

Cpp
North
2025

Telling Your Technical Story

Sherry Sontag

Telling Your Technical Story

Engineering

Bloomberg

CppNorth 2025

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Sherry Sontag

Code Governance Solutions

TechAtBloomberg.com



Twenty years to this moment...

**I've never been more panicked
crafting a talk.**


**Reaching out for help, it came down
to one question.**

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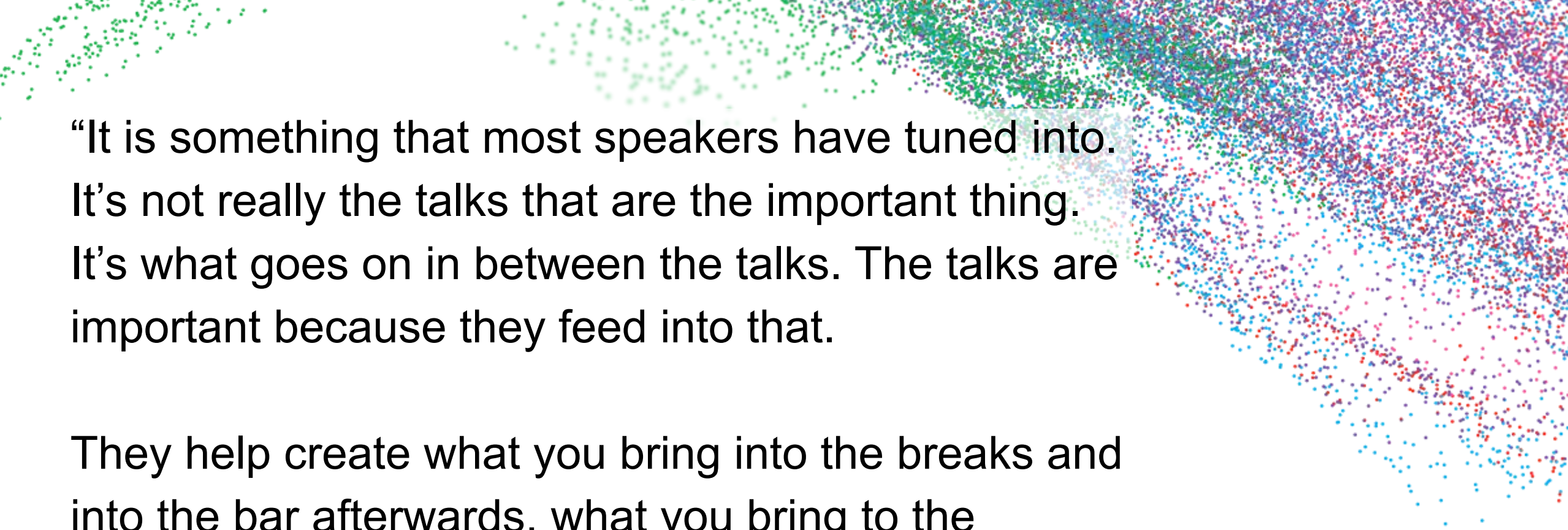
What do you love about conferences?

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“It is something that most speakers have tuned into. It’s not really the talks that are the important thing. It’s what goes on in between the talks. The talks are important because they feed into that.

They help create what you bring into the breaks and into the bar afterwards, what you bring to the connection between you and the friends you make, that you are thinking along similar lines.”

– **Phil Nash**
C++ on Sea



Punching through: From the from the “hallway track” to lecture rooms?

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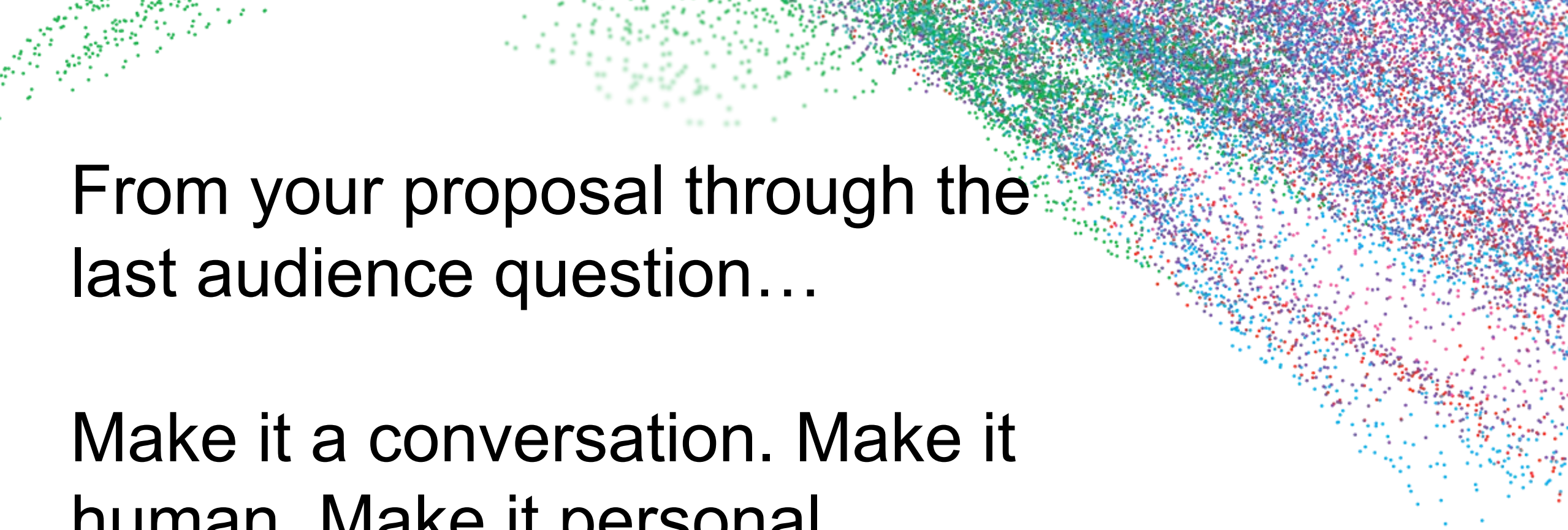
The Three E's

Engage

Entertain

Educate

– Andrei Alexandrescu, as told to John Lakos



From your proposal through the
last audience question...

Make it a conversation. Make it
human. Make it personal.



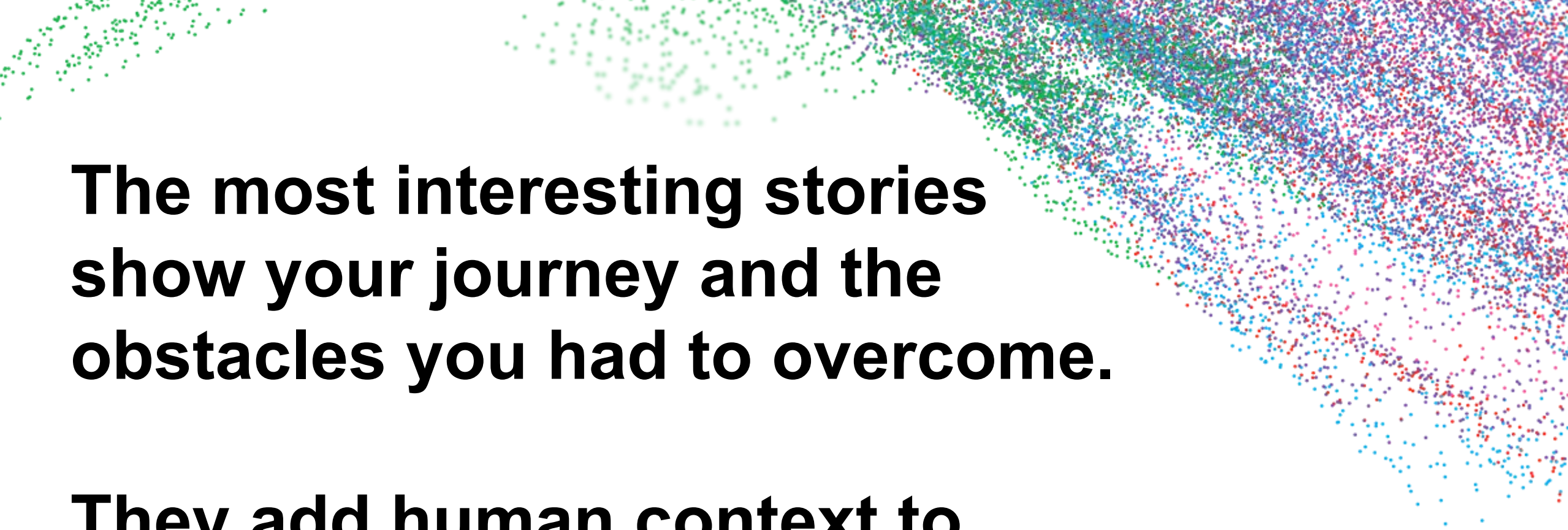
“Be vulnerable.”

**– Jon Kalb
CppCon**



“We are a species of storytellers.”

– **Andrei Alexandrescu**



**The most interesting stories
show your journey and the
obstacles you had to overcome.**

**They add human context to
technical depth.**



The process starts when you answer the call for papers...

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Your proposal.

You are rendered invisible.

Best be loud.

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And obvious.

**After people hear your talk, what
should they walk away with?**

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Round One -

New tech wins. Focus matters.

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Round Two -

The Program Committee finds room for process and a point of view.

Help them with a story, depth, experience, and even journalism.

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Congratulations...

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Time to write...

Step away from the slide deck.

**Compose one piece, one thought,
one moment at a time.**



What problem were you trying to solve?

Share your victories.

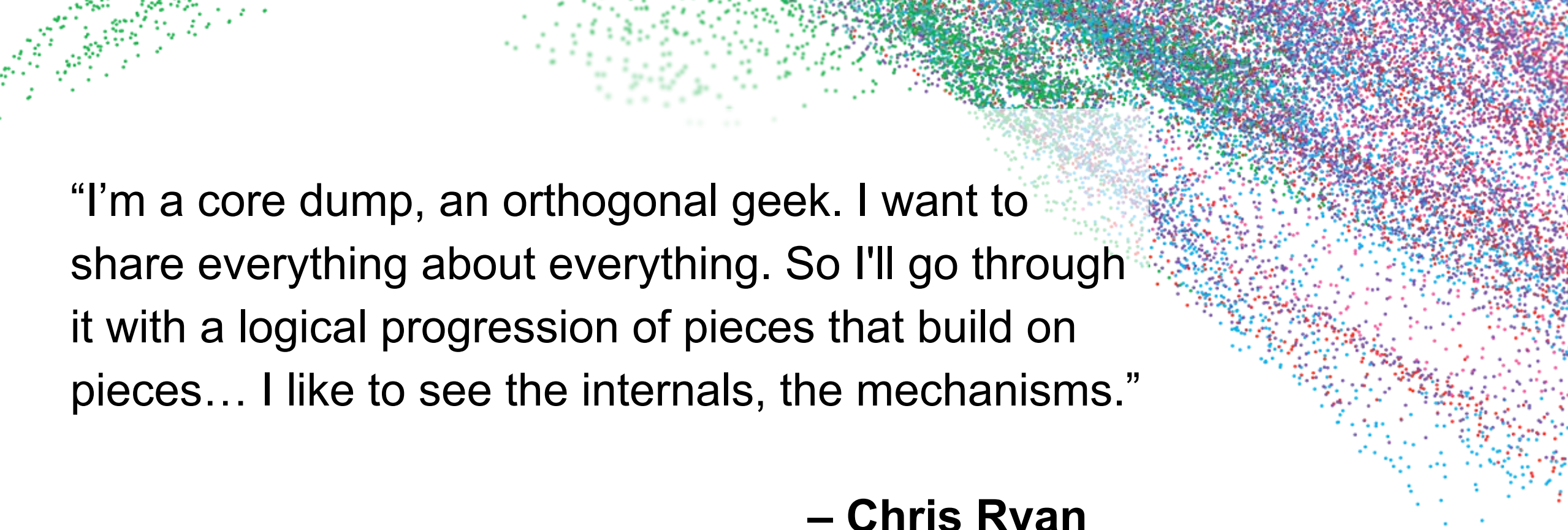
and your mistakes.

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“I’m a core dump, an orthogonal geek. I want to share everything about everything. So I’ll go through it with a logical progression of pieces that build on pieces... I like to see the internals, the mechanisms.”

– **Chris Ryan**
CppNorth



The rule of three:

What can people follow, absorb,
and remember?



**Now you can work on your
slides.**

They are merely the illustrations for
what you want to say.

A decorative graphic in the top right corner of the slide, consisting of a dense, curved cluster of small, multi-colored dots (green, blue, red, purple) that tapers off towards the top left.

On Stage...

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Who are you?

Who is in the audience?

**What can the amateur teach
the expert?**

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Slides & Demos

Where less is more

And font matters

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Callouts

- What are callouts?
- How do they reference points on the slide?

Callouts are messages that “pop up” during your presentation.

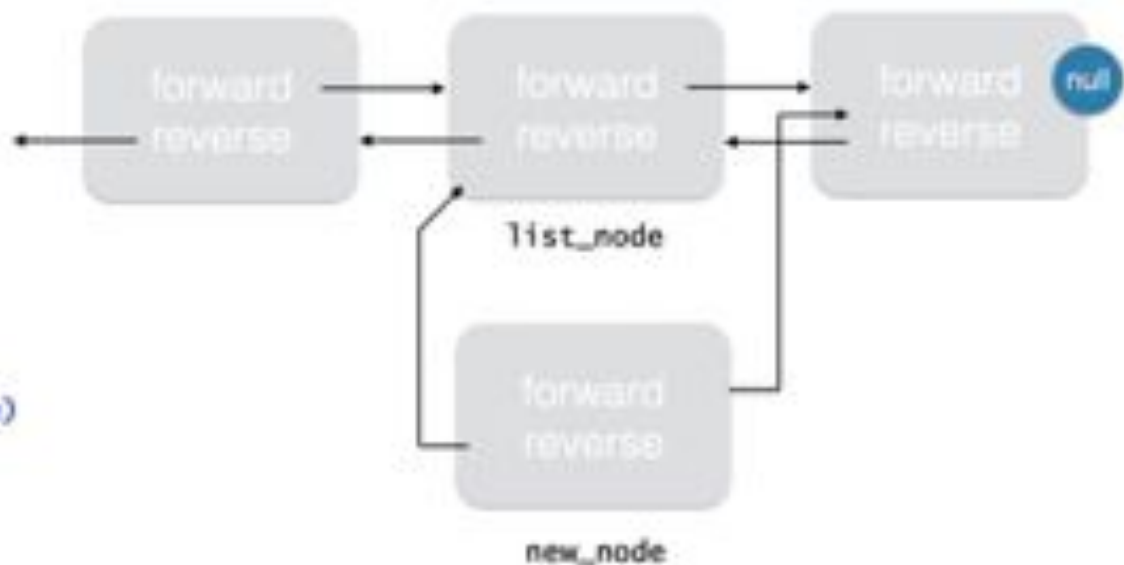
They will usually point to a bullet point or line of code.

Highlights - code example

```
template <class T>
struct Node
{
    T payload;
    Node* forward;
    Node* reverse;

    Node(): forward(nullptr), reverse(nullptr) {}
};

template <class T>
void insert_after(Node<T>& list_node, Node<T>& new_node)
{
    new_node.forward = list_node.forward;
    new_node.reverse = &list_node;
    list_node.forward->reverse = &new_node;
    list_node.forward = &new_node;
}
```





Endings... and Echoes

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Endings... and Echoes

Chart where you've been.

Start the next conversation.

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**From your proposal through
the last audience question...**

This is all a conversation.



What would you like to ask me?

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Thank you!

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