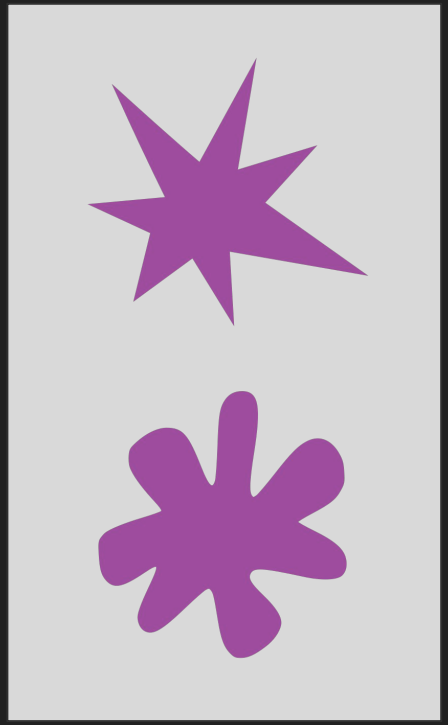
Group work, aaaahhhh

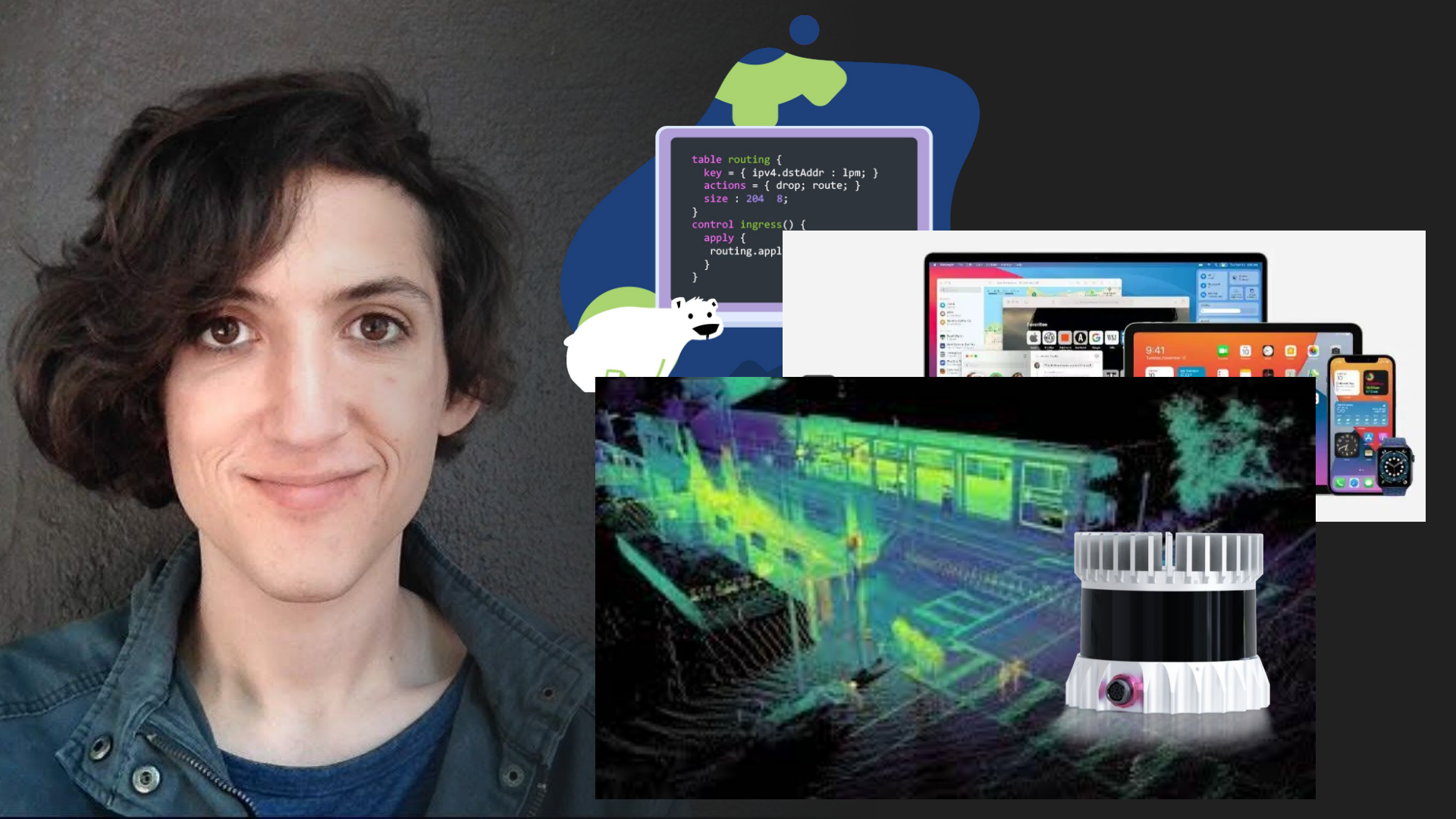
Naomi Alterman // UW eScience Institute

7/13/21

Collaboration is beautiful and hard

- Within a collaborative dynamic, some of us are pointy and some of us are round
  - It's easy to needle each other, even without knowing it
  - Highly context dependent

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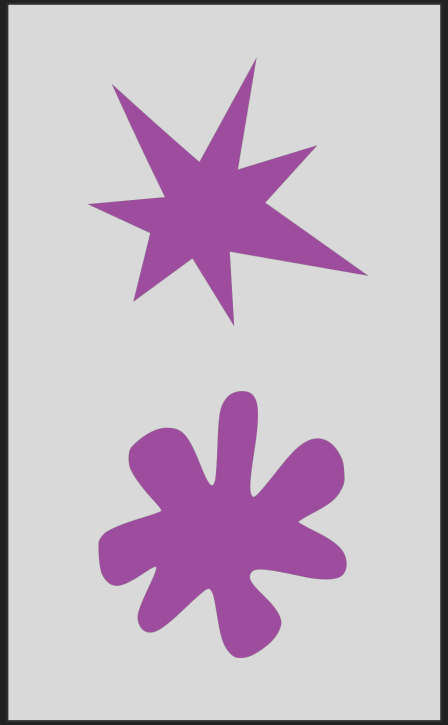
Data Science Hackathon
December 2018

Collaboration is beautiful and hard

- Within a collaborative dynamic, some of us are pointy and some of us are round
  - It's easy to needle each other, even without knowing it
  - Highly context dependent
- Base assumption: **we're all trying to be good neighbors**
  - But doing so is hard, and takes practice



Ok! So, some hacks:

1. Use “we” instead of “you”

Use “we” instead of “you”

- Use collective pronouns to promote a sense of teamwork and shared purpose
  - Even if it’s really just about stuff one person is going to do

- “**You** need to install scikit-learn with pip”
  -> “**We** need to to install scikit-learn with pip”

- “Can **you** open a new tab and search for the docs?”
  -> “**Let’s** open a new tab and search for the docs.”

2. Share softly

Share softly

- Working together means we have to ask a lot of questions and offer a lot of suggestions
  - The art is doing so without making it feel like a PhD qual
- It can help to:
  - Shift the subject of questions off of the individual and onto the concept you're tackling
  - Avoid absolutes and judgements of triviality
  - Focus on subjective experience, rather than objective fact

Soft examples

"Do you know what [`Python`] is?"

"What does [`Python`] mean to you?"
"How familiar are you with [`Python`]?"

"It's just a matter of [`reading a file`] "

"There are a lot of resources to help with [`reading a file`] "

" [`reading a file`] is a problem I know we can tackle"

"Does that make sense?"

"How do you feel about that?"
"Did I explain that well?"

"You should be using [`numpy`] " /
" [`numpy`] is trash"

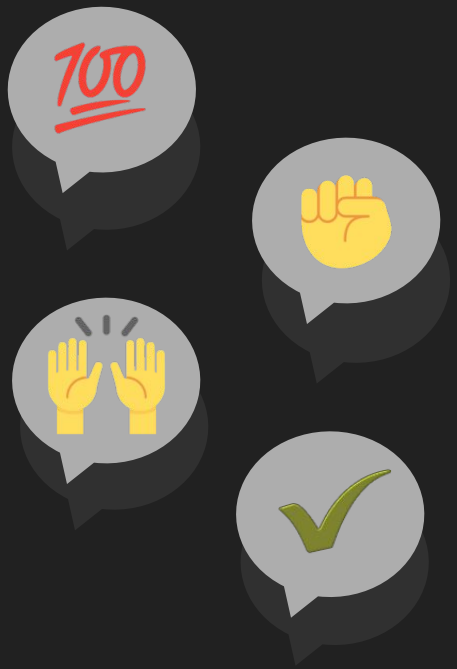
"I've had a lot of good experiences with [`numpy`]"

"I'm worried about [`numpy`] because [`I've seen it perform poorly with this kind of data`] "

3. Appreciate the thought process

Appreciate the thought process

- Look for opportunities to identify and positively reinforce each other's working processes
  - Every **question** is a good question
  - Every **idea** is worth props
  - Every **obstacle** is worth commiserating with
- Be specific where possible
- Even if it seems too minor or too often, it's not.
  - We're hard on ourselves when learning something new, we can use the **validation**.



Some of my fave affirmations

“That’s a great question, I think it brings up a really subtle point about [...] “

“Oh I love this! I appreciate how { elegant / effective / on-point / ... } it is.”

“Wow that was a ridiculous bug, I’m going to remember that one.”

Let’s get excited!

Hype man

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A **hype man**, in hip hop music and rapping, is a backup rapper and/or singer who supports the primary rappers with exclamations and interjections and who attempts to increase the audience's excitement with call-and-response chants.[1][2][3][4][5][6] Music writer Mickey Hess expands the term as follows: "a hype man is a figure

To recap,

1. Use “we” instead of “you”
2. Share softly
3. Appreciate the thought process

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2. Share softly
3. Appreciate the thought process
4. Remember that experience is subjective

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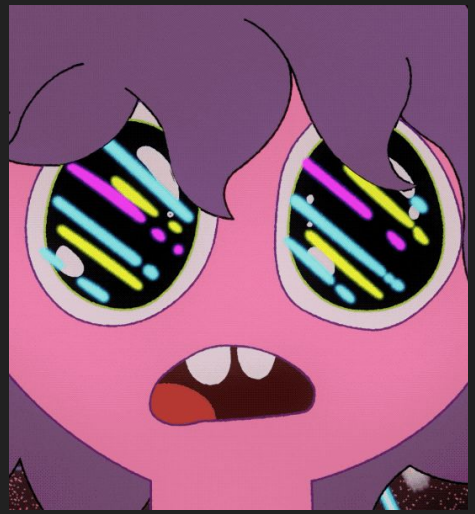
Remember that experience is subjective

- Luckily, our teammates' experience of working with us is largely unrelated to *our perception* of their experience working with us.
- It's ok to struggle, and ok to feel bad
- Regardless of whether you do or not, **your teammates want you to succeed**



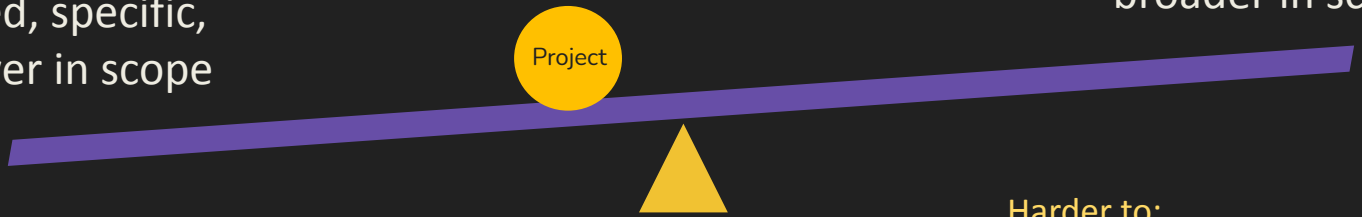
Hackweek Project Team: Getting Organized

Charley Haley
eScience Institute/Wayforagers.org

Organizing Considerations

What is the best scope for your project?

Focused, specific, narrower in scope



Exploratory, open-ended, broader in scope

Easier to:

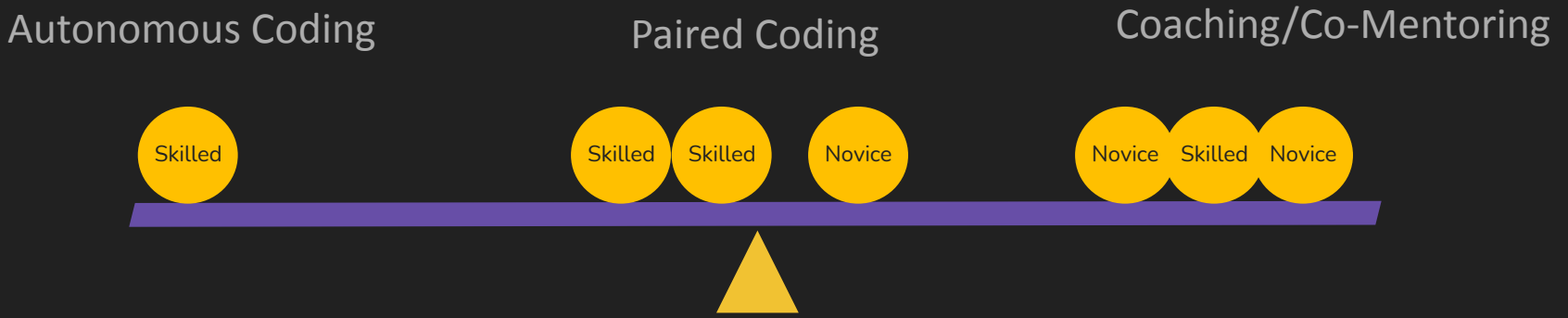
- Identify tasks & skills needed
- Distribute tasks across team
- Organize & manage
- Know when a task is complete
- Have a sense of success & completion

Harder to:

- Organize & manage
- Project Leader may spend more time mentoring & guiding others & less time hacking
- Sense the progress being made

However, it's great opportunity to advance something bigger, personally meaningful, longer-duration

How will we work on tasks given our mix of knowledge & various levels of skillfulness?



When working on your project team, what do you personally need to experience for this time to be a satisfying success? What supports & motivates your learning?

Completing tasks/project

Place the smiley inside the triangle to indicate your learning & development sweet spot

Working out challenges & tasks on my own

Peer learning, co-mentoring, working together

Getting Started on Your Project Team

1. Find the best scope for your project and goals, then list out the tasks and skills needed
    - This part is messy and hard, so don't be shy about reaching out to a hackweek data scientist to help clarify & shape this part
2. Invite team to indicate the tasks they're attracted to and their skill-level
3. On the next slide, invite the team to show where their learning & development sweet spot is inside the triangle
    - Remember, be "selfish" about what you want to experience during this hackweek, ask for what you need

When working on your project team, what do you personally need to experience for this time to be a satisfying success? What motivates your learning?

Place your smiley inside the triangle to indicate your learning & development sweet spot

your name your name your name

your name your name your name

your name your name your name

Completing tasks/project

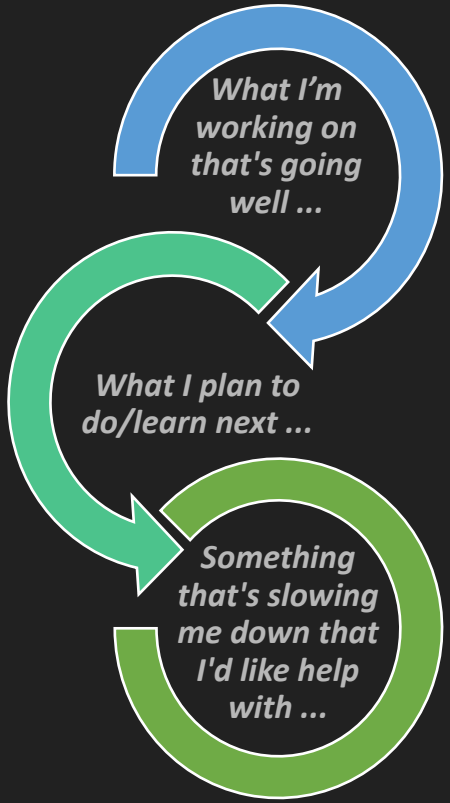
Working out challenges & tasks on my own

Peer learning, co-mentoring, working together

Getting Started on Your Project Team (cont.)

1. Chat about the pattern/distribution you see in the triangle
   - How well do our learning preferences/needs map to the tasks to be done?
   - Do we see any skills gaps that will need to be worked out w/ data scientist helper?
   - Given what we know now about the project/tasks, would anyone like to look for another project? *If so, no worries, the data scientist helper can help with that. Just reach out in #hackweek-help- or in a private DM to Anthony*
2. Pin down logistics
   - Who's doing what?
   - What is everyone's availability to hack (alone &/or together)?
   - How will we coordinate and communicate with each other?
3. Start hacking!

Daily Huddle: *Briefly connect, coordinate, & get/give help*



Steps (~ 15-ish min.):

1. Coordinate a time & place to meet each day
2. Everyone takes ~2 min to check-in around 3 areas
3. Project lead coordinates help & coaching