A black and white photograph of a man with long, light-colored hair and glasses, sitting on a dark couch. He is wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and dark trousers. He is holding a small book or pamphlet in his hands, which has the word "INTROVERT" printed on its cover. He is resting his head against his hand, looking thoughtful. The background is a dark, textured wall.

# Agile for the Introvert

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Väg74  
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podcaster  
gamer  
Lara  
house  
1880  
games  
father  
married  
playing  
colleague  
Sweden  
work  
boardgamer  
kids  
Agile  
movies  
chocolate  
Hanna  
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Ines  
coach  
programmer  
Tobias  
development  
Agile  
Sweden

**Introvert**

Idea: by understanding how introverts and extroverts differ, we can make some adjustments to how we collaborate and in the end make everyone awesome.

# Agenda

1. What is Intro- and Extraversion?
2. The science of Introversion
3. Psychological Safety
4. Agile Practices for the Introvert



# Carl Gustav Jung

1875-1961, Founder of Analytical Psychology

What is Introversion?

# What is Introversion?



A trait; an aspect of personality that is relatively stable over time.

# What is Introversion?



# What is Introversion?



One of the big five personality traits; CANOE

# What is Introversion?

# What is Introversion?



NOT shyness! Shyness is a fear of social judgement, often linked to low self-esteem.

Introverts gain energy from  
spending time alone.

Extroverts gain energy from  
being around other people.

Characteristics of  
an introvert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Prefer spending time alone.

Get energised in large groups of people.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Not anti-social, but prefer a close group of friends.

Has a large number of friends and acquaintances.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Often very quiet but has a rich inner monologue.

# Characteristics of an introvert



Gets drained quite fast from socialising. Prone to suffer from the introvert hang-over.

# Characteristics of an introvert



Hates small talk but love deep meaningful conversation.

# Characteristics of an introvert



Prefer written communication to verbal.

Thrive in a social or networking environment.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Tend to be quiet at meetings and keep their ideas to themselves.

Often very talkative and likes to share their ideas and thoughts.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Will seldom make decisions quickly but instead analyse and reflect before deciding.

Often make quick decisions and share "unfinished" thoughts.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Can concentrate for long periods of time and are not easily distracted.

Quite easily distracted.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Likes to observe and are uninterested in getting attention.

Love to be the center of attention.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Often do not like change.

Easily accepts change.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

# Characteristics of an introvert



Have an eye for detail and are generally good at spotting problems.

# Characteristics of an introvert



Generally good listeners

# Characteristics of an introvert



Very creative when being alone.

Very creative when being alone.



Characteristics of  
an extrovert

Poll: How many in  
here self-identify  
as an introvert?



30-50% are  
introverts!

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The science of introversion

# The science of introversion

There are four shades of introversion (Cheek)

# The science of introversion



1. Social introversion

# The science of introversion



2. Thinking introversion

# The science of introversion



3. Anxious introversion

# The science of introversion



4. Restrained introversion

# The science of introversion



They are 'dimensions'.

# The science of introversion



Introverts have a less active reward system.

# The science of introversion



Introverts have longer pathways in the brain.

# The science of introversion



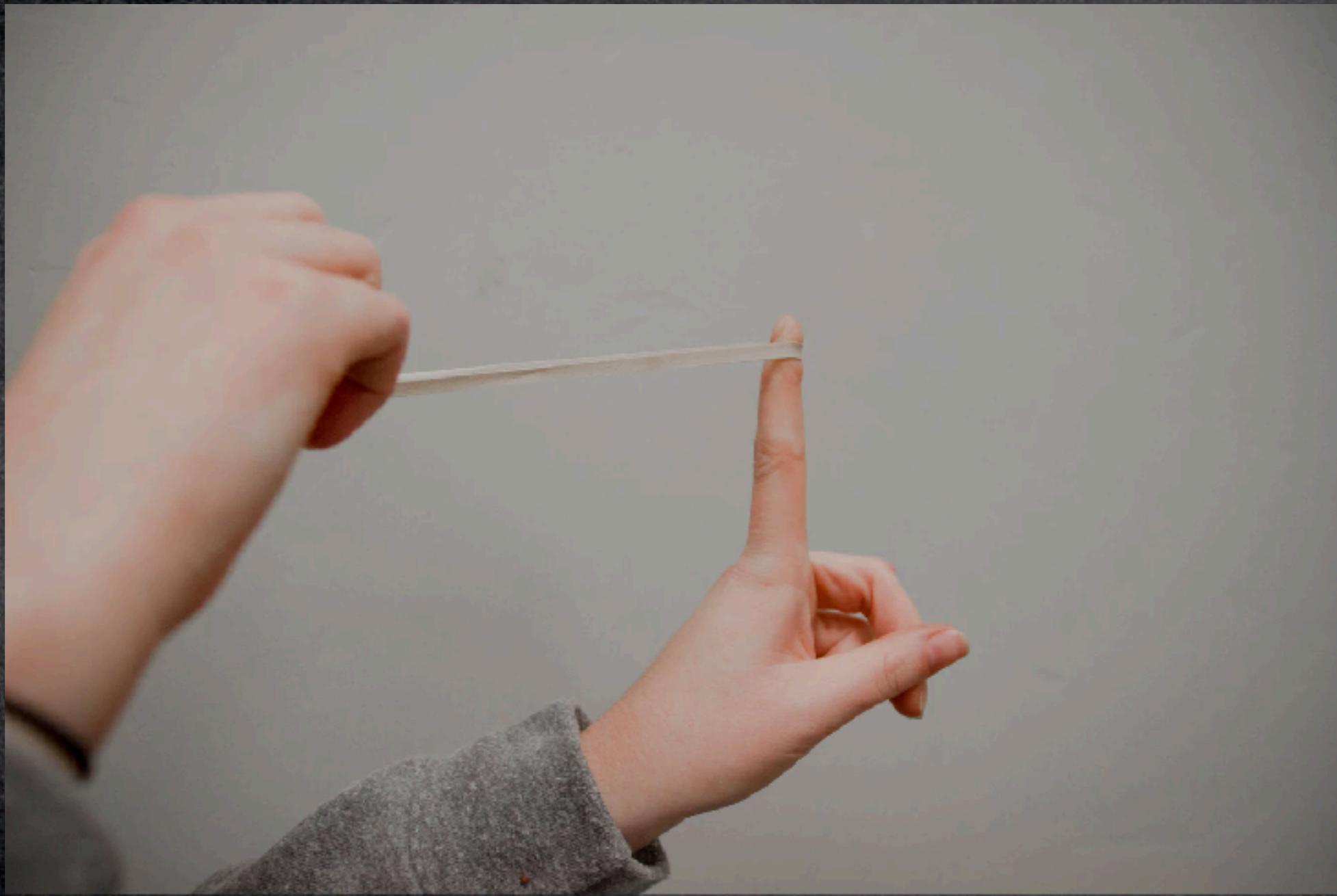
Many introverts are highly sensitive (HSP).

# The science of introversion



Situation affects our behaviour but we have a fixed personality.

# The science of introversion



We can stretch our personality, but only to a certain extent. Susan Cain calls this the 'rubber band theory' of personality.

Some people are in the middle  
of the spectrum and are both  
introvert and extrovert. These  
people are called ambiverts.

"There is no such thing as a pure introvert or extrovert. Such a person would be in a lunatic asylum."

— Carl Jung

One might state that we are all ambiverts but with a tendency to lean either towards introversion or extroversion.







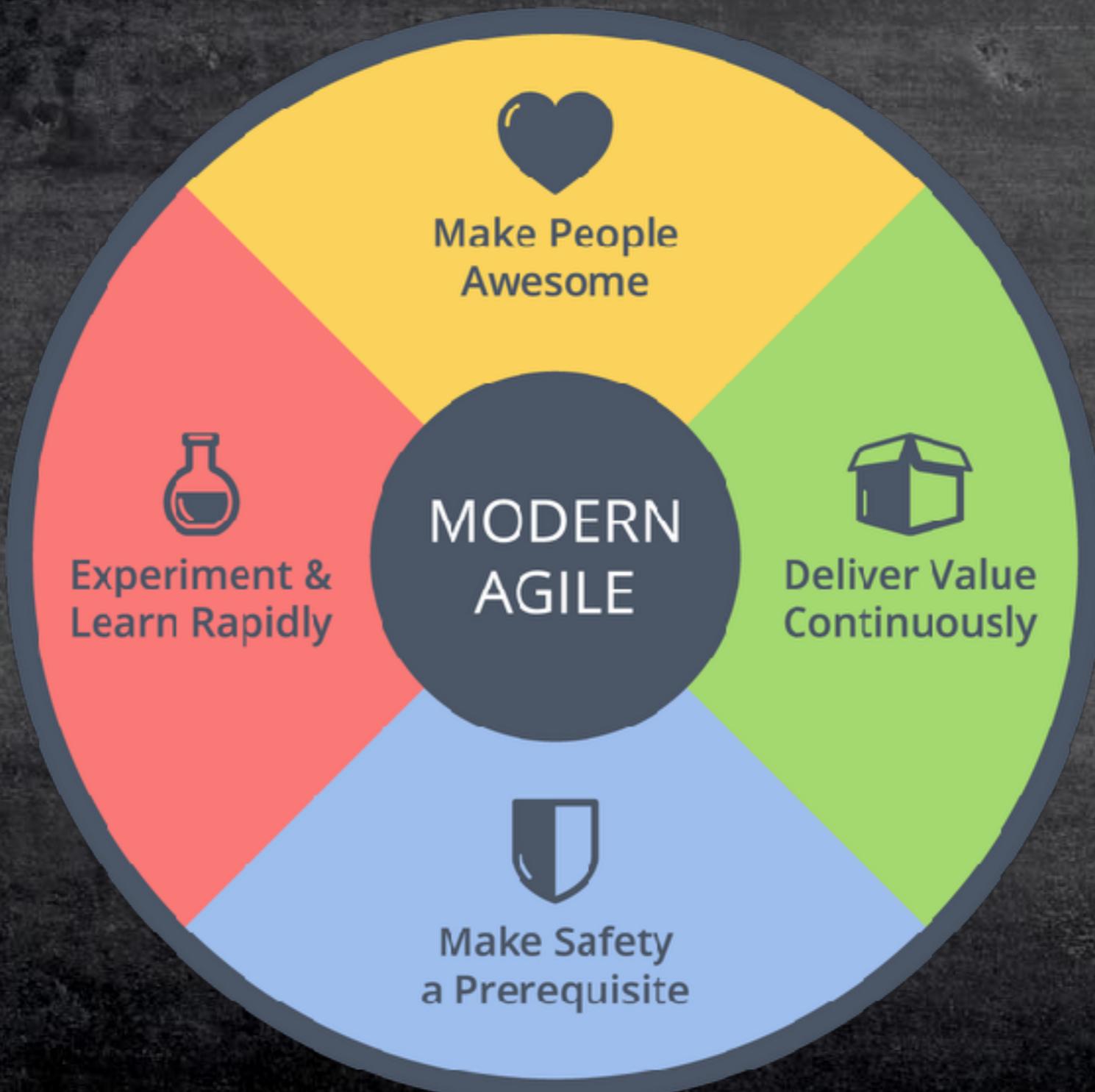


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Psychological Safety

# Psychological Safety



Basis for one of the guiding principles of Modern Agile (<http://modernagile.org>)

# Psychological Safety



One of the five keys to a successful Google team (Project Aristotle).

# Psychological Safety

"A belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes."

– Amy Edmondson,  
HBS Professor

# Psychological Safety



We need to feel safe in order to take risks,  
speak our mind and be creative.

# Psychological Safety



We become more open-minded, resilient and motivated when we feel safe.

# Psychological Safety



It must be safe to fail in order for us to innovate and to dare to experiment...

# Psychological Safety



... and through the experiments we learn.

# Psychological Safety



When we feel safe, we dare to be ourselves!

# Psychological Safety



Even more important for introverts.

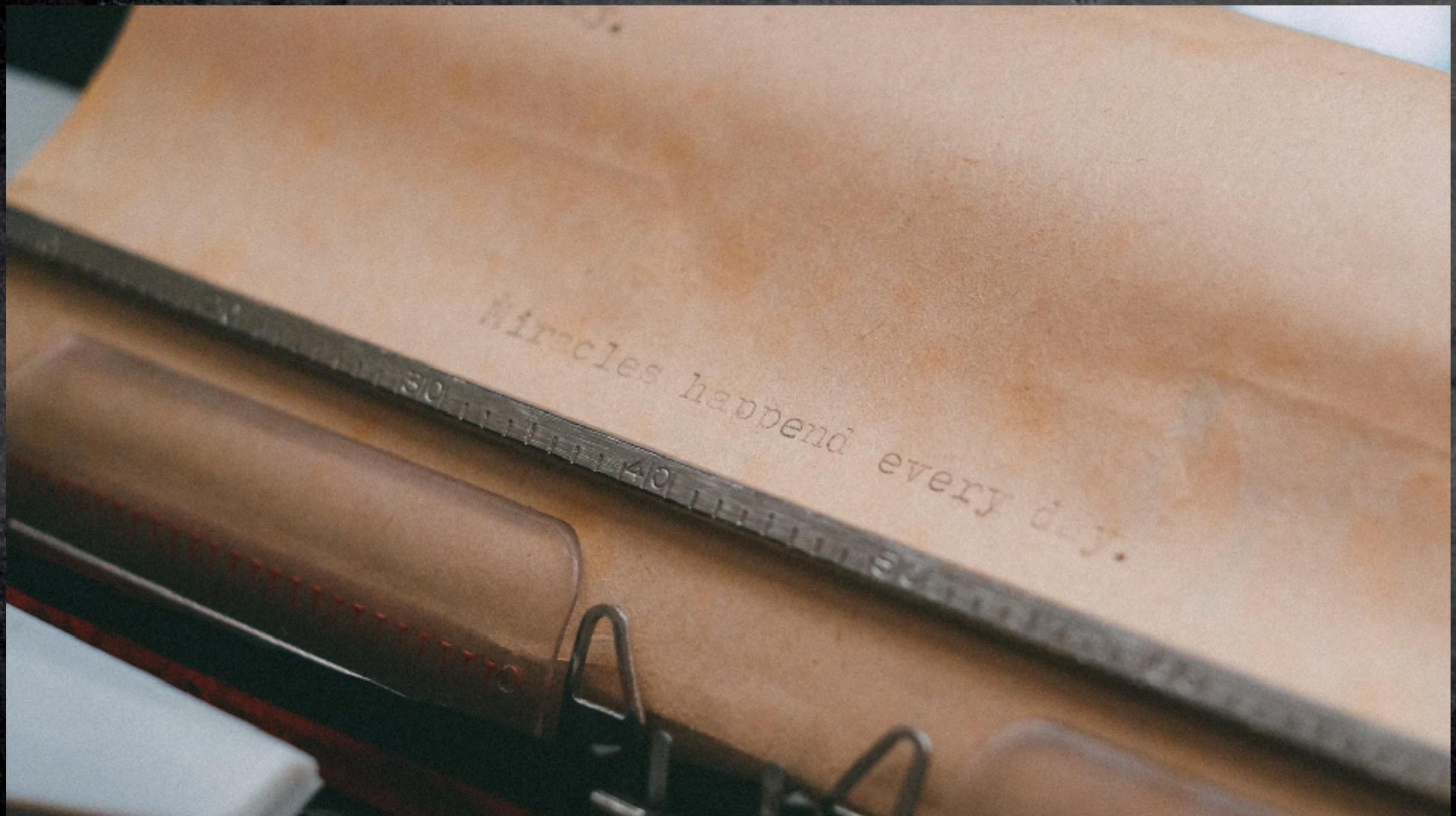
How do we foster safety?

# How do we foster safety?



1. Frame all work as a learning problem.

# How do we foster safety?



2. Acknowledge your own fallibility.

# How do we foster safety?



3. Model curiosity.

# How do we foster safety?



Trust your coworkers and get trust in return.

# How do we foster safety?



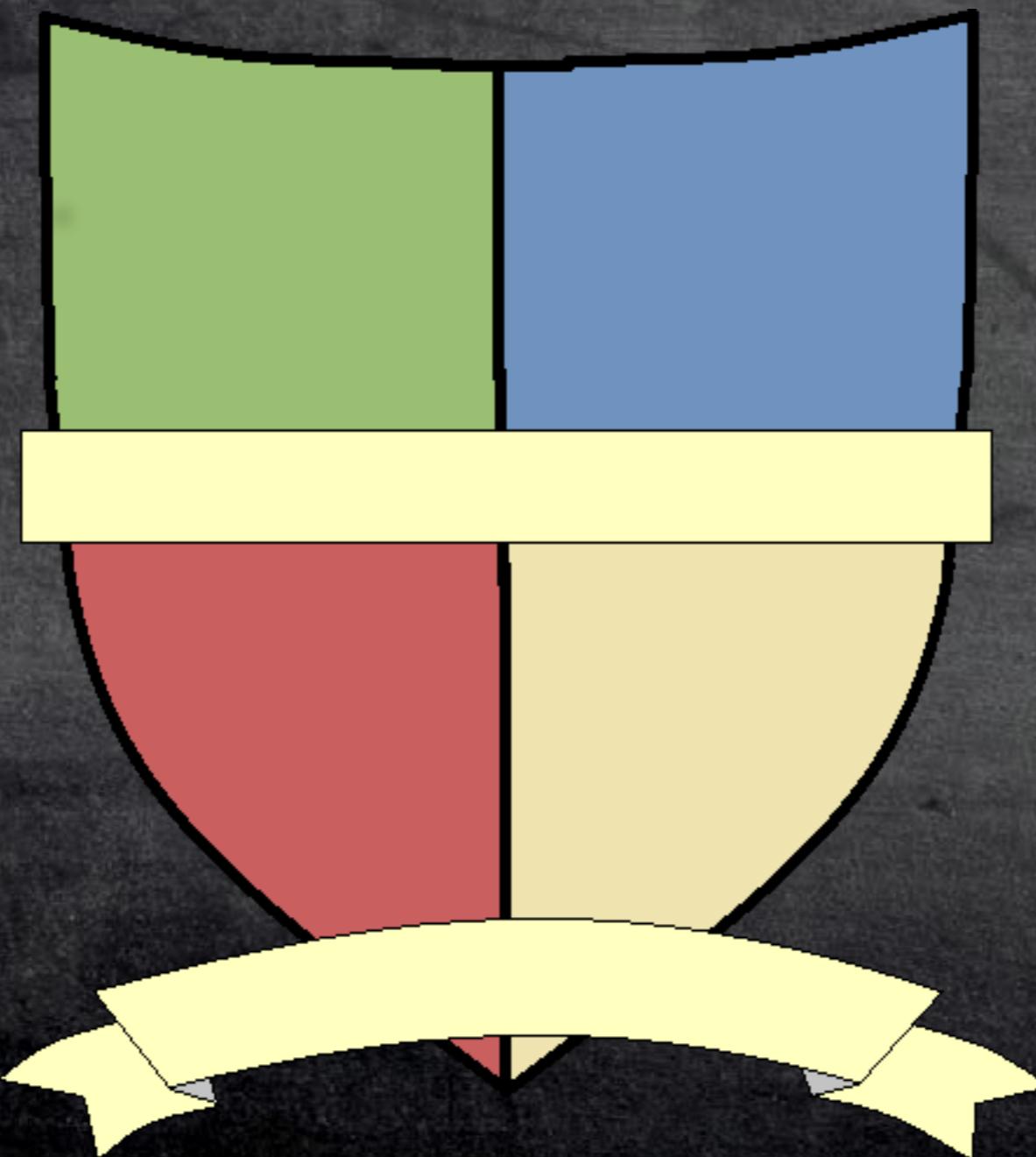
Do not ever play the blame game.

# How do we foster safety?



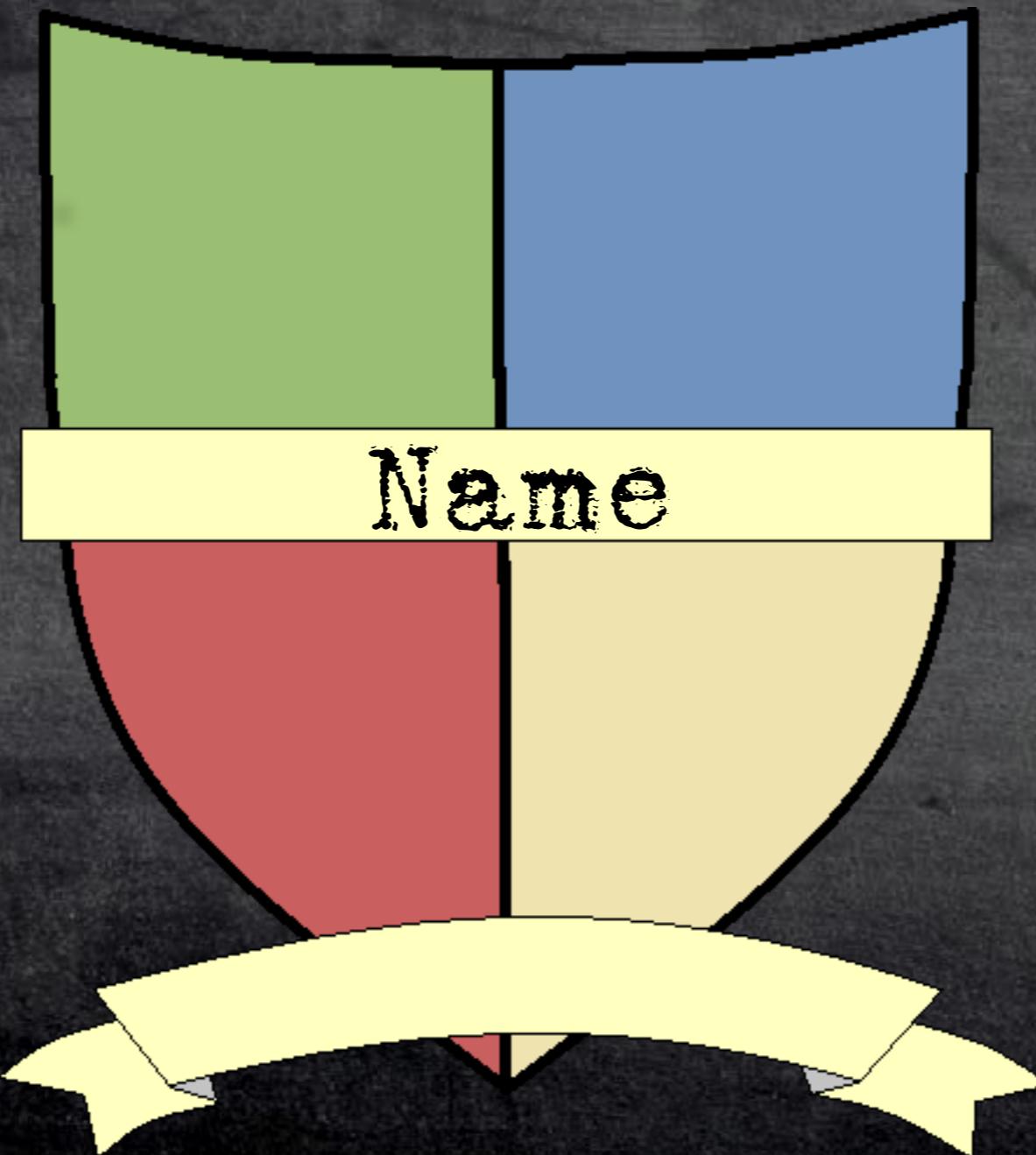
Get to know each other!

# How do we foster safety?



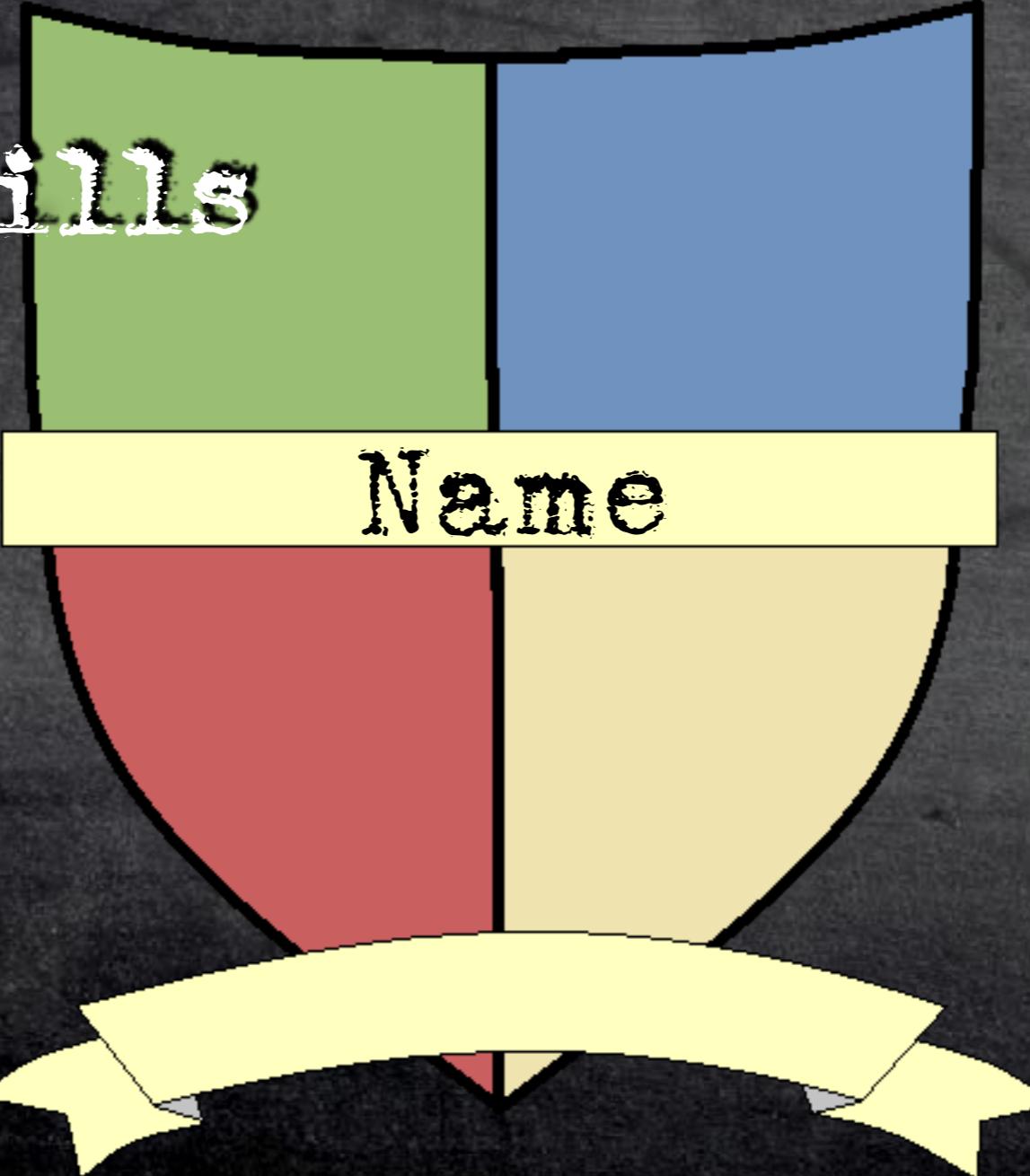
Personal Shields (Derby and Larsen).

# How do we foster safety?



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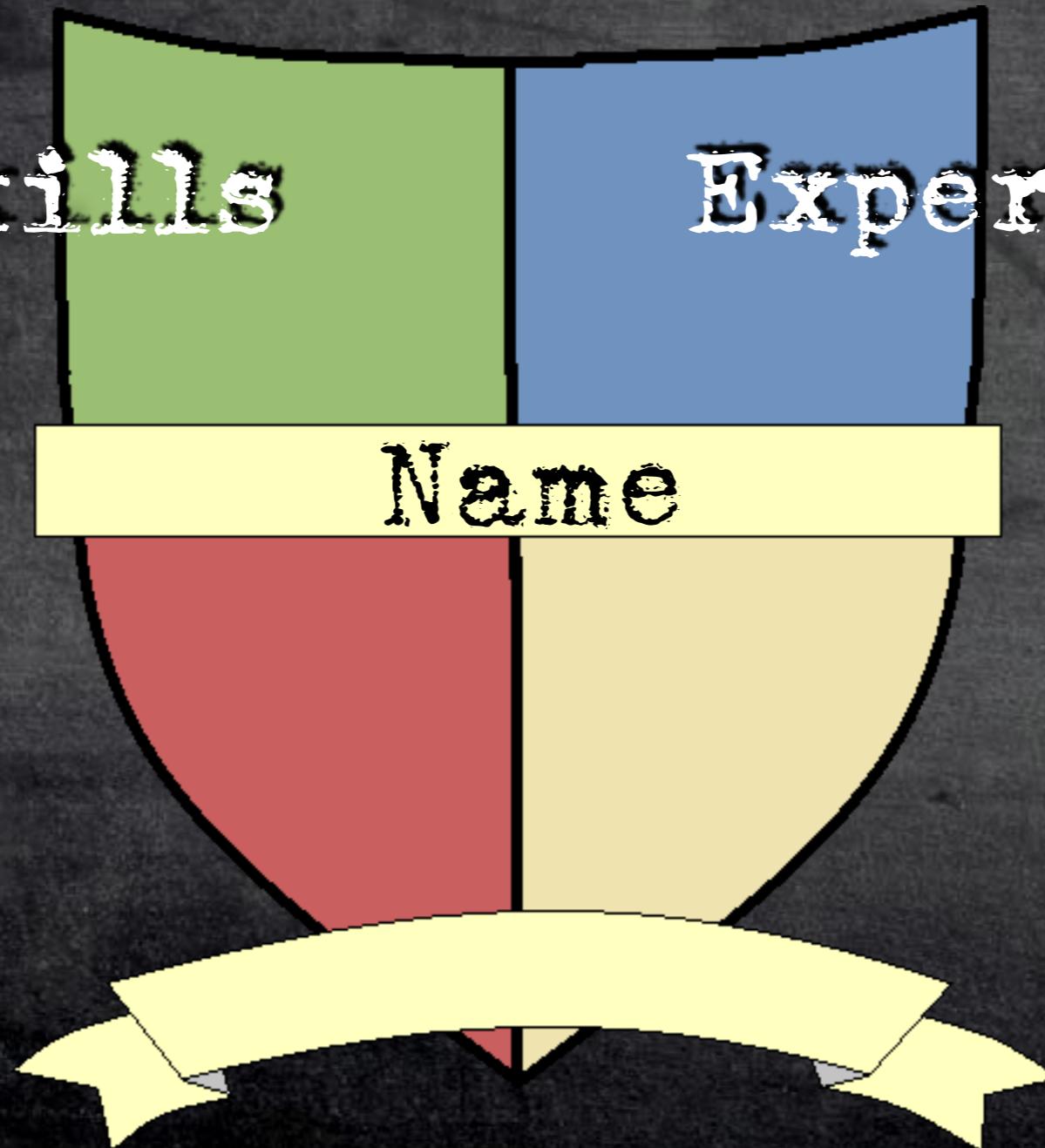


Skills

Name

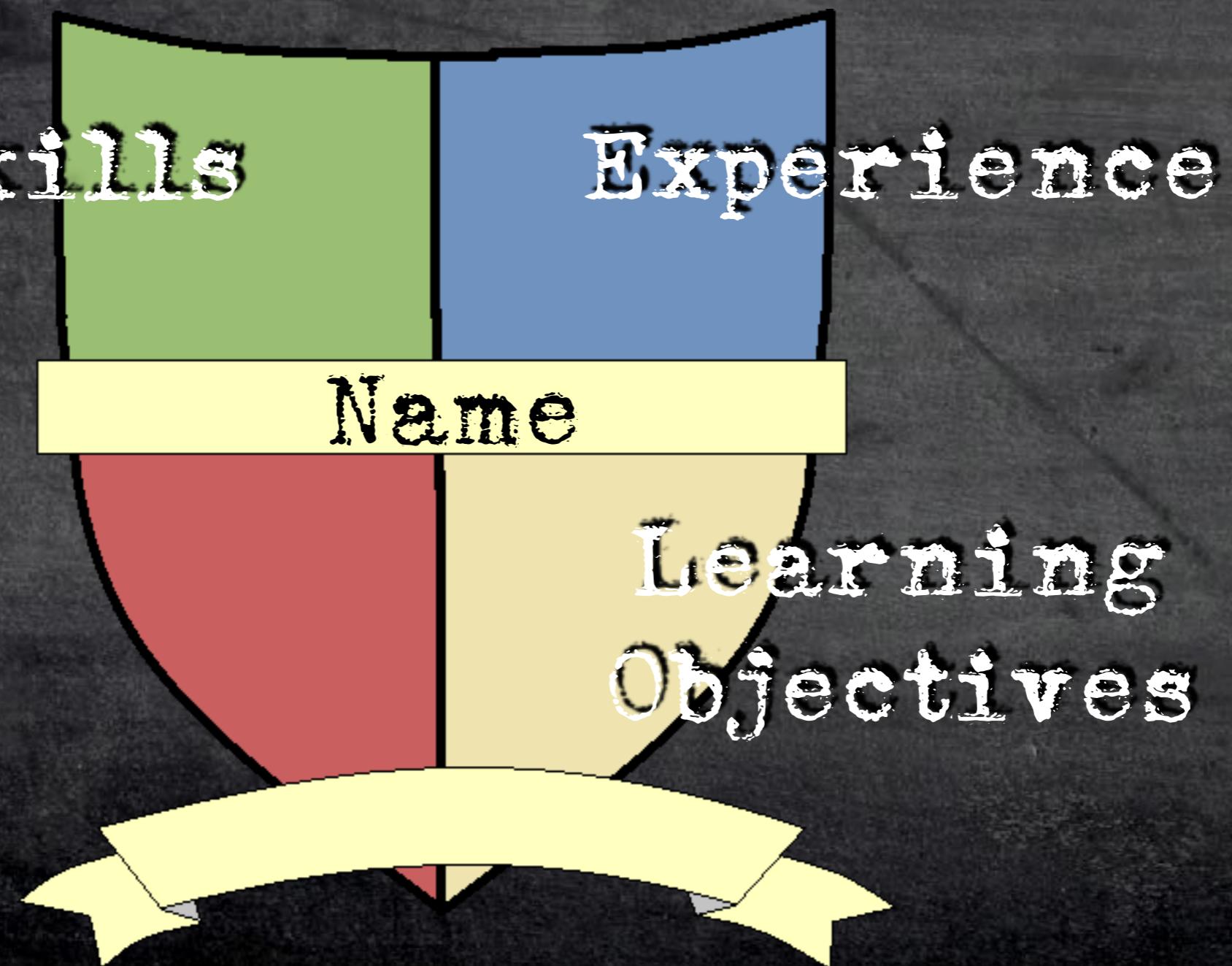
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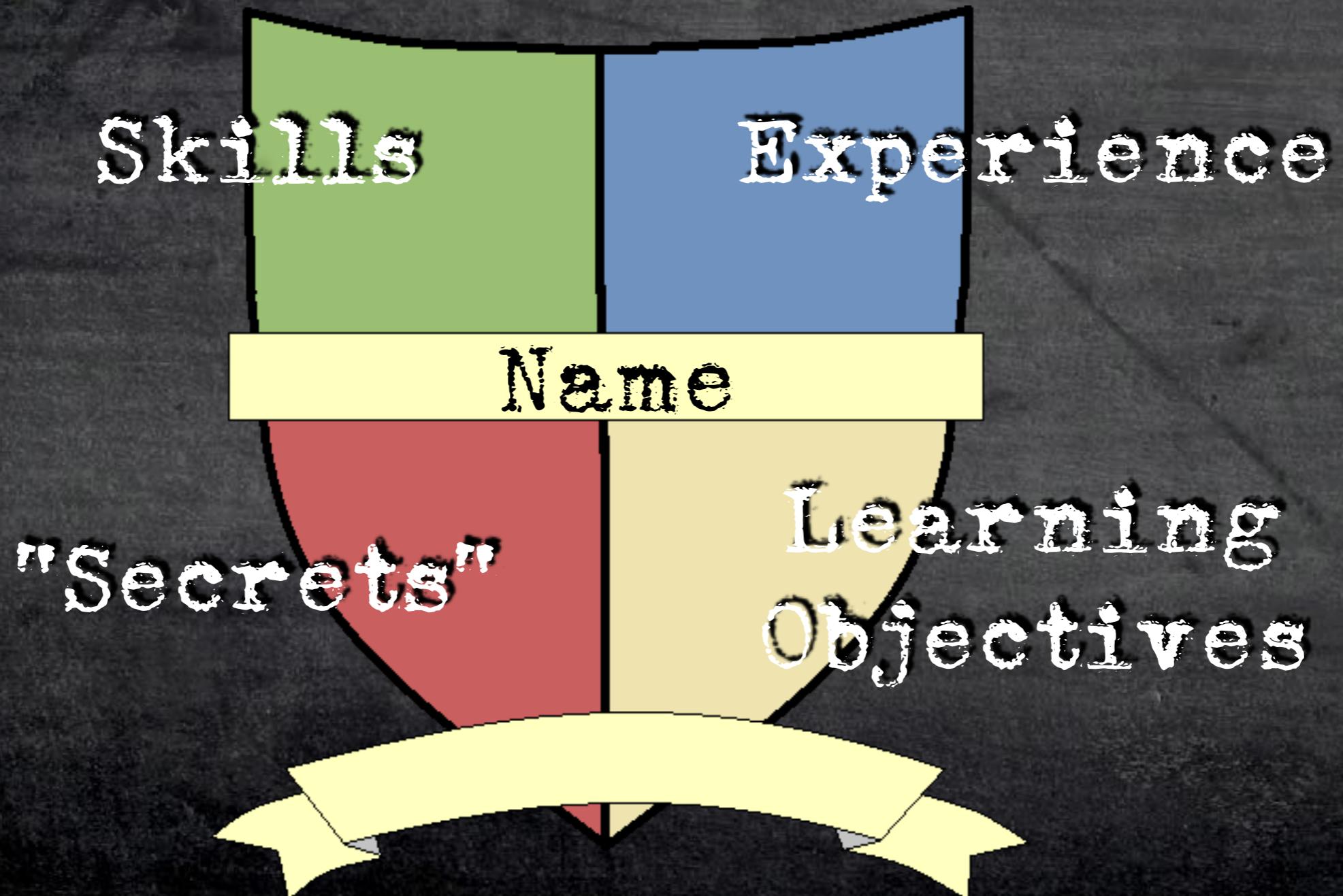
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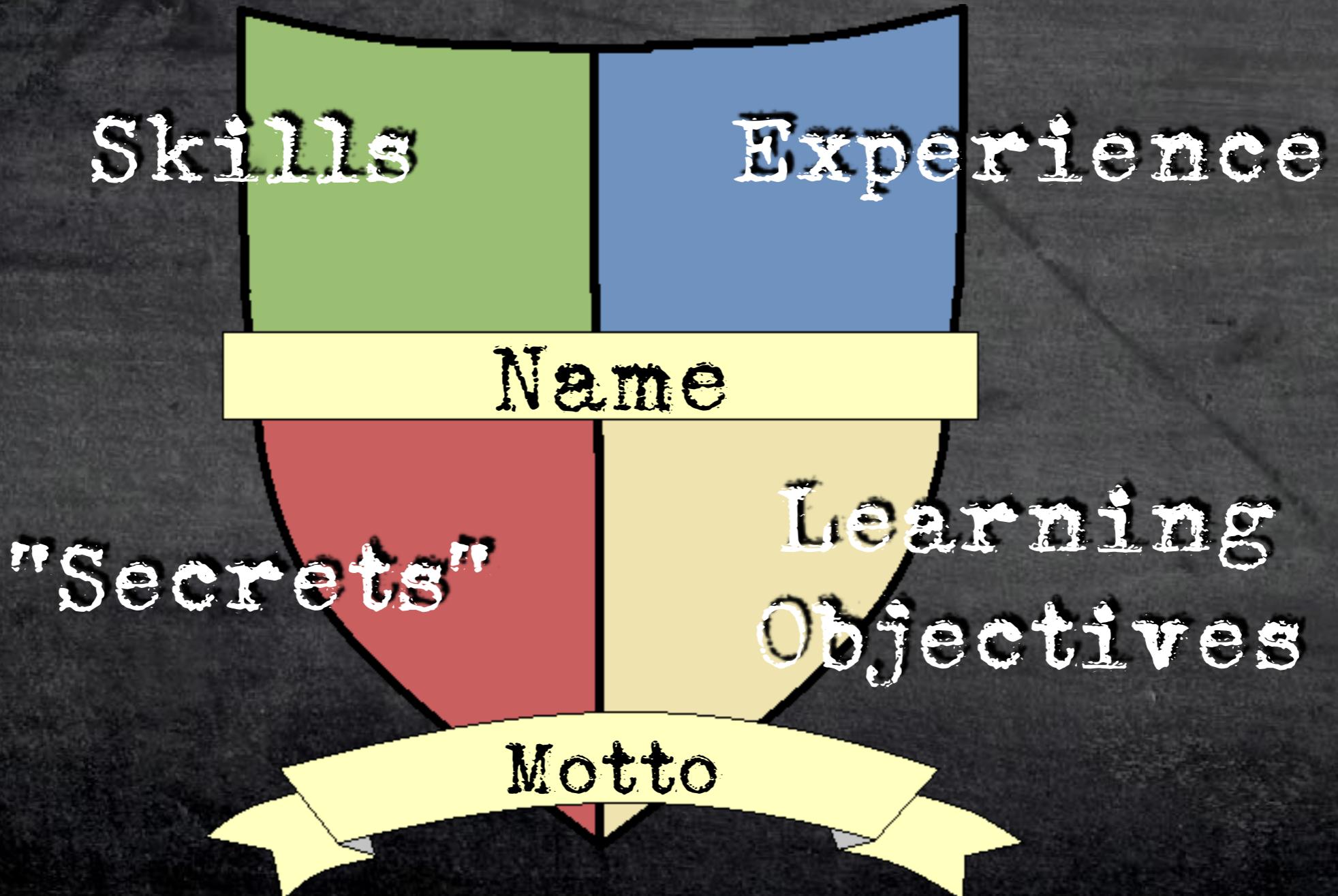
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"Laters"

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Agile practices for introverts

# Agile practices for introverts



Teamsize; Favor smaller (4-5 people).

# Agile practices for introverts



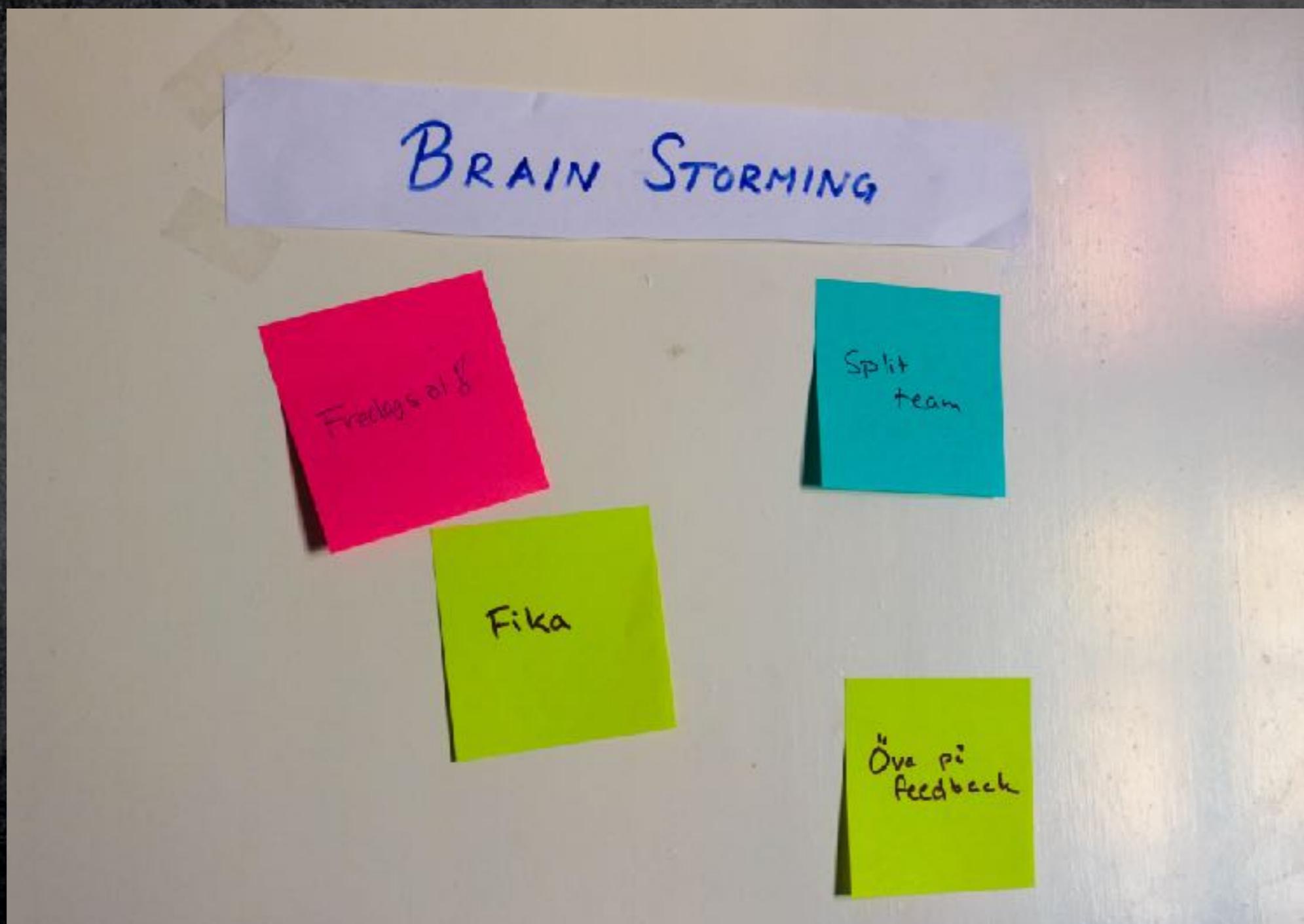
Speaking at meetings? Small spontaneous meetings are better than large planned ones.

# Agile practices for introverts



Colocation favours both introverts and extroverts.

# Agile practices for introverts



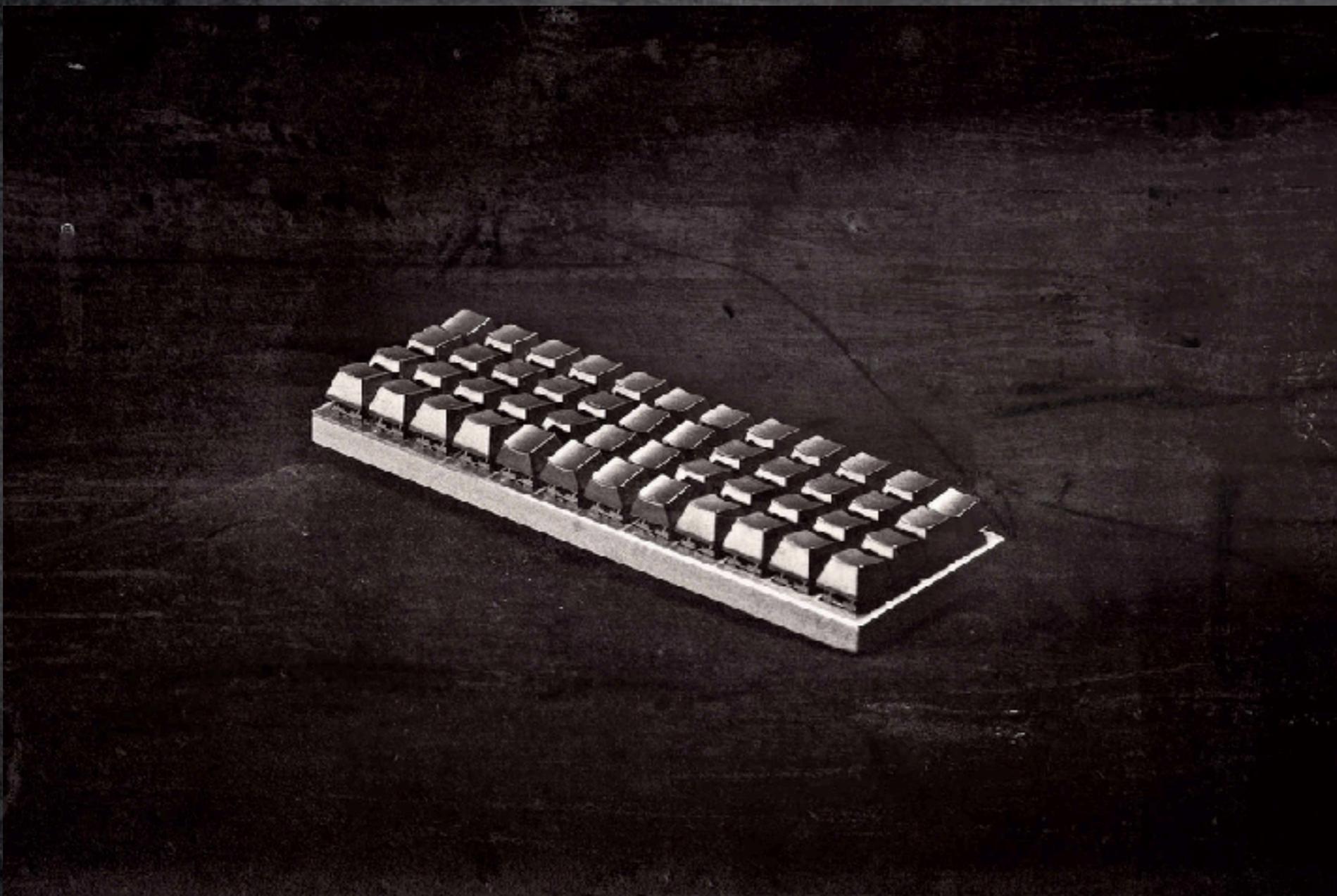
Brainstorming; Introverts are more creative on their own. Take advantage of this.

# Agile practices for introverts



Retrospects; Gathering data in writing beforehand favours introverts.

# Agile practices for introverts



**Pair Programming;** Introverts favour one-on-one communication, but remember to take restorative breaks.

# Agile practices for introverts

Mob Programming is a software development approach where the whole team works on the same thing, at the same time, in the same space, and at the same computer.

# Agile practices for introverts



Mob Programming; Actually works very well.  
Easy to take important breaks.

# Agile practices for introverts



Open Office; Extremely bad for introverts!  
Especially Hot Desking.

# Agile practices for introverts



Introverts need something called restorative niches where they can regain energy.

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- Get to know each other, favour small team size and do mob programming.

# Summary

- Intro/Extraversion is a personality trait that cannot be "removed".
- Our brains actually differ.
- Sometimes introverts need to be by themselves to regain energy. Let them!
- We all need psychological safety.
- Get to know each other, favour small team size and do mob programming.
- Introverts require restorative niches. NO hot-desking!

# Further Reading

- Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking – Susan Cain
- The Secret Lives of Introverts – Jenn Granneman
- Mob Programming for the Introverted – Aaron Griffith  
<https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/mob-programming-for-the-introverted/>

# Thank You!

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