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Letter from Lugano, Switzerland

by Maren Donata Urschel – coach supervisor and regional coordinator for AOCS in Switzerland



Dear Colleagues,

I moved to Lugano (Switzerland) last August after 12 years in London. A wonderful transition after such a long time of getting to know a country inside-out. For me, throwing myself into a new culture and language without knowing what to expect brought up a variety of emotions and thoughts: curiosity, surprise, joy, anxiety, openness, scepticism, hope, a wish to learn, saying hello to something new and at the same time good-bye to something that was in its place previously, assumptions about how people are and how things function and a wondering about how I can integrate all my learning and discoveries into a new way of being. In other words, a real handful of things which have been with me throughout my encounter with this new place.

When I reflected on my own situation I wondered whether the emotions and thoughts I am experiencing at the moment could be similar to what a new client experiences when they meet me for the first time. New clients are likely to be in a stage of not knowing, of testing the waters, of checking whether this could work for them and if so how. They might make assumptions about me, themselves and about what working together feels like. They might come with mixed emotions some of which might be opposites such as joy AND anxiety, openness AND skepticism. They might deep down have some hopes for what they want to achieve but do not know yet whether I am the right facilitator for their development.

To me, there are many similarities between my current situation and what a client might experience when they meet me for the first time. And if there were those similarities, I wondered whether the same sets of behaviours and ways of being could be helpful for both my new life situation and to being with a client for the first time. The results of my enquiry were a wonderful reminder of what we are all trying to model for our clients in order to get out of their way and facilitate their development to the best of their advantage:

- *Be in the moment and start from there*
- *Be curious and prepared to be surprised*
- *Become aware of assumptions and choose what to do with them*
- *Be open to learning and the unexpected*
- *Perceive with all your senses and listen to what they tell you*
- *Bring in your whole being and see which of your facets best suit the situation*
- *Be unattached and trust that what needs to happen will happen*
- *Grow and develop with the places and people around you*

I realised again how easy it is to get into a certain way of 'doing' first encounters with people and places, making assumptions and thereby not allowing enough space for things to grow and emerge.

I wish you all a wonderful month and many inspiring encounters.

Maren Donata Urschel

Maren is an experienced coach and supervisor whose work is deeply rooted in learning and ethical practice. She brings freshness, professionalism and a real joy in partnering with her clients to enable them to move to a place of insight, clarity and confidence in their next steps. Maren holds a Certificate in Coach Supervision from Coaching Development and has lived and worked in three countries. Her website is: www.fruitfulcoaching.com ; email is: maren@fruitfulcoaching.com

AOCS just went global!

We have now expanded with a presence in Switzerland as you can see above, plus France, Singapore and the US/Canada! We have had a sudden surge of new members and Regional Coordinators – see our growing map which we plan to expand soon!

New Country and Regional Coordinators:



In France: Gilles Roy, regional coordinator in Avignon



In USA: Sam Magill, country coordinator in USA/Canada

Growth in new membership...

We are having approx 8-10 new members joining each month, so we can truly claim that AOCS is the fastest growing coaching association around! There are around 10 new members currently waiting to join too. If you have any supervisor colleagues you think would enjoy membership of AOCS too, do invite them join us online.

"Welcome" to new members who have joined since last Newsletter:

Anne Pink in Teeside

Edna Murdoch and Miriam Orriss from CSA, both based in East Sussex

Fiona Adamson in Hertfordshire

Lynne Cooper in Middlesex

David Bredin in Suffolk

Ian Mackenzie in Brighton

Sarah Gornall, as Regional Coordinator South West, based in Bristol

Julia Menaul, as acting Regional Coordinator North West, based in Bolton

Leanne Lowish in south west London

Lynne Cooper in Hampton Wick

Rosalind Maxwell-Harrison in Nottingham

Jan Brause in Leeds

Evelyn Thomas in Pontypridd, Wales

Louis Harvey in south east London

Lisa Rossetti in Chester

Anne Roques near Oxford

Jacki Nicholas in Singapore

Georgia Parker near Manchester

Why supervisors are joining us:

It's interesting to note the many reasons why people are joining AOCS - some quite personal, some quite evangelical. An abridged extract of new member's comments reveal:

'As a recently qualified supervisor, I believe joining the association will support me in my quest for ongoing development and networking in relation to my supervision work, and also provide clients with comfort in relation to quality.'

I see supervision being not only vital for the coach and coachee but also for the 'profession' of Coaching itself. I am keen to assist with the promotion of 'supervision' and its delivery and see AOCS as offering a medium for this.

'A professional support group for exchange of ideas, best practice, and collaboration. I hope that AOCs will be able to educate the coaching community re benefits of supervision. Also, my hope is that AOCS may be able to "broker" contracts.'

'Opportunities to network with other supervisors, CPD and business development.'

'I expect membership to provide a discussion and CPD forum, and give me the exposure to expand my supervision practice.'

'To grow the industry, to develop myself and help others. To build and be part of a community sharing best practice and tips and techniques. To raise awareness amongst coaches.'

Personal development goals that new members wish to work on have included:

'To keep working with the transpersonal aspects of coaching and supervision, noticing them, reflecting on them, playing back, etc. Exploration of creative techniques, moving into constellation work, visualisation, and meditation.'

'I intend to devote a greater part of my practice to supervision. In doing so I am involved with the establishment of the AC's Supervision procedures and practices and expand my interest in Group Supervision.'

'Acquire more skills in Group Supervision and in energy work, possibly Focusing work, and better knowledge of group dynamics and coaching psychology.'

'To increase the supervision proportion of my practice through continuing to attend regular, accredited CPD events, personal 1:1 supervision, Peer Supervision and Group Supervision. To contribute to the coaching profession through seminars and events.'

'To work towards mastery in facilitating supervision groups.'

We want to be member-led so do tell us what features and member activities you would like to see in your new, shiny association!

We would like to hear from you!

In previous Newsletters and on our website, the founders have cited their 'stories' of how they got into supervision: <http://www.associationofcoachingsupervisors.com/about-aocs/our-supervision-stories>

What attracted you into supervision? What inspired you to answer the 'supervision call'? Tell us your story (in 250 words or less) and we'll publish them on the site (send us a photo too). The stories will make great reading and may inspire others too! Email your story to info@associationofcoachingsupervisors.com

Strategy meeting in March

As a result of our well-attended strategy meeting in March, the supervision thought-leaders met and some key topics and themes emerging were:

- Ethics, standards, and core competencies
- Sharing and collaborating with coaching and coach training organisations
- Transfer of accreditation from other organisations/alternative forms
- Team versus group supervision
- Internal and external coach supervision
- Research into Coaching Supervision
- CPD for coaches and coach supervisors
- Buyers of coaching supervision
- Events and conference

What we intend to do with these comments...

- Set up standards, ethics, core competencies for coach supervisors
- LinkedIn group to be added to and discussions opened
- Attend conferences & events in 2011 - Oxford Brookes, ICF and APECS
- Look into research conducted by Oxford Brookes
- Add member's page to website for research docs and latest trends
- Set up area for volunteers to support emerging supervisors/trainees
- Encourage membership and Regional Coordinators to join
- Establish Regional Coordinator geographical boundaries
- Encourage more volunteers to support AOCs founders
- Set next date for further discussion and progress report in Autumn, 2011

Also, as a result of this meeting, Henry Campion and Robin Shoheit are writing a paper on the hot topic of whether a coaching supervisor needs to have a coaching background. We will post this on the website shortly and we welcome your comments and views on this. Email:

Membership benefits:

A new series of Masterclass Workshops is being developed for announcement shortly. We plan to work with the very best to take our CPD further and deeper, so watch the website for news about workshops with Michael Carroll and Robin Shoheit, both Honorary Members of AOCs.

1st Conference on Coaching Supervision is on 1st July - get a special membership benefit when booking by going to our Member's Area. Click on Learning Resources/CPD and download the flier to access it! We will be a sponsor at this conference and are running a stand, so do come and say hello!

Events and Conferences coming up:

International Foundation for Action Learning (IFAL): <http://www.ifal.org.uk/workshops.html>

The Place and Role of Supervision in Action Learning

Wednesday 18th May in London. 10.00 am – 4.00 pm; non-IFAL members pay £75.

Clean Supervision – Friday 29th April, 12.30pm – 5.30pm in Hove, Sussex. Fee: £50 for the first half-day or £80 for the two half days. Participants: minimum 6; maximum 12.

Using clean language in supervision sessions can greatly enhance the experience for the supervisee. Using David Grove's clean language you will use the five key questions in real supervision sessions to embed this excellent technique. This workshop will be followed by a second in June 2011.

To express interest please email: jackie@associationofcoachingsupervisors.com in the first instance. Jackie Arnold has run her own executive coaching and training company for the past ten years. She is trained in Clean Language and she presented at the Clean Language Conference in 2009.

The Use of Parallel Process in Group Supervision – *getting to the heart of supervision*

An exclusive workshop offered by Robin Shohet on 5th July in London is an AOCS fund-raiser, with time and expertise kindly donated by Robin. See website panel for details and booking form: <http://www.associationofcoachingsupervisors.com/>

Do you want to promote your supervision-related workshop or seminar and reach an experienced and informed audience? We are especially interested in regional events as not everyone is based in London! If so please contact us@
education@associationofcoachingsupervisors.com

Volunteer network:

We are still looking to build a wide network of volunteers in national or regional/local roles, to support the growth of AOCS, so if you have just a few hours to spare do let us know!

Currently, we urgently need a few people for our Membership Secretary team to enable new applicants to join speedily, also, people savvy with social media, and people who can research and coordinate external events/workshops. Send offers of help and support to
info@associationofcoachingsupervisors.com

What does AOCS do?

In brief:

- 1. AOCS adds value by exclusively focusing on supervision issues, and our stated mission is to widen understanding and to actively promote the role of supervision**
- 2. AOCS provides buyers and supervisors with a meeting point for both parties to come together and engage in dialogue about buyer's needs and standards**
- 3. We provide opportunities to deepen our collective understanding of supervision, provide access to cutting-edge models, tools and techniques within supervision practice**

Do visit our website for more about what we do and how you can contribute:
<http://www.associationofcoachingsupervisors.com>