



NEWSLETTER 7: SARAH BROSCOMBE, April - September 2018



I chuckled, revisiting the serene beginning of my last newsletter, all retreats and quiet days and mindfulness. April up to now has been lived at a very different pace.

This pattern of chock-full summers and calmer winters looks set to continue.

Therefore, as you'll see at the end, we have decided to embrace this as an opportunity!

Sarah Brocombe

HIGHLIGHTS

We began our Irish/ British/ Flemish **Ignatian Leadership Programme** in July, in lovely Drogenen, near Ghent (photo top right). It's a big undertaking: four modules in four countries from 2018-2020, with 24 participants of extremely diverse specialisms and experience. It takes a lot of generosity for talented people to accept this diversity, and adjust their expectations to serve the group as a whole. They were brilliant. The balance of input and activity, personal time and group time, social space and good food (and of course delicious Belgian beer) felt just right. It is a real relief, too, to be launched after all that planning. Our next module is in Co. Durham in January. (Yes, I know!)

China was a highlight, but also a big milestone for me, of which more below. In brief, 32 participants, me as the sole trainer running a fortnight's course, a bit daunting at first but the rewards quickly overtook the stresses.



Coaching continues to be a source of all sorts of good things (illumination, challenge, confirmation, joy, stretch...) My coaching landscape has changed a lot; wrapping up with my longest-standing client, completion approaching with a few more, and several new leadership coaching clients starting. And I like our range of media too- face to face; Skype; both of us cycling to meet in the middle for coaching in the park; phone; even WhatsApp chat.

And there have been some satisfying **one-off events** too: I'm particularly remembering a gorgeous retreat morning in June for people who host refugees in their homes, through JRS UK.

MILESTONES

1. Launching "Listening with Everything" Days. I've designed a team workshop that draws on my experience and training in active listening, coaching and Theory U. The prototype was with a

social enterprise in their stunning retreat space, a converted barn in the Lake District. It was a thought-provoking and fruitful day, and importantly the team relished it (team days sacrifice such precious time, quality is vital). I've got two more bookings for this workshop in January, in very different environments, so it'll be fun working out what needs to flex to fit.



2. Authorised user of the LDF. The Leadership Development Framework is a fascinating lens on how adults make meaning of their world, and how that evolves and deepens... or not. The Authorisation process is a 3-day Intensive (and they aren't joking about the intensive). On hindsight I think I was expecting it to be rather "worthy" and "useful". It was much richer and more absorbing than that. I'm looking forward to using it more with my leadership coaching. Meanwhile, it has helped me greatly with leadership training.

3. Designing & delivering Training of Trainers. I've done a fair bit of course design, so I hadn't quite registered that I have never written a Training of Trainers from scratch before. It's SO satisfying. Many ToT courses assume that it's all about WHAT



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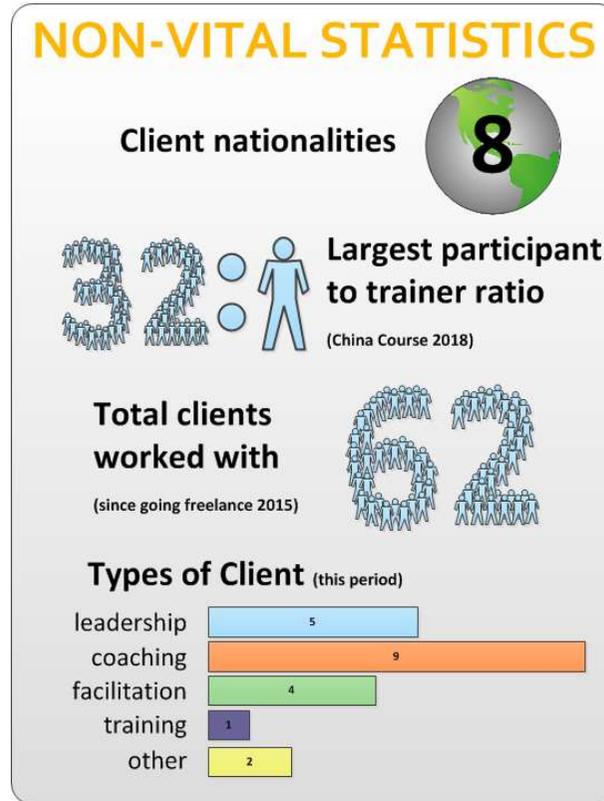


you do, the course contents, and maybe a bit about HOW to train others. There was something perversely satisfying about having little to draw on in the realm of "WHY?", and thinking it all out step by step. If we can't articulate why we are using certain methodologies, we need to think clearer before we inflict ourselves on trainees... There was lots of good learning, and we now have a team of superb trainers-in-waiting for the 2019-2021 course, training a new cohort of retreat guides.



WHAT I'M LEARNING

Audiences. I don't want to work with teenagers, young adults or in schools, not even for one-offs. Academic audiences aren't exactly it either: I'm more of a practitioner than a theoretician- I don't think well in the abstract. My focus is applying, integrating, and helping people become more effective. People are my passion: supporting people to understand themselves and to grow.



WHAT'S NEXT

I'm just entering into the longest retreat I have ever worked on: 30 days of silence. I made my own 30-day retreat back in 2008, and it is still giving me food for thought (and wonder, and hope) ten years on. I am thrilled to be at St Beuno's to support others through the 35 days of preparation, entering in, the long silence, and then re-acclimatisation (whilst being supported myself with regular

supervision and learning, and a good team: I need that).

And after that? It's time for another adventure. Practicality dictates a smaller, handier-for-parents, keep-your-job, pint-sized kind of adventure. We both come alive immersing ourselves in a new place, bumbling around grinning idiotically, without language fluency or much of a clue about culture, trying out new foods and kinds of music and exploring. So we are renting out our house in Yorkshire, and moving to rural Portugal for the winter. Near the ocean, more sunshine and hours of daylight, cycling all winter without black ice... Here is a picture of our nearest town, Obidos.



And in the blink of an eye it will be Module 2 of the Leadership programme, and lots of other juicy things that'll have to keep for next time!

Thank you for reading
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