

Campfires and coaching

It seems a wonderful idea to sit around a campfire as the sun sets and the stars appear in the night sky. And it is, but if you are anything like me the reality of getting the fire started can be less like an Instagram photo that I had in mind and more like a pile of sticks that seem intent on producing nothing but smoke that gets in your eyes. The potential is there for a great fire, but fire lighting is a craft that gets better through experimenting, learning as you go and making changes the next time. Be it the way to build it, the best moment to blow on the fragile early flames, and the right twigs to get started or the logs that burn long and hot.

You may be familiar with the letter of 2 Timothy and the words addressed to the emerging leader of the church "... to fan into flame the gift of God"(2 Tim 1:6). The encouragement is to keep growing and learning, to move beyond the recognition of what is possible to realising the fullness of God's gift. Not to stop at the vulnerable flames that can easily be extinguished but to nurture the fire at every stage with what it needs to burn brightly.

Through our virtual visits to Circuits, presentations at gatherings and the training communities we have, the Evangelism and Growth team has met all sorts of talented and deeply committed people involved in innovative mission in the Methodist Church. As well as providing the resources that will help the God for All strategy become part of every context, we also know from talking with those who have led fruitful mission that 'fanning into flames' requires good support and space to grow.

A key way that we have identified to make sure this this is happening is through the provision of coaching. A regular space with a trained coach who will help and encourage the exploration, the key questions that are raised by the missional context and the next step to put in place the things you need to develop as a leader. Coaching is the opportunity to deepen and develop the gifts that God has given, not extra help because you are failing. It is the support to flourish in the places that God has called you to pioneer, to be an evangelist or a transformational leader.

If you are involved in innovative mission and evangelism then maybe you would like to be matched with a coach as part of the *God for All* Influencer coaching programme. You can find out more and apply at www.methodist.org.uk/coaching or if you have any questions, please email coaching@methodistchurch.org.uk.