

Re:Focus

simple ideas to help you thrive

by Simon Sinek

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Small is special

It was a complete coincidence. My friend Jules Shell happened to be in Paris for a few days while I was there. She is a remarkable human being. She is the co-founder of Foundation Rwanda, an organization that funds the education of children born to the victims of rape during the 1994 Rwandan genocide and links their mothers to psychological & medical services (if you only give to one charity per month, please give to this one next month). Jules and I are always traveling and we never get to see each other, so it was a total treat that we were in the same city at the same time...and that it was Paris was a bonus.

I took Sunday off and spent the day with Jules. We had croissants for breakfast in the gardens of the Palais-Royal, ate the most scrumptious duck confit for lunch, shopped the Marais, licked Berthillon ice cream on Ile St. Louis, had the perfect cup of coffee in a small, secluded square somewhere we're not sure where and finally had, what can only be described as, a hilarious dinner in a Japanese restaurant where we drank French wine with our ramen noodles. Twelve hours we spent together that day and it was great. Then last night we went for a late night glass of wine and a crepe in front of the Eifel Tower. We laughed and laughed the whole time.

This morning I awoke to an email from Jules.

Totally loved our time together. Straight out of a woody Allen film- the most romantic trip ever among friends. Ah Paris... Everyone should go once with Simon Sinek.

I love Jules's desire to want to share what we had with lots of people so that lots of people can have as much fun as we had. The problem is, if everyone got to go to Paris once with Simon Sinek or Jules Shell, it would no longer be special for the few that do.

There is something special about small. Small is intimate, spontaneous and intense. Small is...well...small is special. If lots of people experience something special, it is no longer small and, in turn, ceases to be special. Good, yes. Fantastic, even. But not special.

The Pacific ocean was special when few people ever got to see it. Now, it's not

so special. Chocolate was special when only a few people ate it. Now, it's not so special (though there is still some special chocolate out there - like Vosges bacon truffles - but very few people have tried them).

If you stumble upon something special, keep it small. Though you may want to share it with lots of people, which is a good thing, remember that in so doing, what originally made it special will quickly dissipate. But if you do choose to share something special with lots of people, then just make sure you always keep another thing available that only a few special people will get to experience. That way there will always be something special about what you do. This is as true in relationships as it is in business. When we treat people as numbers, they will never feel special. When we treat them as individuals, they will. Sending a mass email to the company isn't special. Roaming the halls and saying hello to everyone is.

The reason humans like feeling special is because feeling special is human.