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Já um mês no SINAL!

I haven't seen the past month go by. It was so intense that I have this weird and ambivalent feeling that I arrived yesterday but at the same time that I have been here forever. Regardless, I finally take the time to sit down, open my computer and reflect upon the time spent at SINAL. It has been filled with enriching encounters, adventures, and discoveries. I will try to transmit you the richness of the various experiences and reflections in a few lines.

Maybe what strikes me the most now that I take the time to reflect upon it is how my relationship with time and planning has evolved. Being Swiss and descendant of two families of watchmakers, I value punctuality and time. My life used to be structured according to time slots, and I loved planning my weeks and days ahead. Well, that does not work in Brazil and especially not when you live in the middle of the forest where power cuts and problems with Internet connections may happen. So I had to adapt and learn how to get rid of my timing management habits, the result is somewhat incredible. I "go with the flow" and let myself be surprised by whatever the day might bring. Every little issue is the starting point of a new experience like planting vegetables in the garden or suddenly meditating in the dark with the noises of the forest as sole companions. It is also about enjoying the silence, the disconnection from the rest of the world, and the connection with yourself. Somehow I feel more relaxed, and I let go of the potential stress or guilty feelings that happened earlier when I was late on schedule. I still have an organized "to-do list" but I do things when I can, in their due time. I lose less energy getting angry at the Brazilian infrastructures, and I slowly become a resilient human being. I also do not get stressed or upset when the bus in Rio does not show up as planned or when a meeting starts later. I consciously enjoy every second and try to make the best out of it.

The past month at SINAL also opened me to many new ways to raise mindfulness at a personal but also at an organizational level. This introduced me to Kum Nye, which is an ancient Tibetan Buddhist practice. It comprises elements of physical exercise, stillness, respiration, self-massage, and visualization. I enjoy discovering new ways of training and incorporating them into my daily routine. I was also introduced to the benefits of Aromatherapy, and after implementing it for a few weeks, I can feel the first benefits. As each human being is unique, I think that there is no single method for raising mindfulness but that each one of us has to find its mix of practices. My feeling is that this quest is infinite and that each day brings new

elements to the routine. At an organizational level, I was lucky to be introduced to amazing people who came to SINAL and ran workshops with us. We spoke of strategy, ways to raise money, the power of having rituals in an organization, the soul of SINAL and potential ways to make it accessible to a greater amount of people.

My work here at SINAL is to support its transition from an organic growing organization to a platform ready to welcome and train students of the worlds. I help to set up some structures in different ways; some are rational and visible, and others are more untouchable but effective as well. I am deeply grateful for having the opportunity to work so closely with Thais. She empowers me every time we work together. I feel her strength, energy, and confidence being transmitted. This phase of transformation is crucial for SINAL and being here, now, is fascinating and enriching. After this month I feel like a sponge that absorbs everything. I listen, I watch, I read, I fell, and I save everything in my head and body to be able to use it later.

As you might notice this post is a first reflection on the personal changes and experiences that I went and still am going through. I feel “fuller”, “more aligned” and starting to be fully in agreement with myself. I think that we never stop changing and that we should keep looking for opportunities to learn and grow further throughout life, but there exist places and times that better fit this purpose than others. SINAL is a magic and unique venue, and I enjoy this phase of transition in my life after the university to explore my own self.

Enough for the reflection over the past, let’s speak of the future! I will stay for another month in SINAL, where I will keep working on different tasks and projects. I am sure that this next month will be very enriching and exciting as well. I will then leave the country to go back to Switzerland for a few weeks before coming back to Brazil mid-October. I will then start my second Brazilian adventure in another state (State of Bahia) working for another organization of Thais, Adapta Sertão. Adapta Sertão looks for practical solutions to helps farmers face daily challenges due to the changing climate. The Sertão is a semi-arid and poor region of Brazil. I will contribute to the creation of an Institute and thus deal practically with the concepts of knowledge creation and management. I will let you know more in due time.

Saudações cordiais do Brasil!