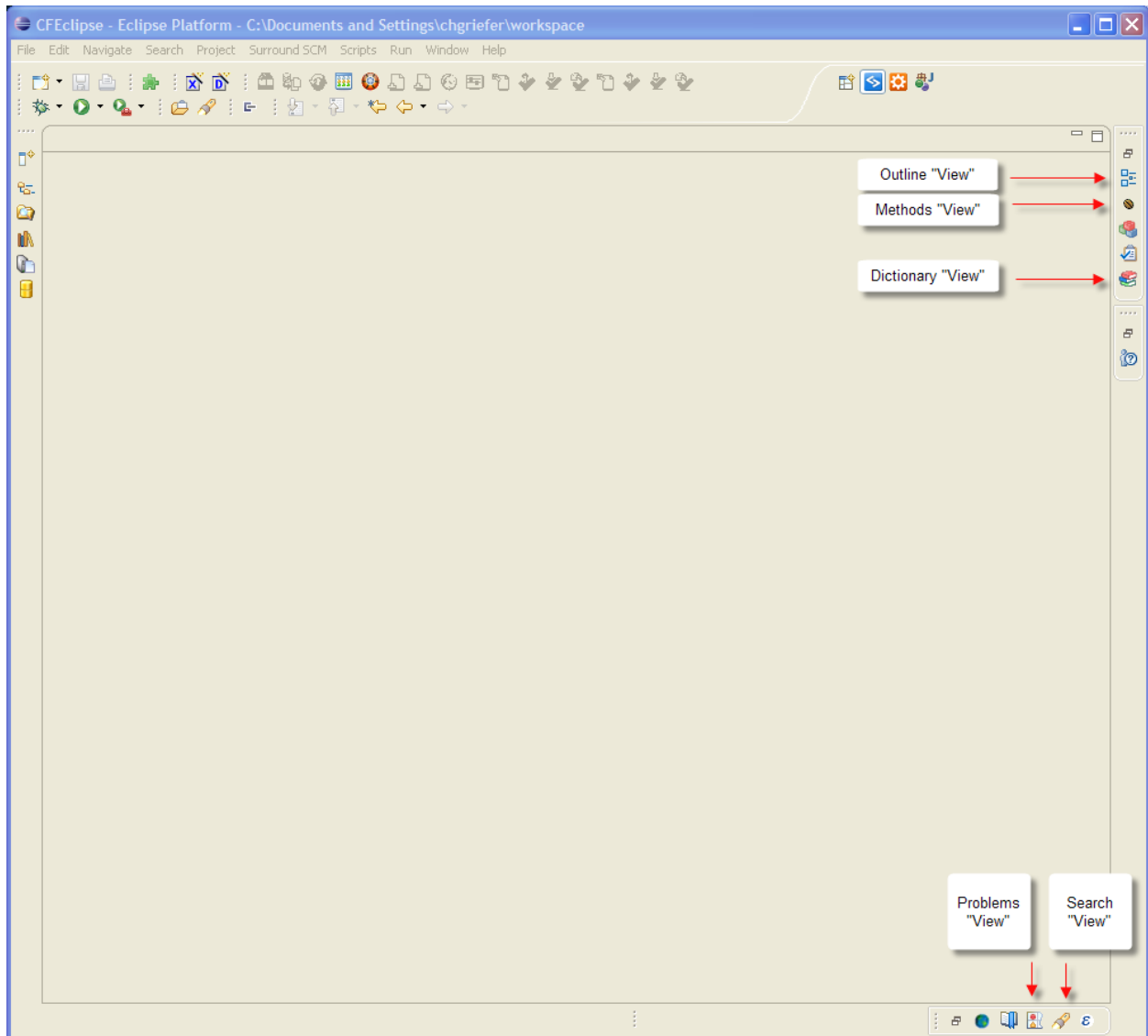


**View:** A **View** is a sub window within a **Perspective** that displays specific information. An example of a View would be Navigator (shows a list of **Projects**), Search (displays the results of the most recently run search, and allows you to step through those search results), Problems (displays a list of problems (e.g. syntax errors) in a **Project**), etc. **Views** can be accessed via Window -> Show View.

Views within a given Perspective can be easily minimized into Eclipse's chrome.



Some of the "Views" within the CFEclipse Perspective:



**Project:** Eclipse organizes code into user created **Projects**. The filesystem itself is generally not browsable (although this can be accomplished via **Plugins**). **Projects** are created, and each project encompasses various files and directories from the filesystem. The screenshot below shows all of the **Projects** that are currently defined (inside the Navigator **View**). Note: when creating a project, Eclipse will create a .project file (XML) that contains information/metadata about the project. Care should be taken to ensure that these .project files do not get promoted to servers outside of your development environment.

