

You too are a teacher... yes, you!

I was watching aerial practice recently - it's something I've always wanted to try, but... I'm clumsy, I'm scared of heights, I'm... but so are some of the beginners there too. Clumsy isn't the point, nor is getting your legs in the right place first time. What counts here is that you keep trying, and if you need to, you make it a little easier until you get it (e.g. using a trapeze rather than the silks until the legs go the right way).

This doesn't just apply to circuses. Some of the best volunteers, deployments and systems that I know started out awkward and clumsy, but kept trying, adapted to where their skills were, and kept trying 'til they got good. The circus school has incredible teachers who know when to ask for more, and when to walk over to the trapeze. We have great teachers in the crisis data space too – now we need to distil their knowledge, to best get skills and lessons to all the individuals, deployments and systems that we're fostering. That's why we created OpenCrisis, and why it continues to support other efforts to teach.

I'm heartened that at ICCM 2014, some of our shyest but most knowledgeable mappers stood up and talked about what they know, what they're passionate about - people like Leesa who knows more about virtual PTSD than anyone else I know, and Hilary talking about how to manage gender issues in map creation. But more of you have amazing experience and know so much... please, please, get out there and teach others about it, give them the chance to learn from you too.