

'The Boot on the Other Foot'



An Occupational Therapist's
Lived Experience of
Cancer
in
their Leadership Journey

Sheena Wight

#RCOT2019

@sheena_OT

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Leadership lens



Career overview

Qualification

Diploma 1981
Conversion cs '99
MSc 2012
NIDMAR 2012
[Horse riding &
Pilates Instructor]

Clinical

Learning Disability
Older People
Physical Disability
Spinal Injuries
Stroke Rehab
Neuro Progressive
& Com Rehab

Current

Clinical &
Professional Lead
for Occupational
Therapy

Falls lead &
Healthy Working
Lives lead

Research, Higher Ed & Managerial

Lead & Head OT
Research
Lecturer

OT Manager (&
Arts Therapies)
OT & PT Manager

Cancer experience

Acute illness
Diagnosis
Treatment Plan

Chemotherapy
Waiting / scans
Radiotherapy

Narrative

Getting my life back
All about the Occupation
Return to work

Recovery & Rehab
Milestones
Legacy

'Let me off!!'







What it meant to my leadership

What matters when acutely ill?

- ▣ Recognising the impact on staff & colleagues of my illness
- ▣ My physical absence
- ▣ Practical issues created
- ▣ My emotional absence (safe place to be for staff)
- ▣ Their concern for me (emotional burden)

What matters after the acute episode?

- ▣ Re-engagement in discussions & work related issues
- ▣ As is often the case
 - No backfill
- ▣ Operational tasks – off loaded onto team leads
- ▣ Cover for my workload
- ▣ No soft landing on RTW

Recovery & Rehab

- Cardio respiratory
- Proprioception
- 'Chemo body'
- Flexibility
- Strength
- Stamina
- Balance

Physical &
Sensory

- Fear & uncertainty
 - Anxiety & anger
 - Confidence
 - Self esteem
 - Self image
 - Self trust
 - Sleep

Emotional

- Self care
- Leisure
- Productivity
- Roles & Routines
- Getting my life back

Occupational

Cognitive

- Memory
- Processing
- Multi-tasking
- 'Chemo brain'
- Concentration

Getting my life back

▣ Milestones

- Avoiding sepsis
- PICC line removed
- No more transfusions
- Temperature taking
- Driving again
- Stopping meds

▣ Supports

- Husband family friends
- Staff & colleagues
- Social media & technology
- Nutrition
- Humour
- Promise of HOPE

▣ Fears & Frustrations

- Trauma of it all
- The *not* knowing
- Waiting for results
- Impatience
- Night demons

▣ Legacy

- Finding the new normal
- Side effects of chemo
 - ▣ Fatigue
 - ▣ Peripheral Neuropathy
- Burden on family/friends
- Insight
- *Rudely interrupted!!*
- *Reaffirmed my passion in all things occupational*

Its always about the *Occupation*

- ▣ The centrality of occupation
- ▣ Routines & roles
- ▣ Identity
- ▣ Occupational balance
- ▣ Skill development
- ▣ Mastery of new tasks
- ▣ Achievement
- ▣ Self worth
- ▣ Adaptation & flexibility
- ▣ Motivation & Attitude

- ▣ Disruption of former self
- ▣ Pursing a new normal
- ▣ Revise & create new meaning through *occupations*
- ▣ Supportive employer is critical
- ▣ Good work is good for your health
- ▣ Return to Work –
 - **Not finished yet!!!**

Medicine adds days to life
Occupational Therapy adds life to days

Leadership experience to date

1. Experiential
2. Learning & development
3. Professional supervision



Change Weavers
Playing to your
Strengths
Myers Briggs TI
*Managing
Transitions

*Courage to Manage



1. Knowing yourself first!
2. Adopting 'Eclectic' approach
3. Transformational leadership

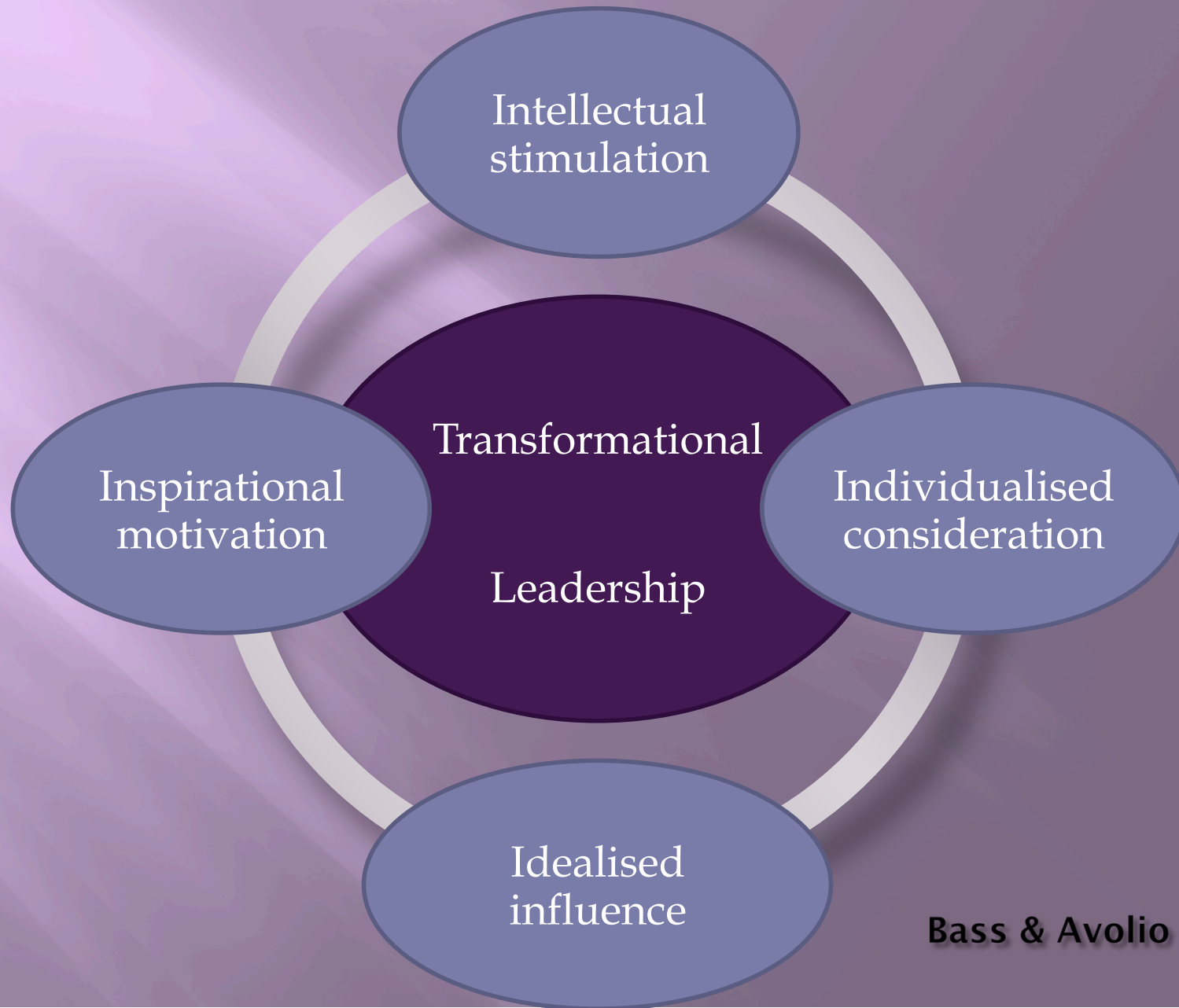
Leadership styles



A word cloud of leadership styles arranged in a diamond shape. The words are in various colors (orange, red, pink, purple) and fonts (serif, sans-serif, script). The styles include:

- Authentic
- Democratic
- Facilitative
- Collaborative
- Effective
- Autocratic
- Authoritarian
- Compassionate
- Charismatic
- Innovative
- Servant
- Supportive
- Collective

Transformational leadership



Bass & Avolio 1990

So what?

Personal message:

Live for today
Self care is vital
Choose the way you
respond to situation

Leadership message:

Be bold, honest
courageous and
kind to yourself
and others.
Be transformational
Speak up & out!

Occupational Therapy message:

Amazing
profession
Embed OT into all
cancer rehab
Increase our
visibility



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Thank you for listening to
my story

Any thing you would like to ask me
or share?

Sheena Wight

@sheena_OT

sheena.wight@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

07885 765 968