

exercism.io

One Platform, Three Perspectives

# About Me

A photograph of a man from the chest up. He is wearing dark-rimmed glasses and a dark hoodie with a light-colored, diamond-patterned graphic on the front. He is looking slightly to his left. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green and yellow foliage.

I am 31 years old, started  
coding at 24, became a  
Gopher about 1 year ago.

# I live in Bielefeld, Germany.



Photo by [Kevin Bückert](#) on [Unsplash](#)

I am working as an  
infrastructure engineer at

real.digital<sup>1</sup>.



we ❤ digital commerce

<sup>1</sup> real is hiring!

# I love Japanese curry.



I really enjoy Go Time.<sup>2</sup>

GO TIME

<sup>2</sup> Unpopular opinion: Mat Ryer is quite funny.

You can find me as [@shimst3r](#)  
on Twitter and GitHub.



# Agenda

1. What is exercism.io?
2. As a Mentee
3. As a Mentor
4. As a Team

*Exercism is an online coding platform that offers code practice and mentorship.*

— [Wikipedia](#)

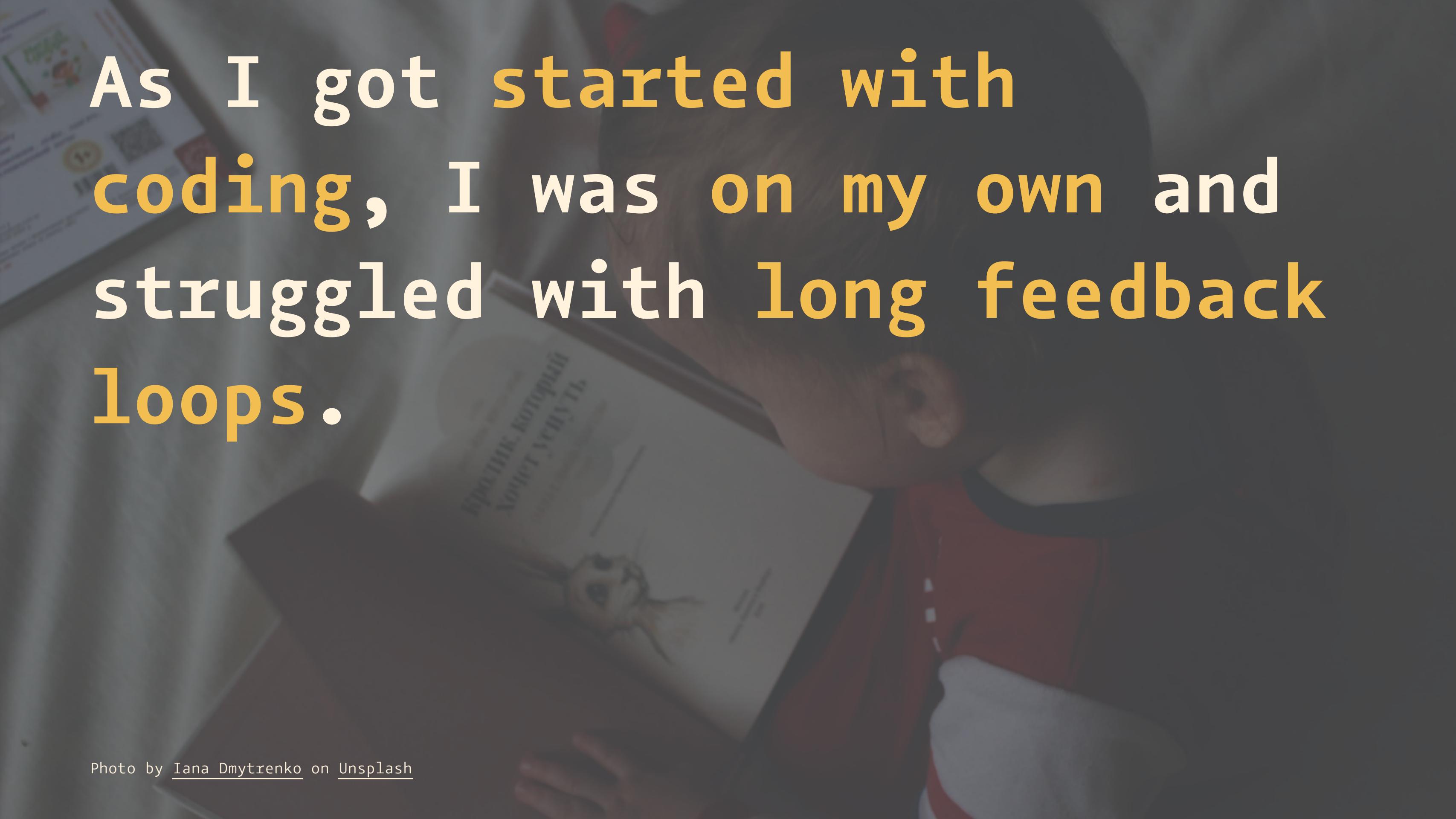


Where other online coding platforms are about challenges and competition,  
Exercism focusses on ~~community~~ **community** and **compassion**.

# Exercism has

- A community of **330k users** in **200 countries**
- A group of **2.5k mentors** in **29 timezones**
- A variety of curated exercises in **50 programming languages**

As a Mentee

A dark, slightly blurred photograph of a person sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. The person's hands are visible on the keyboard. In the background, there are some papers or books with text on them, though they are out of focus.

As I got started with  
coding, I was on my own and  
struggled with long feedback  
loops.



I didn't know where to  
start.  
Or how.

As I tried new languages, I  
had trouble unlearning old  
habits.

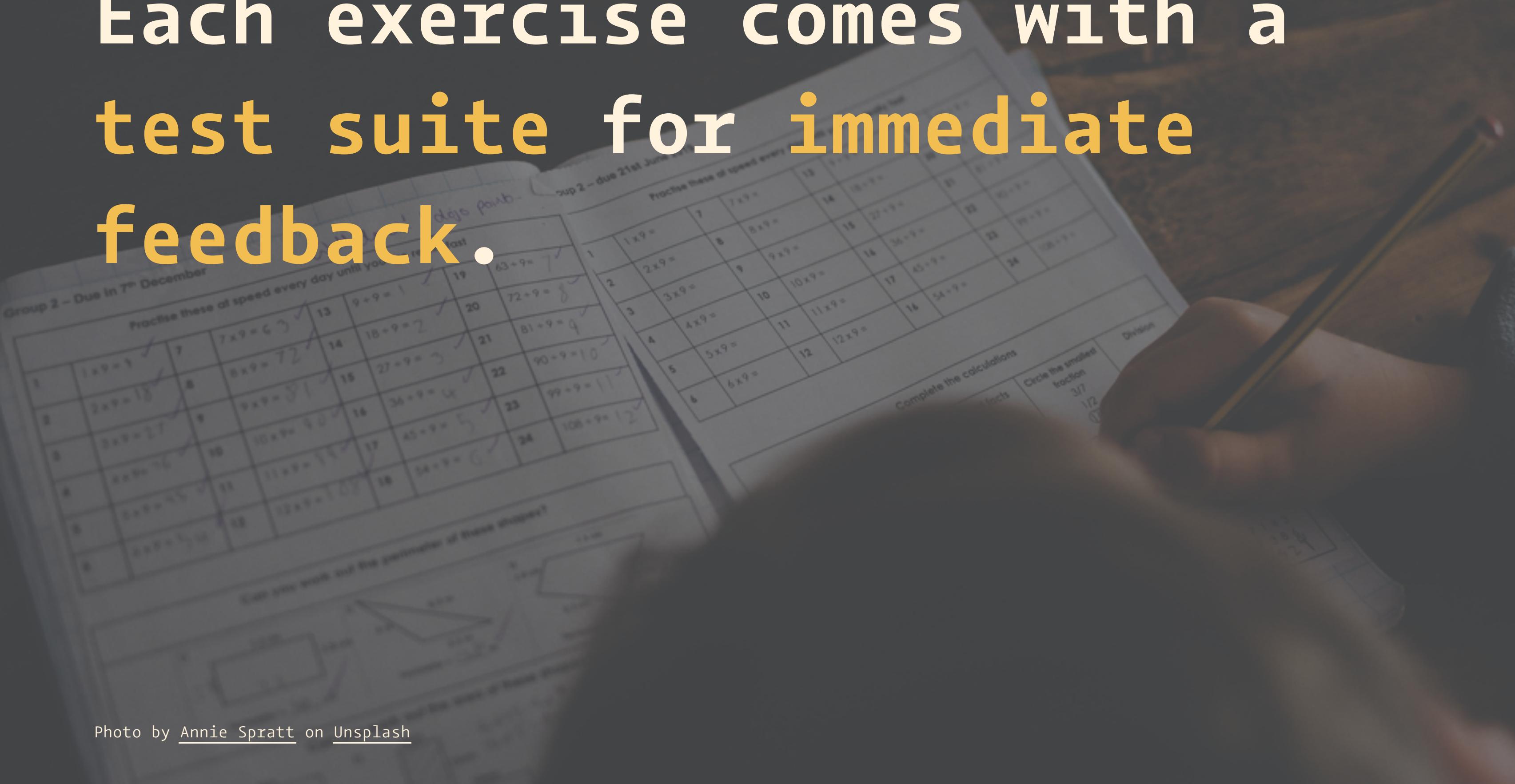




A photograph showing two pairs of hands holding white coffee cups. The hands belong to two different people, suggesting a social interaction or mentorship. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

Exercism mentors will  
support you and guide you to  
idiomatic code.

Each exercise comes with a test suite for immediate feedback.



A dark, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hands resting on a laptop keyboard. The hands are positioned as if ready to type. The background is dark, and the overall mood is focused and professional.

The Go track comes with 109 exercises<sup>3</sup> of varying difficulty.

It starts with Hello World and extends your knowledge little by little.

<sup>3</sup> As of Dec 2020

# Mentee Guide

To get the most out of Exercism:

1. Ask your mentors all the questions.
2. Compare your solutions to those of other mentees.
3. Explore the language in the safe environment.

As a Mentor

A classroom setting where several students are seated at their desks, facing a chalkboard. The chalkboard is filled with various mathematical calculations and formulas, including integrals and trigonometric identities. The lighting is warm, and the overall atmosphere suggests a focused learning environment.

After being a teaching  
assistant at university, I  
wanted to keep on mentoring,  
but didn't have the time for  
in-person classes.

I was looking for an open  
community where I could help  
mentoring people regardless  
of their backgrounds.



These personal guiding  
principles are reflected by  
Exercism's value  
proposition:

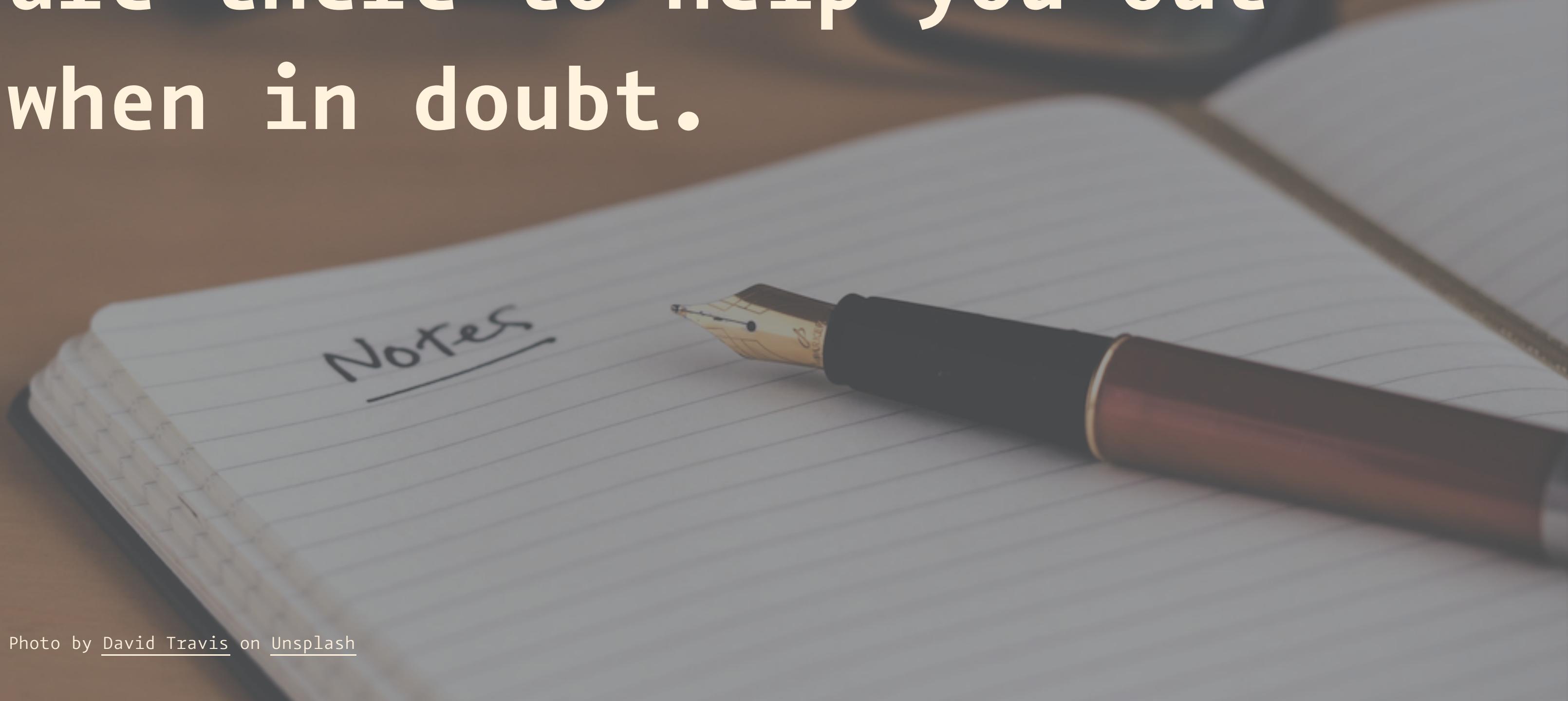
*We envision a world where anyone  
from any background can become  
fluent in any programming language  
for free. Through programming  
exercises, resources and a safe  
and nurturing community.*

— [exercism.io](https://exercism.io)



Mentoring on Exercism is a  
great way of becoming a  
**better developer** and a  
humble teacher.

Great community mentor notes  
are there to help you out  
when in doubt.



A photograph of a person from behind, walking away through a field covered in fallen autumn leaves. The person is wearing a dark jacket and a backpack. In the background, there are trees with bare branches and some remaining autumn leaves.

Because of the asynchronous  
nature of the platform, you  
can mentor at your own pace.

# Mentor Guide

How to be a supportive mentor:

1. Be **humble** and **patient**.
2. Make use of the **community mentor notes**.
3. **Don't rush** yourself!

As a Team

In August 2020, real.digital  
decided to go **remote-first**.



**Remote First**

**real.digital**

While it made life easier in general, it made **knowledge transfer** more difficult.



To counter this, I proposed the introduction of **remote coding dojos** using Exercism:

*A Coding Dojo is a meeting where a bunch of coders get together to work on a programming challenge. They are there to have fun and to engage in deliberate practice in order to improve their skills.*

— [codingdojo.org](https://codingdojo.org)

# why Exercism?

1. **free** Teams Edition
2. lots of exercises at **different levels of difficulty**
3. **clearly defined** tasks
4. infrastructure for **async discussion**

# How does it work?



Photo by [Kelly Sikkema](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Each session has a theme,  
like algorithms or data  
structures.

We start by introducing the exercises, with an emphasise on what to learn and what to watch out for.



Depending on the group size,  
we work **in pairs** or **as a  
mob**<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> See [Code with the Wisdom of the Crowd](#)

We set aside 30 minutes each for solving the exercises and discussing the solutions afterwards.

Following each session, the Exercism platform can be used to discuss open points.



Photo by [Akson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Team Guide

1. Choose a **theme** and pick suiting **exercises**
2. Emphasise **learning outcomes**
3. 30 minutes each of **coding** and **discussion**
4. . . .
5. Profit!

# Executive Summary

Exercism is

- an open and welcoming coding platform.
- benefitting mentees and mentors alike.
- great for knowledge sharing and team building.

# Thank you!

