



Beyond the bus factor

GitHub Universe - San Francisco
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 Ruth Cheesley

LinkedIn



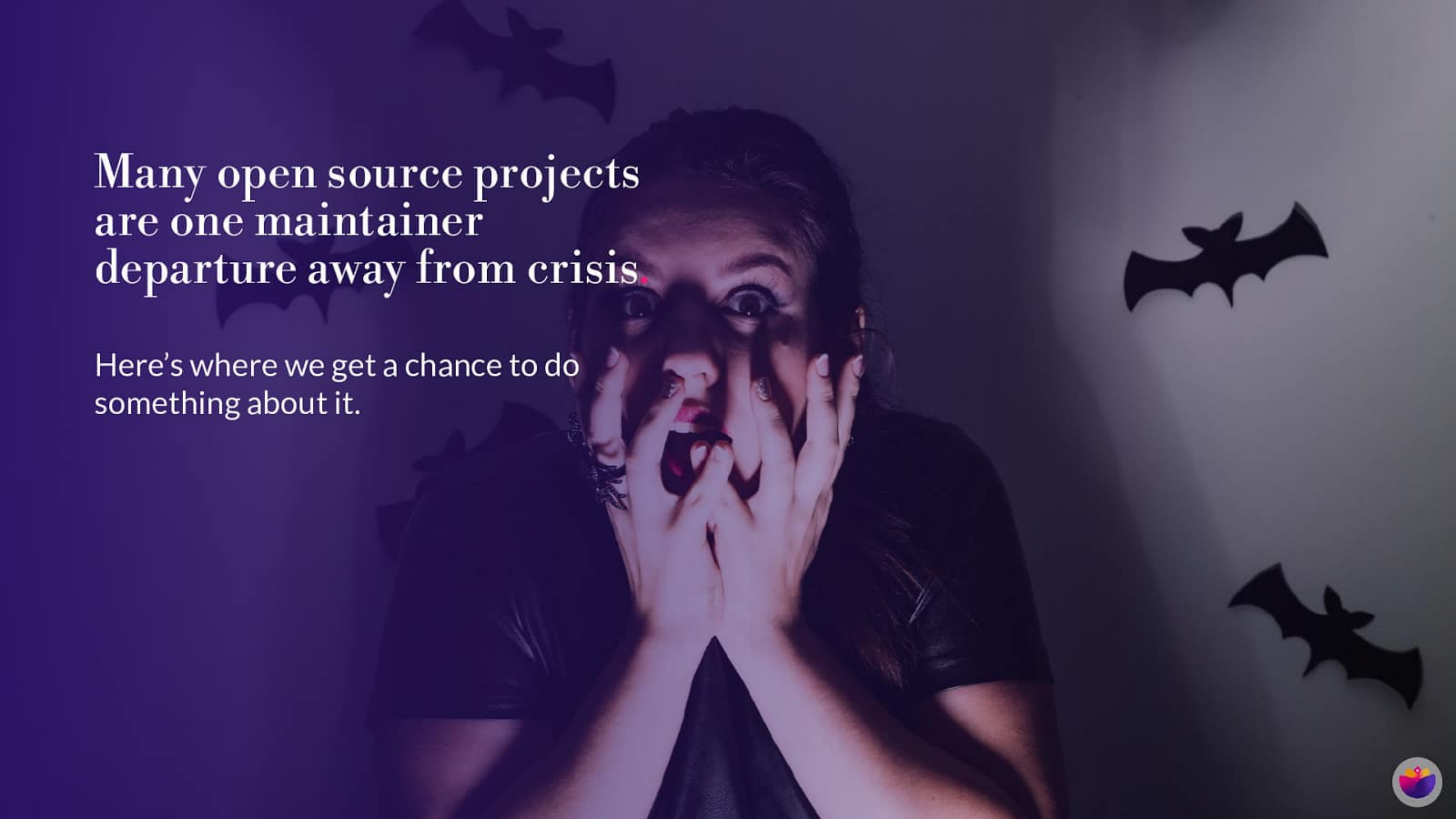
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links and resources

  @RCheesley

A woman with dark hair and a shocked expression, her hands covering her mouth. The background is dark with several black bat cutouts. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Many open source projects
are one maintainer
departure away from crisis.

Here's where we get a chance to do
something about it.



Today's schedule.

- Opening and tune-in
- Mapping your bus factor
- How would you deal with ... ?
- Collaborative tactic brainstorming
- Creating your action plan and tune-out

**Notes and
resources on
GitHub**



beyondthebusfactor.org - links to the resources can be found here.



Quickfire question:

Who are you, and what's your biggest fear about your project's sustainability?

Let's go around the room, and try to summarise in just 1-2 sentences



Mapping your bus factor.

Most issues relating to succession planning fall into three broad categories:

1. Technical areas such as code, infrastructure
2. Governance, legal, finance and decision making
3. Community and relationships



Technical areas.

In this section we're considering the main technical infrastructure of your project.

What this looks like will vary between projects, so feel free to adjust the terminology to fit your specific situation.





Score your risks.

- ● Only one person = critical risk if they leave
- ● Two people = risky but potentially survivable
- ● More than three people = resilient





How many people can do this independently right now?

- Deploy to production / release
- Emergency rollback of a deployment / release
- Access your critical production/release infrastructure
- Handle security incidents
- Manage DNS and domains



Governance and decision making.

In this section we're considering the governance and decision making aspect of your project.

What this looks like will vary between projects, so feel free to adjust the terminology to fit your specific situation.





How many people have responsibility for this right now?

- Deciding project direction
- Making emergency decisions of any nature
- Making decisions that impact the future of the project
- Documentation of your critical infrastructures and resources
- Financial and legal decisions



Community and relationships.

In this section we're considering your community, and any other people-to-people relationships that are important to your project.

What this looks like will vary between projects, so feel free to adjust the terminology to fit your specific situation.





How many people are involved in:

- Community moderation
- Managing communication channels (as admins)
- Maintaining sponsor relations
- Onboarding new contributors
- Communicating with your users



Popcorn sharing:

- Areas where you're most vulnerable (your critical risks)
- Any patterns that you noticed
- Any resources that you think might be helpful in addressing the critical risks



Some deeper
audit questions



Succession planning:

- Break out into small groups
- Pick a scenario from those listed on GitHub
- Discuss:
 - What would you do immediately?
 - Focus on the first 24/48hrs
 - What resources would you need?

Scenario
cards



Table sharing:

- One key insight
- What surprised you?
- What would you have no idea how to handle?
- What resources might be helpful to navigate this situation?



Quickfire questions: Tactical practices

What's ONE practice that prevents your project from depending on any single person?

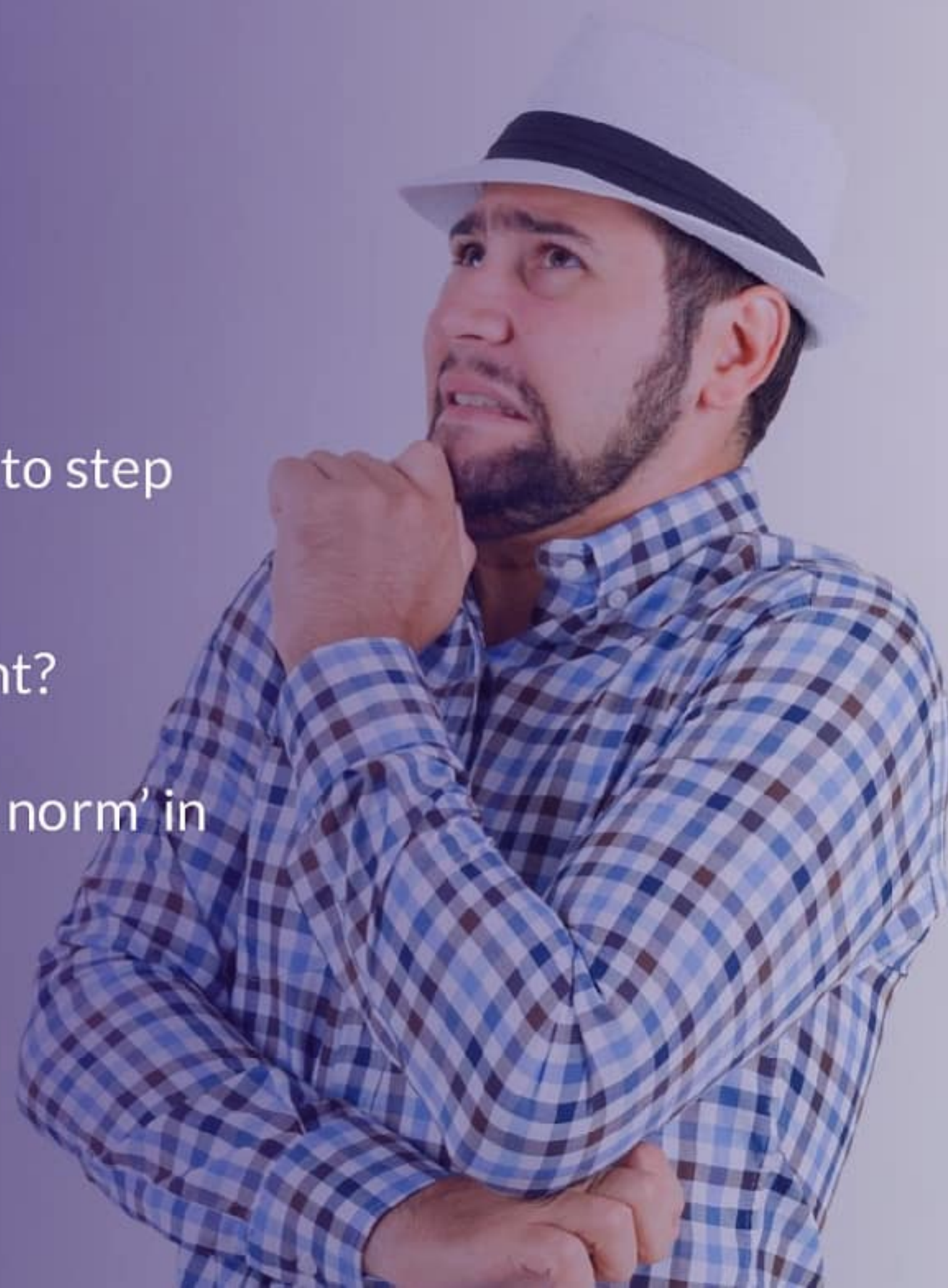
- Which ones surprised you the most?
- Which could you take away and action next week?
- Are there any patterns arising?



Quickfire questions: Cultural shifts

How do you make it normal for people to step back before they burn out?

- What makes these hard to implement?
- What would it take to make this 'the norm' in your project?



Wrapping up: Your commitment

Notes and
resources on
GitHub



Get out your notepad or digital notebook and write down:

- One specific action you're going to take **in the next 30 days** to address something we've talked about today
- Share with the room if you are happy to do so
- Share your updates, questions and ideas in the discussions on the repo





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What questions can I answer?

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