The Importance of the Aha! Moment

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What is an Aha! Moment?

- Eureka effect or eureka moment

- Can be defined as a moment of:

  - sudden, triumphant discovery, inspiration or insight

  - a person realising or solving something

- A form of creative thinking

What makes an Aha! Moment?

- Four main characteristics:
  - Suddenness
  - Ease
  - Positive effect
  - Confident perception of truth

The Element of Surprise

- What is surprise?

- Personal expectations
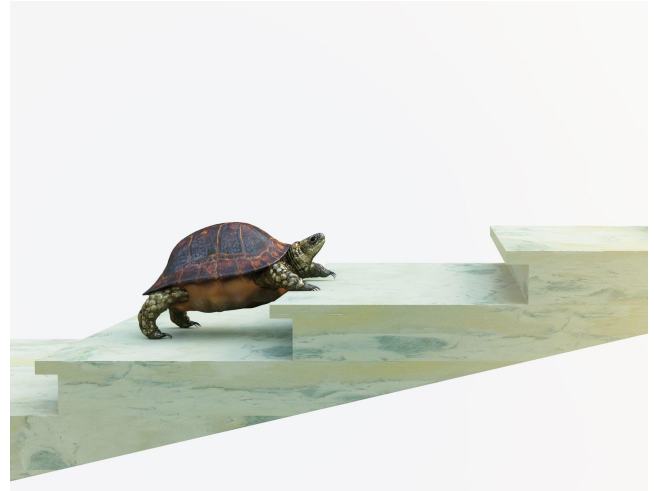
- Isaac Newton and the apple

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The Struggle Ahead of the Moment

- Positive effects of struggle

- Negative effects of struggle

- The "Eh, fuck it!" Moment

- A learner's struggle

- Progress versus momentum

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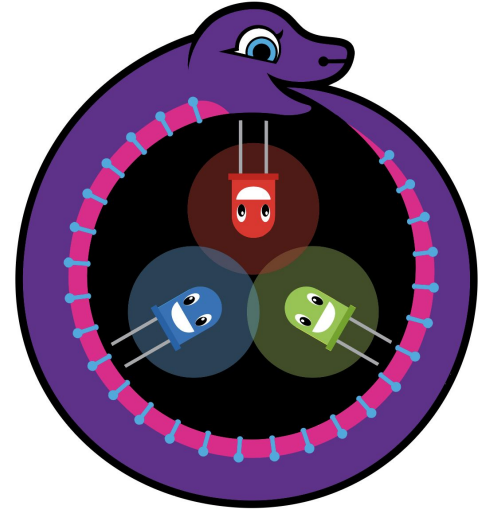
The Reality of the Aha! Moment

- Patience required

- Happens organically

- Not for everyone

- Always a different moment

Real Aha! Moments

My Aha! Moment

- Python programming

- Tried and failed to learn

- Ended up with a microcontroller

- Made an LED blink using Python

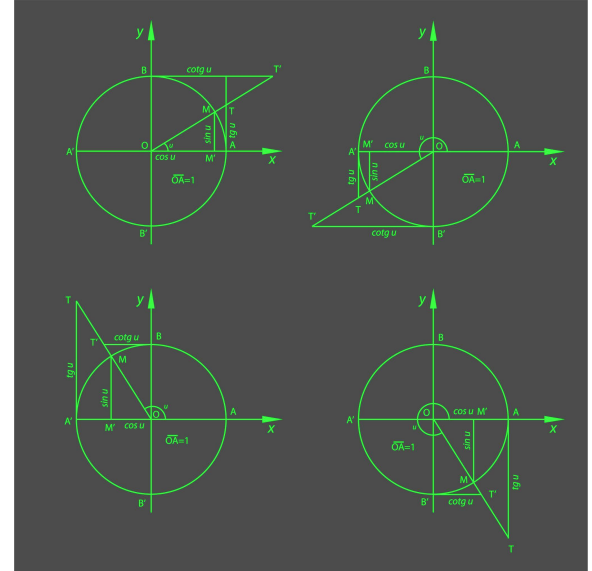- Found clarity and a connection

Tammy's Aha! Moment

- Music theory

- The rules felt arbitrary and illogical

- Explanation of one part

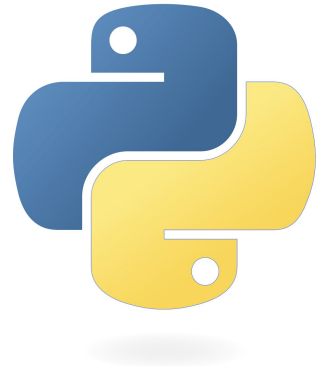- Started to see patterns

- It made sense and became fun

Tod's Aha! Moment

- Trigonometry

- sine and cosine

- An animated diagram

- Able to use them automatically

- Still helps to this day

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Alec's Aha! Moment

- Python programming

- Interacting with certain objects and not others

- Found dunder (or "magic") methods

- System behind the scenes

- Uses this functionality regularly

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John's Aha! Moment

- Programming

- Learned as a kid

- Career in animation

- Made it exciting and relevant

- Able to apply to other concepts

Finding an Aha! Moment

Cultivating the Aha! Moment

- Recognise your strengths

- Conducive environment

- Validate, ask, listen

- Appropriate guidance

- Maintain self-awareness

Increase the Potential for an Aha! Moment

- Take a break

- Let your mind wander

- Boost your mood

- Get some sleep

- Experience new things

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Following the Aha! Moment

- Sense of clarity

- Focus on the positive

- Be open to change

- Use the momentum

- Revisit your successes

Not Finding Your Aha! Moment

- "This will never happen to me."

- May not happen

- All journeys differ

- Stay open to it

- Celebrate your successes

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References

References available on GitHub:

- https://github.com/kattni/PyCon2023/tree/main/Education_Summit_Talk_Content/The_Importance_of_the_Aha_Moment_References.md

More information:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eureka_effect (at your own risk)
- https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-aha-moment/ (requires a free account)

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To My Contributors

To Bruce: Thank you for help putting this all together.

To Tammy, Tod, Alec and John: Thank you for contributing your Aha! Moments to my talk.

Thank you for attending!

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