

My inspiration – Episode 7 – Surfing the wave of change

Romaine Johnstone/ Sandra Filleaudau I'm Romaine Johnstone and I'm Sandra Filleaudau,
Romaine Johnstone and we'll be your hosts on this podcast series,

VOIX OFF Orange presents My Inspiration.

Sandra Filleaudau Here's what you can expect from each of the seven episodes we'll be airing.

Romaine Johnstone Each month you'll discover an honest conversation on key aspects of what it means to better own your career and your self-development.

Sandra Filleaudau Some real life examples taken from Romaine coaching experience and our own lives, as well as tools to help you better understand yourself, others and your relationships.

Romaine Johnstone: and we'll always wrap up with a practical exercise for you to stop implementing these concepts in your own life.

Sandra Filleaudau Our ambition is for you to feel energized and empowered after listening to these episodes. So enjoy and share with anyone you think may benefit from the episodes. Surfing the wave of change.

Sandra Filleaudau: Hi, Romaine

Romaine Johnstone: Hi, Sandra. How are you?

Sandra Filleaudau: I'm great. How are you?

Romaine Johnstone: I'm good, thank you.

Sandra Filleaudau: Good. This is our last episode. Already, i can't believe we've covered so many topics in these seven episodes and we picked a really great one for our season finale. The topic of change, our podcast today so the six previous episodes actually have been about building awareness and deciding how we can start to do things differently. So in other words, what we can change in the way we do things and the way we interact with ourselves, with others. So it made perfect sense to finish the series on the topic of change, especially now.

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah, absolutely. Especially now in this period of pandemic where you and I are both recording this virtually with our friends from Orange and thank you to them for being there. Yeah. A period of change. Huge change. Thanks or because of rather the pandemic and COVID-19 and which is having a huge impact on our lives and we we're all going through very, very great amount of chaos, yeah lots of change. So we only manage situations of change, that one we're going through right now at some point or another in our lives. So stay with us because we're going to be talking about change, how it affects us and how we can manage it both for ourselves, but also with others. You know, our families, our partnerships are teens, our clients, our suppliers and as usual finish off

with an exercise. So you got something to take away and apply to situation that you're going through.

Sandra Filleaudau: So we have this some notion, especially in France, which is where we live. The change is something that people dislike. So where does that belief come from?

Romaine Johnstone: Well, yeah, I think it's because people have to think and act in a way that they're not accustomed to doing change and because of the uncertainty that goes with it and that's not exactly what we're experiencing now. The most worrying factories, I think the degree of uncertainty and there could be real resistance to change and of course, resistance is greater when the change is imposed on us, when you're made to change, when you choose it, that's something different, when you're made to change or accept a change and this is particularly relevant, I believe, in a professional context, you know, when somebody decides something for you in a professional context, you often can't do anything about it and you can be quite resistant to change and yet I think that's something which is really important, that change is a fundamental part of our personal growth and advancement and something just that I'd like to say that the word for in Chinese, the word for emergency, the word for crisis is the same symbol as the word for opportunity, for emergence and that's really, really interesting, isn't it? And so you have the duality of the situation in the same word in in Chinese symbols anyway. So it's a change can be full of potential, it provides room for creativity and innovation, provides room for new ways of functioning. I don't know about you, but for me, this period of confinement, its huge amount of limitations, void and emptiness and sadness and at the same time, it's full of potential. I'm its taking me places where I never thought I would go. So this goes back to the topic of stepping out of your comfort zone, doesn't it, and pushing yourself to do things that you haven't done before in the context of comfort zone. It was all about networking, wasn't it? So this reluctance to go to somewhere different comes from place of fear, usually and yet change can be a source of development and innovation and adopting a growth mindset will help us step over that metaphor of metaphorical edge and to start thinking about what becomes possible in a period of change. I don't know whether that resonates.

Sandra Filleaudau: It does.

Romaine Johnstone: Sandra, if I look I mean, you know, if I can engage on this topic, if changes is a source of development. Here's a little question for you to start, Sandra, on a scale of one to five one being the lowest level. How comfortable are you with change?

Sandra Filleaudau: I'd say, I'm fairly comfortable with it and I'm fairly accustomed to it and I'd say a three or four I would have said I was a four. But this situation is making me realize how much there are certain things that I hold on to and grasp on to, so I would say you are three or four.

Romaine Johnstone: Now, if I simply replace the word change by the word development, how comfortable are you with development? What would you say?

Sandra Filleaudau: I think that sounds better to me. I think there's bias around the world, around the world change versus developments so development sense is a word that I really like or takes the fear out of it.

Romaine Johnstone: It takes a fear out of it tell me more.

Sandra Filleaudau: Well, yeah. I mean, it takes some of the uncertainty, I guess, out of it and it puts a positive spin on, to me development means adventure. So, that's the way I frame it.

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah. The thing isn't it and we had gone.

Sandra Filleaudau: Yeah. I mean we often talk of things as a wave and that's actually the analogy that we used in the title of this episode. So does that seem like a good way of framing it to you?

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah, I do. I've got a slightly different image, actually, because in systemic coaching and I've explained that, I mean, I'm a systemic coach in the last number of episodes. And so we work with relationships and we often talk about the uncertainty, experience in times of change and that goes back to what we're experiencing now. Right and it's the notion of going over the edge and I like to talk about this a little bit because we do have edges and we do need to go over the edge to be able to accept a situation as human beings, as individuals, we have edges and as groups organizations, we have edges.

Sandra Filleaudau: Absolutely, but what do you mean by edge? I mean, what is an edge? Its a mountain metaphor? Where does it stand for?

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah, that's exactly it. So change is it for me and we have this image of going through changes, going over the edge of the mountain, going over the top of the mountain. If you visualize the mountain, we go over the top, we go from a situation which we know, to a situation we don't yet know. So we're going from a primary, if you like. The primary is our situation today. What situation we don't know which is our secondary, if you like and so to go from one to the other, you have to move and you have to go over the edge. Did it go to the end of the wall? And the secondary is a reality which we cannot yet see, in fact, but depending on how can I say this, depending on the change that we are experiencing. The mountain is more or less steep. It does that help?

Sandra Filleaudau: It does, because it's a good way of picturing the unknown and the fear that goes with it and potentially. So but I feel like there's a difference between change that you're initiating, so you decide, you know, how willing you are to how steep a mountain you're willing to climb Everest versus changed. That's being asked of you where you don't have much of a voice in saying what you're what you're okay with.

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah, absolutely and that's really important actually, because when we individually initiate change, we're in control of the situation, if you like. If someone pushes you to change, it's completely different and then at which, you know, when you decide it yourself, it could be just a gentle hill but when it's pushed on you and you're a bit reluctant, then the mountain could be pretty steep. We see it all depends on the mountain. So it all depends on the changing question and so it's not about us reacting in a certain way to change globally. It's us reacting in a certain way to that particular change which is required.

Sandra Filleaudau: That's interesting. So it's not about you know, it's not about being pro or against change, it's about the situation. It change in itself doesn't make much sense, does it, it's more situations.

Romaine Johnstone: As often as contextualization, which brings you the information.

Sandra Filleaudau: What did you recently cross Romaine?

Romaine Johnstone: When he doing this podcast with you, Sandra? Although, I had the idea and I jumped on my phone to phone you, I mean, just the idea of doing a podcast was a huge hit and you and why you took me there and we're here. We're doing the seventh one and you know, but so is my reaction to that particular change. Is it different to you Sandra of course it is?

Sandra Filleaudau: Absolutely.

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah. I do this all the time. This is one of the things that is part of your of your multiple lives. So when you think about it, imagine how complicated it is for a family to, I don't know, to agree on something as basic as going on holiday and choosing their holiday destinations. You know, I know families where there are these huge crowds. You know, now what they do is they vote, you know, anonymously. Can you imagine? I did a moving house. You know, that's a huge edge and imagine how easy or complicated it can be for an organization to move offices, for example and that's change which is imposed on you. So let's take that example of an organization that wishes to move from a silo based structure to a matrix organization. So we take one step further and this requires the organization to cross collectively all the members of the organization. So it's a companywide edge, if you like. They're going to go be working from one team with clearly defined hierarchy and very little lateral exchanges to have connexions and stakeholders in a number of teams and they're going to completely different way of working and they're going to spanning different teams, working with different levels of hierarchy and lots of lateral exchanges. So as an individual, let's imagine a situation where you're being going from being salaried to being self-employed, you know? And so whatever happens, we have to cross the head individually and when we're in the context of a system issue, like whether it's a family or a partnership or a team, we have to go over the edge collectively.

Sandra Filleaudau: And that's why it gets complicated. You know, that's where it gets complicated, is crossing the edge, collectively.

Romaine Johnstone: Crossing the edge collectively because we're all different in the face of change right? And so, one of the examples that I want to give is that, you know, I became self-employed fairly late on in my career, and I found myself working from home for myself with no team, no office, no boss, no coffee breaks, no lunches with my workmates and that edge was way more challenging than anticipated. Despite it being my decision, actually, and best to bite me being totally convinced that it was the right thing to do. So considering the fact that we're never alone, okay. They were always in relationship, professionally or personally. So it's easier to understand that the larger the group involved by the change, the slower the shift for the whole group to move from what they don't know their reality today to their future reality, if you like. Does that make sense?

Sandra Filleaudau: It does. Can you talk a little bit more about the collective crossing of Edgers? Because I think that's probably where it gets tricky.

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah, absolutely, so the center for Right Relationships, which I've talked about before, which has got this, you know, systemic model of relationship coaching, has developed a model around what they call leapers, bridge builders and tradition holders.

So three types of responses to change, okay and it's based on the obvious and that change is constant and change is the new normal. This is what IBM said in some research that they did back in 2008, I believe, and they read it in 2014. So change is now part of our lives and the research that was done by ORSC on this particular work by IBM, brought them to identify three different types of responses to change, so you can be a leaper, a bridge builder or a tradition holder in the face of change and you, Sandra, go on you've got a question for me.

Sandra Filleaudau: No. I think I would I would love to hear more about those three categories, because I think the idea that change is the new normal is was true before but is ever more true now. So can you us take us through those three categories. How they change?

Romaine Johnstone: Yes, absolutely and as I said, don't forget, it really depends on what change we're talking about. So as a general rule, the leapers are keen to go on a particular decision, the keen to go, they've jumped on the opportunity of moving premises. For example, we talked about moving premises. They are engaged with a project before you know it and those guys are already over the edge of the mountain. They're raring to go and then if you look at that mountain of cases, the leap has already set aside and then you've got what's called a bridge builders and they'll go over the edge a little bit later.

They'll consider the options. They'll look at the leapers and they'll be watching them and considering the benefits of making the move. At the same time, they're listening to the third category, the tradition holders who are not quite so positive about the move for a little bit reluctant about this move and the last to go over the edge will be the tradition holders. They could come across as being cynical and negative hardcore detractors who are against change. But they have so much wisdom, don't they? They have so much information to share and every single type of response has energy and information to bring to the group. So those three different types of responses can show up in every single one of us, it all depends on what change we're taught. We're talking about so said. Give it to give you an example for me personally, Sandra. You ask me now to go backpacking. The day after tomorrow in Brazil or when we're no longer in lockdown. I would jump on the opportunity, any day you ask me, however, to do a TED talk the day after tomorrow. On the topic of change. Whoa. Well, I would really dig my heels in and I would procrastinate and I'd have to sleep on it several times before saying, yes, okay, I'll do it. And yet I'm the same person and it's the same year. It's the same moment in time. It's just the decision different. So I am different. I can be three different types of people have three different types of response to change, depending on the change.

Sandra Filleaudau: You know what I love about what you just said? There's two things. First is that there is no judgement on the three categories. So we tend to talk about changes, if you like, liking changes it's sort of like a badge of honor. You know, I go, I'm brave, i like change. So there's no judgement because even the traditional elders have something to say and their reaction is worth listening too. So I like that and I also like the fact that depending on the situation, you can be in certain situations, you can be the leaper like you jumping on a plane to go to Brazil or the tradition holder because for this or that reason you got you have reasons to hold onto something. So I really like that. I remember a few months ago I was making an important decision for myself. We were discussing it together and you guided me through a fantastic exercise that really helped me in making the decision. Would you be willing to share it with the auditors?

Romaine Johnstone: Absolutely, interesting. You remember that it did it did have an impact, didn't it? So all of you who are listening and Sandra, you can do it again on a different decision, if you like. Think carefully about a decision that you need to take that is going to imply some important change okay and this exercise is all about weighing up the pros and cons of this change, using our image of the mountain and the edge of the top. So take a piece of paper, draw a mountain on your piece of paper and focus on the edge of the top and think about where you're at right now. So on the left hand side, the primary, if you like your reality and consider that you're going to the other side of the mountain and during this exercise will help you to plan and to strengthen the forces supporting a decision for and reduce the impact of the opposition to this decision. So first step, you do your basic mountain. You describe the plan for change the topic. Okay, so changing jobs, reorganizing the department, moving house. Anything important like that? Changing bedroom, unthinkable. I'm thinking of confinement. What change would be compulsory considering confinement? So, yeah, changing bedrooms could be one, you know. Well, having to work somewhere else, having to reorganize the way the computers are allocated anyway.

So the list to the left of the mountain list, all the forces in favor of this change in bullet point style created a list of all the favors or the forces in favor of change to the left. Now you go to the right of the mountain and you list all the forces against this change and take the time to really consider what is keeping you back. What are the forces against the change? And consider what's really in reality, the kind of practical logistical elements, but also consider, you know, emotionally maybe. Now, you've done that for both sides. Let's say you've got five on each side or six whatever, five on each side, try to limit it to the same number two would be better. Now, carefully assign a score to each force. You go back to the left hand side, you assign a score to each force, a ranking, if you like, from one which is weak to five, which is strong. So, for example, if you're desperately unhappy in your job and the decision is to change jobs, to look for a job, then give a score of five to unhappiness. Okay, so that's the fourth four against for example. Then you've done that for the forces. For the forces against from one to five for every single force. You add up the numbers for the left hand side and you add up the numbers for the right tense side. You have two figures. You work out what is the weight of the forces for the change and what is the weight of the forces against the change.

So there's one important element changes that is successful if the forces for change are stronger than the forces against it. But remember, you can strengthen the forces for and mitigate the force against. You can choose do you think that they can be mitigated? I mean, for example, if distance was a force against changing jobs, okay, you could then mitigate that force against by increasing your mobility, by moving closer to this new job. But you'd have to do so. So if, for example, the kids schooling. Is against moving house, then could you decide to mitigate that force by decided change schools during the summer, for example, rather than in the middle of the school year?

Sandra Filleaudau: So you end up with two scores, I guess and comparing these scores and comparing how each one of them can be mitigated or sort of leveraged is how you it helps unveil the true motivations and how really how willing you are to change. Is that correct?

Romaine Johnstone: Yes. It helps unveil absolutely and what you can do in reality. So it helps unveil the importance of the forces for the forces against them and then if they are very close to each other, you can then whether you can boost the forces for or mitigate the forces against them and if you think I can't mitigate the forces against well, then maybe you have your answer are no different. It all depends on the figures and the factors, really.

Sandra Filleaudau: Right, thanks so much. I mean, it's some it is really a lot of fun and very valuable digging into all these topics with you and dear listeners. We had a truly great time bringing you these tools, bring you these ideas, and we hope you learnt a lot from these episodes. So if you'd like to be in touch with either one of us, here's where you can find us.

Romaine Johnstone: Yeah. It's a great opportunity. Thank you, First and foremost, my LinkedIn page, because I don't have a blog and that's what I tend to keep alive and I do post and I share posts and that's what's most up to date. So my name is Romaine like the salad and my surname is Johnstone like John that the first name and stone comme la pierre Johnstone or my website www.johnstonebusinesscoaching.com Although still up to date and sometimes on Twitter but really the LinkedIn page is the most relevant one and my contact details are there and what about you, Sandra?

Sandra Filleaudau: Great. Well, you can you can find my podcast “**Les équilibristes**” which is a podcast it means literally the tightrope workers in French you can find wherever you find your podcasts and you can find me on my Website, so www.leséquilibristes.com where you can also sign up for my weekly email. It's crafted for parents juggling with careers, family and everything else going on in their lives.

And I have an Instagram page as well. So yeah, that's where we can we can keep in touch. So it's been its true. It's been a pleasure for both of us to collaborate on these podcasts. We've had so much fun and to work with the Orange team on this great project. So, yeah, if you want to if you like what you heard and you want more, let us know. We'll make it happen and by now.

Romaine Johnstone: Absolutely. Thank you all for listening. Thank you all for staying with us to the end and trying out these tools. We'd love to hear from you as you can and guess is by four by four now to need to Romaine. Take care.

Voice off: You were listening to my Inspiration and Orange podcast.