



Interglobe Cross-Cultural Business Services

January 2019



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SIETAR JOURNAL

I was honored to be interviewed recently by SIETAR EUROPA Journal. Click [here](#) to read the article.

Dear Readers,

The new year is up and running -- and have you noticed something? To me, the transition from the old year to the new one was a bit... blah. As in: January 1st came (after I struggled to stay awake until midnight), then January 2nd, 3rd, etc. -- and back to business we were. It's not necessarily a bad thing -- it just felt like something had gotten lost, i.e., the specialness of transitioning from one year to the next.

My suspicion is that we have gotten so used to dealing with a constant stream -- if not bombardment -- of breaking news stories and shocking events (mostly of the catastrophic rather than the joyful kind) that events like the beginning of a new year that used to be a "big deal" might not register on our personal Richter scales the same way they used to.

2018 was a hard year in terms of global and domestic politics and events, with an ever-increasing divisiveness in society and a seemingly diminishing acceptance and appreciation of differences, instead of the opposite. On a personal level, it was tough as well: three close friends and a dear colleague passed away; another close friend is battling terminal cancer; and I seemed always to be dealing with some type of ache or pain, which tells me the fact that I'll turn 60 this year is actually not an error but reality...

The year brought tons of good things, too: my work took me into new directions including Agile Leadership and [Mindfulness at Work](#); I traveled to many cool places including Cuba, France, England and [Kenya](#); I reconnected with old friends during my 40th high school reunion; and I officially became a Buddhist.

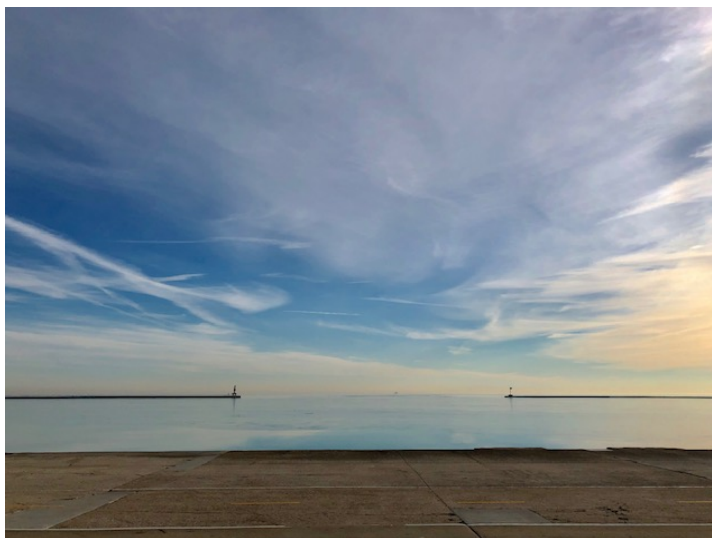
To remind myself to cherish the people and events that are special in my life -- and not to always simply go back to business as usual when something "big" happens, I'm choosing Honoring as my 2019 Word of the Year.

Let's honor and acknowledge special moments we experience this year, the person standing or sitting next to us and the kindness we receive from others.





Happy 2019!
Rita



What's Coming Up at Interglobe



January 22 - June 18,
2019 (6 monthly
meetings)

[Mindfulness at Work 6-
Month Virtual Program](#)



March 1-3, 2019

[Wisdom 2.0](#)

The annual gathering of
those dedicated to living
with greater
mindfulness, wisdom,
and compassion

San Francisco, CA



Give Yourself the Gift of Mindfulness: 6-Month Virtual Program

Developing a new habit or skill takes practice. Practice takes discipline and motivation. Getting motivated to learn something new and sticking with it is much easier when you're not alone!



If you have been interested in bringing more mindfulness into your work and personal life and would like to do so in a structured group setting -- without leaving the comfort of your office or home and fighting traffic -- here's your chance: A 6-month virtual program with monthly sessions every fourth Tuesday from 9 to 10:30 a.m., starting on January 22nd.

For more information and to register, please click [here](#). Registration deadline is January 20th.

Coach's Corner

"Coaching: a conversation that supports the client in cultivating greater self-awareness, making new and more refined distinctions and building new behavioral competence."

Coach's Corner is a regular feature highlighting a particular aspect of coaching.

April 26-28, 2019

[The Personal Leadership
Global Gathering: A
Coming Together of
Head, Heart & Hand](#)

San Francisco, CA



May 30-31, 2019

[Dalhousie University --
Personal Leadership:
Leading the Self Before
Leading Others](#)

Halifax, Nova Scotia,
Canada



**Quotes
and
Sayings**

"We cannot become
what we need to be by
remaining who we are."

-- Max DePree

"Wanderer, there is no



Coaching Across Cultures: When One Size Doesn't Fit All

Every coaching client is different. "Of course," you might say -- just as every human being is different and unique. However, if your client grew up in a different country or culture than you did and adheres to a different set of values than you do, coaching them requires a special skill set.

This skill -- intercultural competence, i.e., coaching across cultures effectively -- also comes in handy when you coach a client who works in global settings. They probably need your help developing their own intercultural competence when interacting with direct reports or colleagues abroad.

Learning this skill takes time. Here are a few pointers and resources that might be helpful when coaching across cultures:

- **Patience and pacing.** Good coaching is dependent on establishing a solid foundation, building a trusting relationship, communicating effectively and facilitating learning and results. When you coach someone from a different culture, these steps will probably take more time than you expect. Understanding how trust is built (for example, by making a personal connection first or by demonstrating your expertise) or how certain cultures prefer to communicate (using a direct vs. an indirect style) might slow down the coaching process considerably. Pace yourself. Invest more time initially in explaining your coaching approach and process. Allow for interruptions and questions. Slow down.
- **Preparation and continuous learning.** Continuously develop your self-awareness and cultural competence by noticing your own judgments and biases. How? By taking the [Harvard Implicit Association Test](#), by getting feedback from others and by paying attention to how you perceive and judge others. Ask yourself where your judgments and perceptions might come from. Continuously stretch yourself and leave your comfort zone. Travel. Go off the beaten track. Walk among strangers and get to know them. Take time to learn about your client's

path; the path is made by walking."

-- Antonio Machado



"When the waves close over me, I dive down to fish for pearls."

-- Masha Kaleko

"Happiness is the absence of striving for happiness."

-- Chuang-Tzu

"Growing older is like climbing a mountain: the higher you get, the more strength you need, but the further you see."

-- Ingmar Bergman



"It isn't more light we need; it's putting into

culture. Do research. Find available resources. For example:

Resources

[Coaching Across Cultures](#) (2003) & [Global Coaching](#) (2010) by Philippe Rosinski

[9 Tips for Intercultural Coaching](#) by Terrence Brake, in: Training Magazine, June 21, 2016

[Intercultural Coaching](#) by Michel Moral

To find out more about our coaching services, please [email](#) or call me at (404) 915-2340.

The Whole Enchilada: Managing Unconscious Bias, Building Cultural Competence, Leadership Agility, and Mindfulness

What do these four topics have in common? On the surface, not much, you might think -- and yet, to me, they became my Whole Enchilada this past fall. In case you're not familiar with this US slang expression: it's used to describe "every part of a multifaceted thing or situation taken together as a whole; the whole thing (The Free Dictionary).



I'm mentioning the Whole Enchilada here because I had the opportunity to teach programs focusing on all four topics in the past six months. Coincidence? Maybe -- but it got me thinking...

To me, these four topics are all connected somehow. They are all ways to survive and thrive in a complex and chaotic world. How? Becoming aware of and managing our biases to the best of our abilities can help us build our cultural competence. We are better able to leverage differences in positive and productive ways. Mindfulness is a way to do so: only when we pay attention to what's going on in and around us can we manage our reactions to differences effectively and think of new ways to respond to, behave towards and communicate with others. Finally, nowadays leaders must find new -- agile -- ways to lead "under conditions of rapid change and mounting complexity" (Bill Joyner, [Leadership Agility: From Expert to Catalyst](#)).

So, bring it on, Universe -- I'm ready to dig deeper into my Whole Enchilada, deepen my knowledge in these four areas, look for new connections, teach more and invite others into the conversation.

One resource of interest for readers based in Germany/Europe: [Agile Culture Camp](#) offered by my colleagues Dr. Heike Pfitzner and Martina Tadli on January 25 & 26, 2019 in Hamburg, Germany (languages: German or English)

practice what light we already have. When we do that, wonderful things will happen within our lives and within our world."

-- Peace Pilgrim

"Do not doubt your own basic goodness. In spite of all confusion and fear, you are born with a heart that knows what is just, loving, and beautiful."

-- Jack Kornfield



"The future is not some place we are going, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made. And the activity of making them changes both the maker and their destination."

-- John Schaar

"Each moment is a chance for us to make peace with the world."

-- Thich Nhat Hanh

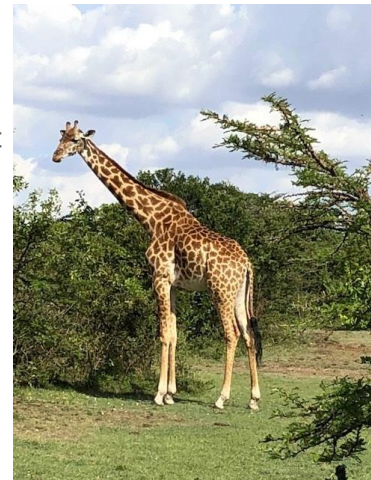
Client Testimonials



My First "Mindfulness at Work" Group

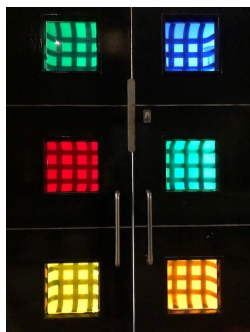
Kenya -- Insights from Traveling in a Very Foreign Country

Last September, I had the pleasure and privilege of spending almost two weeks in Kenya, East Africa, getting to know a new country and culture from scratch. Kenya has it all: savannas, lakes, the dramatic Great Rift Valley, mountain highlands and a coastline on the Indian Ocean. It's a multi-ethnic state with a diverse population of over 47 million people. I spent time in Nairobi visiting expat friends and meeting with local consultants and coaches. I went on safari in the Maasai Mara, the oldest game reserve in Kenya, and I spent time on the island of Lamu in the Indian Ocean. I learned a lot about Kenyan history, economy, society, culture, and about its people, flora and wildlife -- and: I feel like I have only scratched the surface. The good news is: I'll (hopefully) be back in East Africa in September to attend a global meeting taking place in Rwanda. Fingers crossed.



Here's what stood out for me from my visit -- in no particular order:

- The ancientness of the country. Kenya is sometimes called the "cradle of humanity" because of 1.6 million-year-old remnants of the first humans that were found in the country. Duplicates are on display at the impressive National Museum in Nairobi with the originals on display by appointment only.
- The abundance of wildlife and how the government and conservation community take care of it -- in huge wildlife reserves that are well-managed and tightly controlled.
- The mixture of ancient history (see above), colonial history (I took a stroll through the now 5-star Stanley Hotel in Nairobi, known as the meeting place for those going on safari in East Africa since the 1900s) and modern history and lifestyle, including Western-style shopping malls, an active nightlife and the availability of Lyft and



Here's what recent clients have to say:

"The mindfulness meditation has given the team tools to use to alleviate or at least moderate this stress, and they have learned a variety of techniques so that everyone is able to use what works best for them."

Head, Patient Care Team, Pharmaceutical Company

"It was a great pleasure meeting you, interacting with you, and learning from you. Your session [on Personal Leadership] was quite eye opening."

Participant, IMCL (Institute for Muslim and Civic Leadership)



"The coaching with Rita really aided me in understanding how to manage and lead a

Uber.

- The demographic diversity reflected in the number of tribes: between 40 and 70 mainly based on language, with the Kikuyu forming the largest group -- about 17-20% of the population.
- The absence of plastic bags. Neighboring Rwanda has had a ban on plastic bags for 10 years, and Kenya instituted theirs in 2017. The result is quite amazing: a visible reduction in plastic bag pollution and the sides of all major roads are mostly clean.
- The eye-opening and horizon-expanding experience of spending time as a minority white person of European descent in a rapidly developing and vibrant African country that's 98% black. There are layers and layers of awareness to unpack that I'm still working on. It will be a while.



Resources

Instead of sharing my own book recommendations, I thought I'd offer you the "Best of 2018" lists of two publications I subscribe to and whose judgement I trust. (Click the links to the lists to find links to the individual books and articles.)

Books



[Greater Good Science Center, UC Berkeley](#) -- [Favorite Books of 2018](#)

Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts, by Brené Brown

The Person You Mean to Be: How Good People Fight Bias, by Dolly Chugh

Great at Work: How Top Performers Do Less, Work Better, and Achieve More, by Morten Hansen

Resilient: How to Grow an Unshakable Core of Calm, Strength, and Happiness, by Rick Hanson and Forrest Hanson

dynamic group with distinct levels of experience and personalities. She supported me in developing techniques to better communicate with my peers and employees and how to actually put them into practice. She not only helped me become a better leader, but also helped me position myself for further development in my career"

Commercial Sales Manager, Plastics Manufacturer

"I REALLY enjoyed your Unconscious Bias program. It was thought-provoking (...) and it was different in approach than others I've participated in."

-- General Counsel, Pharmaceutical Company

When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing, by Daniel Pink

Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress, by Steven Pinker

Aware: The Science and Practice of Presence--The Groundbreaking Meditation Practice, by Daniel J. Siegel

mindful
healthy mind, healthy life

[Mindful Magazine](#) -- [The Best Mindfulness Books This Year](#) -- by Editor-in-Chief Barry Boyce

Mindfulness Is Not What You Think: Mindfulness and Why It Is So Important, by Jon Kabat-Zinn

Resilience: Powerful Practices for Bouncing Back from Disappointment, Difficulty, and Even Disaster, by Linda Graham

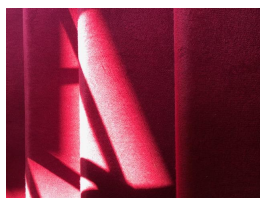
The Mindful Day: Practical Ways to Find Focus, Calm and Joy from Morning to Evening, by Laurie J. Cameron

Mindful of Race: Transforming Racism from the Inside Out, by Ruth King

Articles



Greater Good Magazine
SCIENCE-BASED INSIGHTS FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE



Interglobe

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[Greater Good Science Center, UC Berkeley](#) -- [The Most Read Greater Good Articles of 2018](#)

How to Find Your Purpose in Life, by Jeremy Adam Smith

What Type of Meditation Is Best for You? by Tania Singer

How to Hardwire Resilience into Your Brain, by Rick Hanson and Forrest Hanson

Seven Lessons from Mister Rogers That Can Help Americans Be Neighbors Again, by Shea Tuttle

How to Gain Freedom from Your Thoughts, by Daniel J. Siegel

Video

Simon Sinek

[Millennials in the Workplace](#) by Simon Sinek -- Excellent analysis of four major reasons why millennials behave the way they do and what employers can do to support them by TED-Talk prodigy and author of "Start with Why," Simon Sinek

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Effectively and Mindfully.



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