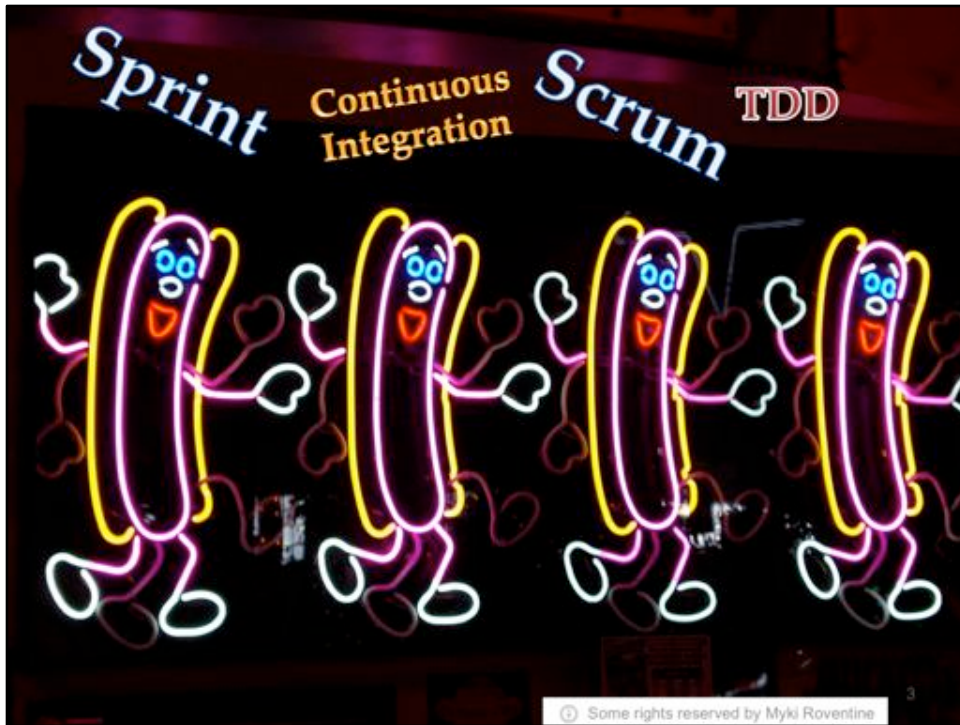


# Agile Sustainability

What are the factors  
that sustain agility  
beyond the initial  
transition?

Presentation Objective: We want people to leave the presentation and take action to make their own agile environments sustainable.

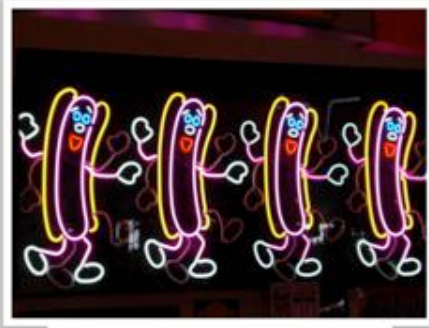


Methods are easier to start with. The mindset is what makes it sustainable.

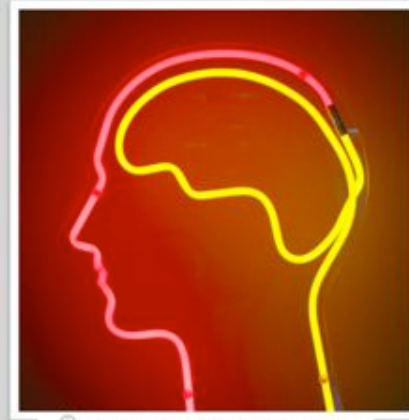


True sustainability is going to be achievable by having an Agile mindset and embracing Agile values and principles.

# Methods and Mindset



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Some rights reserved by dierk schaefer

Practices alone are not all bad. Practices do bring results.  
Agile practices are easier to adopt, but also easier to abandon (e.g., “Scrum, but...”).  
Agile mindset may be harder to adopt (depending on the culture you start with) but  
is more resilient over the long haul.



Provide lots of support until they learn to do it well.



It takes time. Don't declare success too soon; don't quit being disciplined about training, practicing, continuously improving.



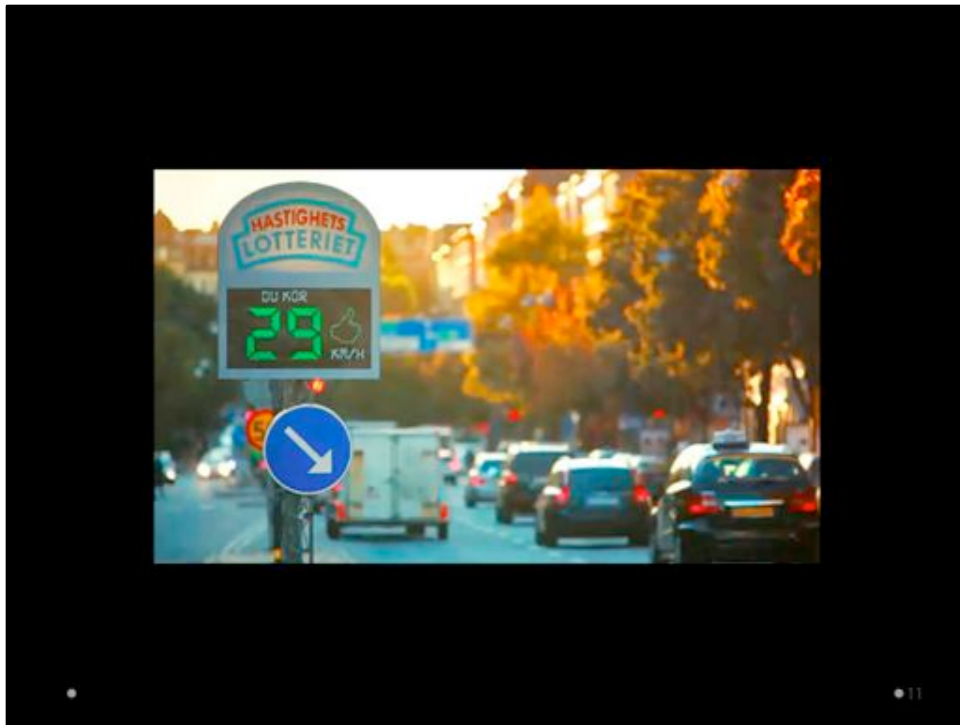
Sustaining – beware the hamster wheel, especially with long release cycles (10 or 20 sprint cycles).

# Do Good Agile

Need to “do good agile” to be sustainable, but that’s not the primary focus of this presentation.



Try to measure outcomes.  
Be careful what you measure.  
Metrics can be demotivating.  
Measure for Information, not motivation.  
Measure for trends, not target. This promotes balanced attention to metrics.



“The fun theory” from volkswagen. It uses measurement and positive reinforcement to change behavior.

Call to action on this slide: Careful use of information can be actionable.

<http://www.ohgizmo.com/2010/12/06/the-speed-camera-lottery-adds-positive-reinforcement-to-encourage-people-to-obey-the-speed-limit/>

# Measure But Be Careful

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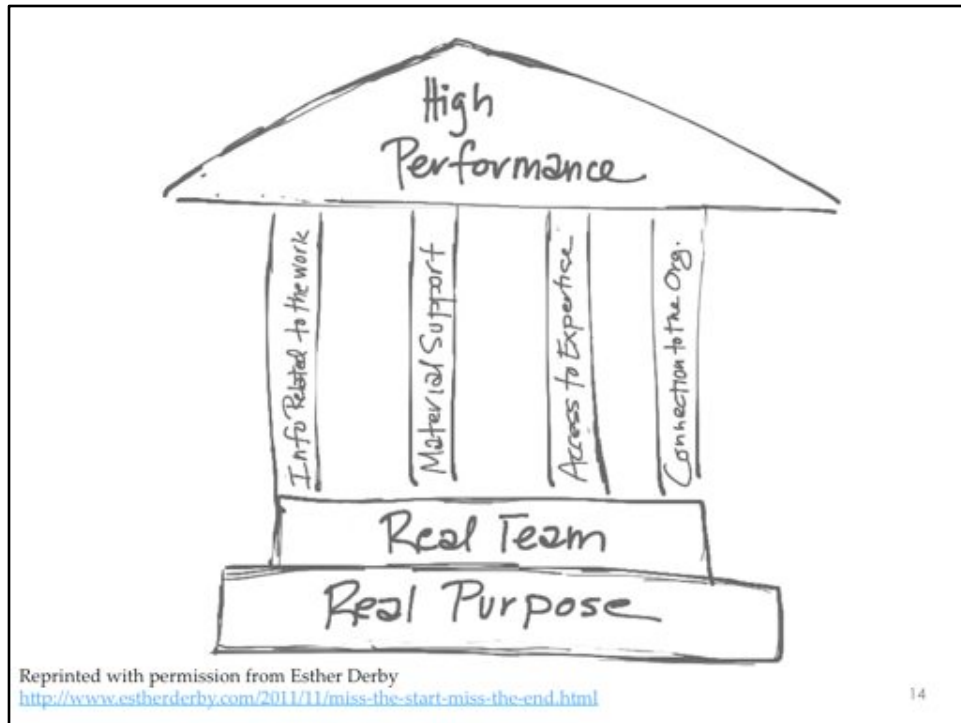
If you don't want the numbers gamed, be careful how you interpret and react to data.

Without trust, the numbers will be gamed.

Even if there is trust, there are likely to be unintended consequences.



Sustainable Agile needs buy-in and behavior changes at all levels of the organization.



Teams must be set up by management for success.

It is management's responsibility to ensure:

Real Purpose – Teams know their mission and understand its value to the business

Real Team – Team members' work is interdependent such that they have a shared outcome; They are allowed to work together long enough to have gelled as a team.

Pillars of Support

Information – problem domain, technology, business – reinforces the purpose

Material Support – tools, facilities, budget – enough to demonstrate that the work is valued

Expertise – access to people that have skills needed by the team

Connection – feedback loops, confirmation they are headed in the right direction, trust

High Performance – The result is they have the opportunity to be a high performing team.

Reference:

<http://www.estherderby.com/2011/11/miss-the-start-miss-the-end.html/comment-page-1#comment-6131>



There is a difference between having a conference call and the next slide, which is investing in people meeting in person.

When times get tough and help is needed, who are you most likely to help? The person on the other end of this conference call, or...



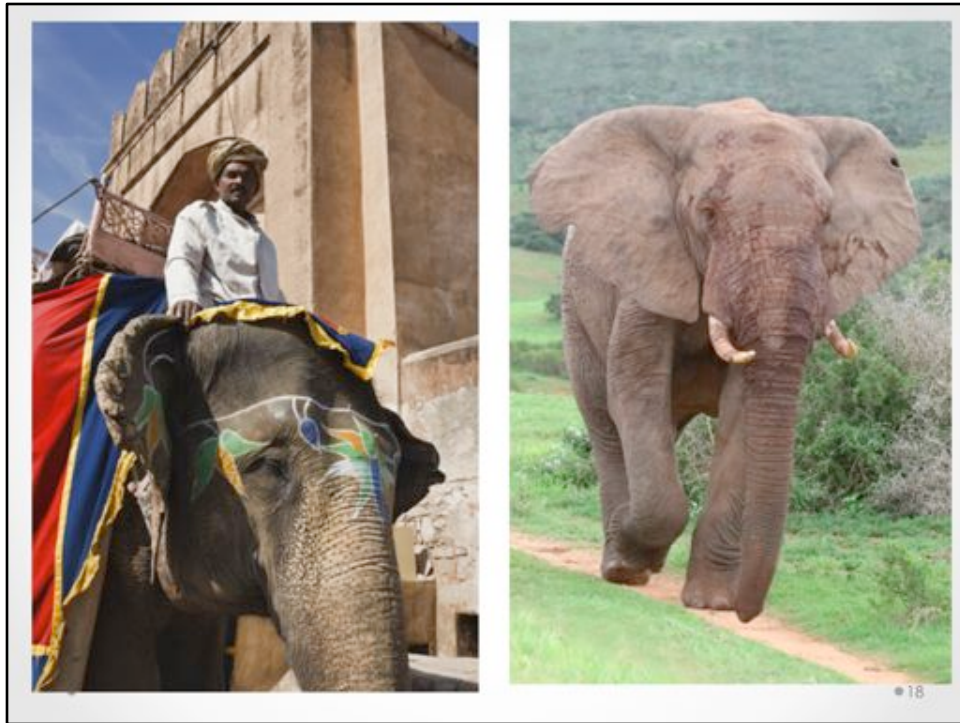
... the person you went to dinner with in this limo?

Team member bonding is critical to sustainment through the tough times.

Invest in people meeting and spending time with each other. Look for opportunities, and they don't have to be extremely expensive. Compare the cost of a group outing (or two) with the cost of missing critical features in a product market launch.

# Set Teams Up For Success

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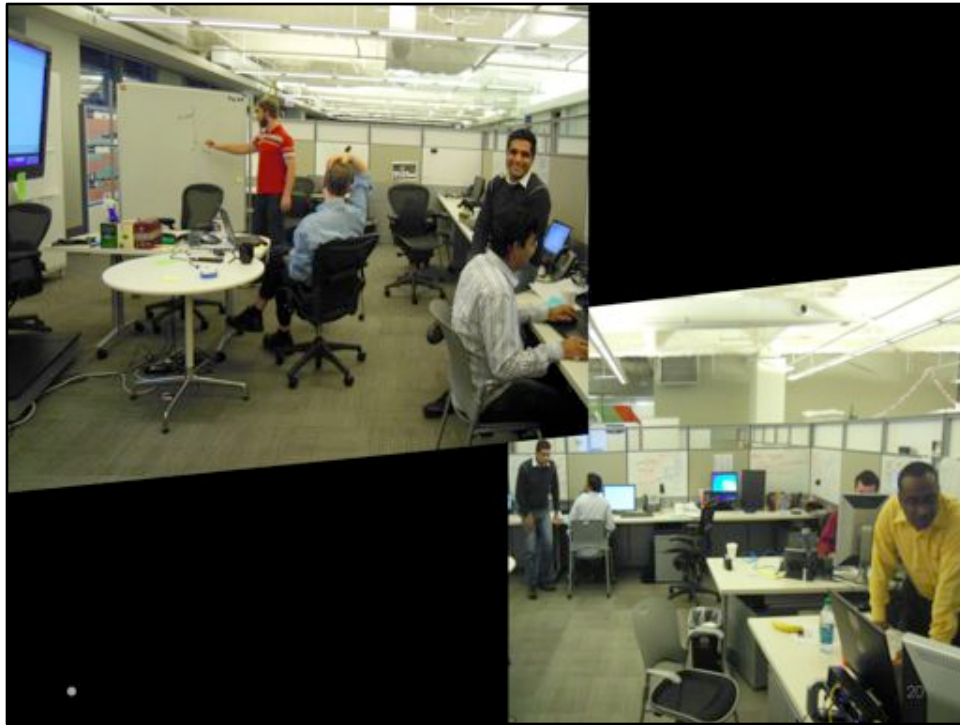


Now transitioning to the concept of “change.”  
Decision making is fatiguing– people only have so much willpower.

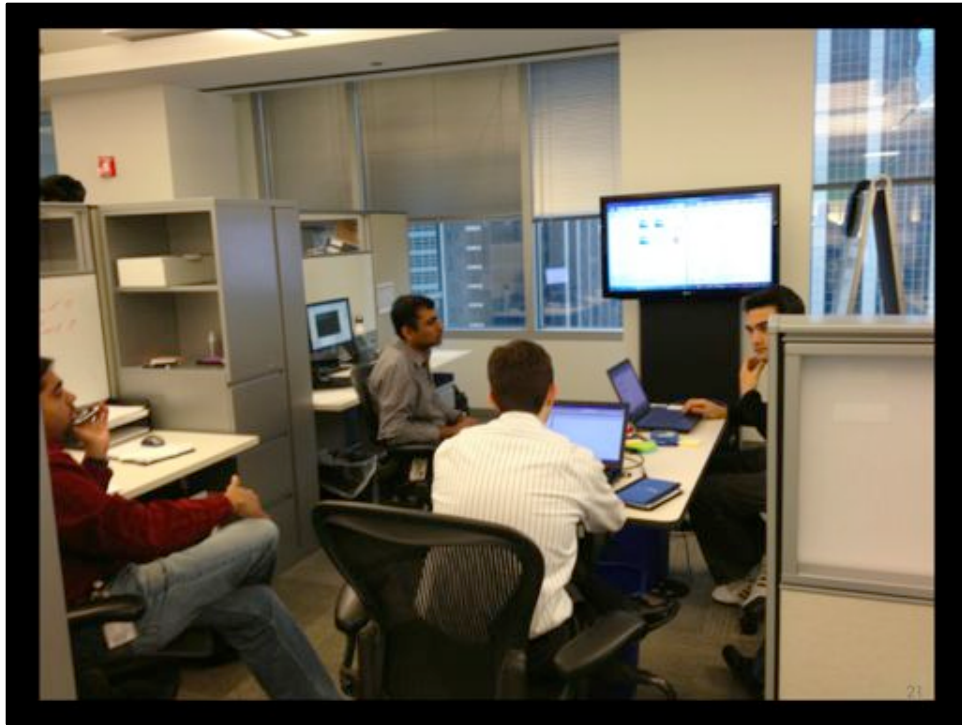


Direct the Rider	Motivate the Elephant	Shape the Path
Bright Spots	Find the Feeling	Tweak the Environment
Critical Moves	Shrink the Change	Build the Habits
Point to the Destination	Grow your People	Rally the Herd





This is a great example of the organization Shaping the Path and setting teams up with support for collocation, and materials (whiteboard, high-res TV monitor...) for success



Even if you cannot get a big investment of funds to do a radical transformation of your space, improvise with what you have.

# It's More Than Knowledge

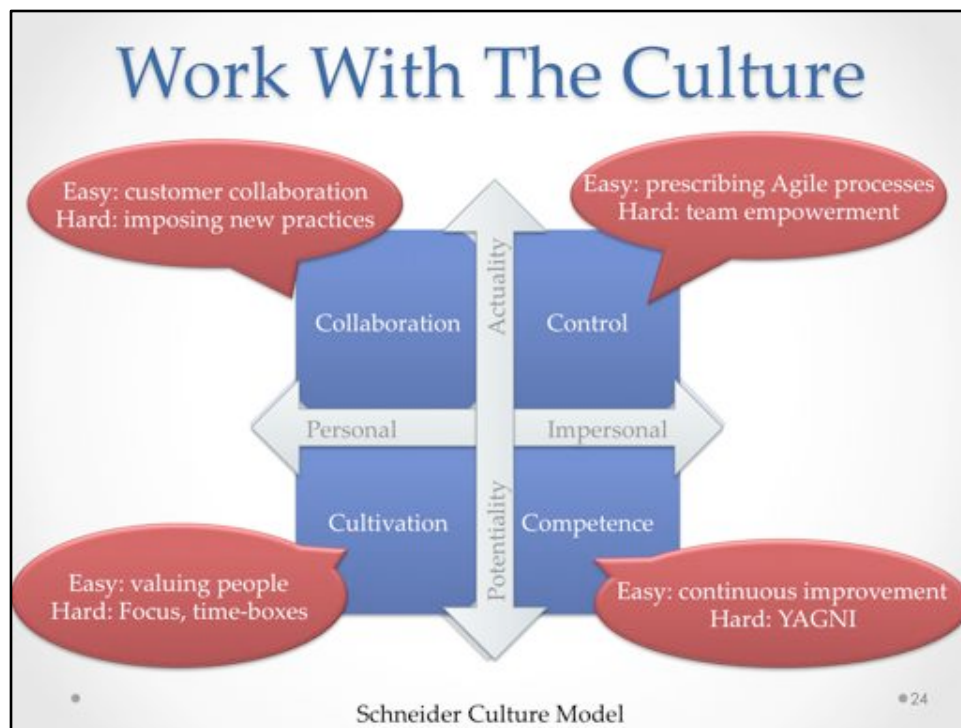
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# Organizational Culture

or

*"How we do things 'round here"*

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## Culture Matters

- It is your starting point
- Its not going to change
- Work with it
- Friction is caused with coaching style doesn't match the culture

## Control - hierarchical

- Use the culture to be disciplined where Agile wants discipline (e.g., time boxes, consistent cadence, people fully dedicated to one team, etc.)
- Be aware that team empowerment will not come easily and be vigilant to keep pushing for it; team building events, external coaches, etc.)
- Using coaches/mentors that rebel against the control will not be productive

## Collaboration

- For teams used to making things up as they go, imposing even a lightweight framework may be a struggle.

## Cultivation – full of purpose and dreaming lofty goals

- Valuing people is easy; perhaps even valuing change
- Reigning in the possibilities to focus on small increments and getting to 'done' within time-boxes may be a struggle



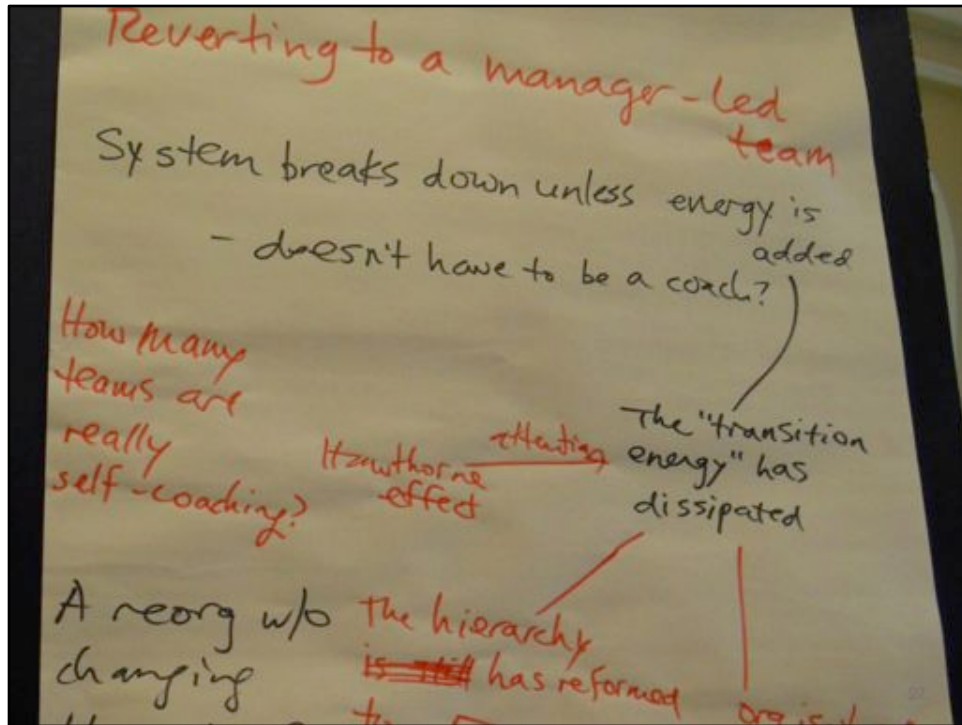
We get questions from executives about “when is this done”, as if it were a project. It’s a milestone and we can celebrate it, but don’t declare “doneness” and don’t stop being vigilant.  
Your role changes, but you don’t get to “done”



How do you respond to the “stiff arm?”

Its not easy to keep feeding Agile energy to the organization. Sometimes, after the initial transition, you get the “stiff arm” from groups that think they are agile enough and don’t want outsiders inflicting help. What do you do?

- Focus on the groups that do want help.
- Make examples of them; publicize their successes and how coaching helped them get there.
- Hope that it creates pull from the other groups for similar help.
  
- Continue to build the relationship in small doses; active listening; Ask “how can I help”.
- Timing is important, so wait for the opportunity to present itself.



KEY POINT: The system breaks down unless energy is continuously added  
Here is a picture from the open space at Agile 2011.  
Some of the things people were discussing in that meeting - particularly the need for continuing to feed Agile energy into the system .

# Are we done?



For longevity; don't quit being disciplined about training, practicing, continuously improving.

Sustainability is about work style vs. a single event

Curiosity about the limits, not simply accepting the status quo.

Continue to retrain, developing new skills and new methods.

You Don't Get  
to  
"Done"

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## Key Sustainability Factors

- Methods and Mindset
- Do Good Agile
- Measure but be Careful
- All In
- Set Teams up for Success
- It's More than Knowledge
- Work with the Culture

You don't get to Done

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Questions?