



# NEWSLETTER 14: SARAH BROSCOMBE, Oct 2021- March 2022



This might be the opposite of the 7-year itch! '7 years freelance' is feeling good.

Leadership and coaching have been the dominant work strands; balance and self-awareness have been the big dynamics.

COVID is still taking up radar space, (for all of us I guess), but I appreciate it not being top of everyone's list all the time. 2022 is unfurling...

*Sarah Brocombe*

Bob Anderson himself, was mindblowing: a kind of eureka-moment avalanche. About half of the network stayed on in Rome to do this training programme together, and the depth of connections we made (to the model, to the personal insights and to each other) was striking.



And then to take all of that into 8 days of silence in Venice ... well, I'll leave you to imagine.



A contrasting highlight was guiding 4 people through an online retreat in December. I know some peers find online media inferior for building rapport and deep listening. That is not my experience. For the first time since the pandemic began, I guided on two face to face retreats in 2021, and both were very good... but there was something special about that December retreat

online. Virtual removes so many barriers: of time zone, of cost, and even of daring to try out silence.

## MILESTONES

1) **Reaching PCC.** This credential from the International Coaching Federation has been glinting on the horizon for a while. Receiving it in November felt like entering a new phase.



2) **30<sup>th</sup> Nationality.** Encountering new cultures is one the many things I love about my job. My 30<sup>th</sup> nationality of client is Kazakh, closely preceded by Emirati and Senegalese. Re-tuning your listening to unfamiliar frequencies is a joy and a humility.

3) **Income weighting.** Year 7 was the year my coaching income overtook my earnings from everything else put together (68% of the total). Partly that's due to getting well-structured

## HIGHLIGHTS

The last newsletter ended with hopes of a much-postponed meeting in Rome. It actually happened! I spent most of March in Italy, first meeting my Ignatian Coaching Network peers for the first time, then into Leadership Circle accreditation and finally on to my own 8-day silent retreat in Venice. All three of these exceeded my (high) expectations. The Network are the kind of peer group you dream of; fascinating, honest, brilliant, light-hearted, modest, unvarnished and unarmoured. No grandstanding, no jostling for position, lots of generosity and safety and raw truth. I know, I know- I'm gushing. They are gushworthy. Then diving into Leadership Circle, led by the creator



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coaching work, and partly it's due to turning down a lot of training and facilitation. But the shift in rhythm is noticeable (and good, so far).

## WHAT I'M LEARNING

**1) Reactivity.** Leadership Circle is a model that's new to me. Of course it makes sense with theories of Adult Development and understandings of what makes effective and ineffective leadership from lots of other sources I've read or trained in. But the thing really percolating for me at the moment is the concept of reactivity: the gifts within traits like perfectionism or belonging or distance, and how important it is to try to grow WITH ourselves rather than DESPITE ourselves. Refusing and rejecting our passionate or energy-burning selves is damaging. As Bob Anderson says, the stuff we like less about ourselves or wish we could transcend or leave behind "is not IN the way: it IS the way!". We need to respect all of our little quirks and self-protection strategies, because we came by them honestly. Old survival strategies have the seeds of something important in them.

**2) Pace.** Being unable to travel during the height of the pandemic shone a light on how much toll travel took on me. I hope the smaller toll was on the quality of my work (although I might be fooling myself there!), but there was a high toll on my internal landscape, and that is unwise and unsustainable. My work is paced differently now,

with less intensives back-to-back, less flying, and more days with breathing space between sessions. I'm committed to keeping it that way.

**NON-VITAL STATISTICS**

**Clients this half-year:**  51

**68%** **Income from coaching**

**Clients' continents:**  5

 **Significant milestone**

The whole of 2022 alternates a month of travelling with a month of working from home. The journeys are a nice mix of boats, trains and the occasional plane, and nearly all of them combine two or three events into one trip. I'll be paying attention to how that balance feels; my hunch is that I'll be travelling less in 2023.

## WHAT'S NEXT

Writing this, I'm struck afresh by the privilege of spending my career (and each day) on stuff that MATTERS so much. Most of my work is listening to people talk about what they care about most in their life and work, or helping leaders lead more effectively, directly benefitting their people and organisations and the world those organisations exist for.

So when I realised that, very unusually, I've got 3 weddings of people who really matter to me within this 6 months, I'm focussing on ensuring these events get the best attention I can give them.

My next travel is for the first wedding, followed by an 8-day retreat at St Beuno's in Wales. Then it's leadership programme planning in Belgium in July, for an event due to run the following January. (It's a newly configured team of four, and I'm looking forward to being part of that new dynamic creating itself). Then it's the UK again in July, and Slovakia in September.

And through it all, the heartbeat is 1-2-1 sessions with the people who allow me to accompany them on the journey through their unique landscapes. From epic poetry to mundanity to bridge-building and climbing and planting and loving and life and death: there's not much it doesn't include.

**Thank you for reading**  
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