

Us vs. Them Thinking

~~Building harmony~~

Or... not

Leaf (Jessica Roy)

Beyond Writing Code

beyondwritingcode.com

What we tried
Why it was worth trying
What I learned

Hi, I'm Leaf.

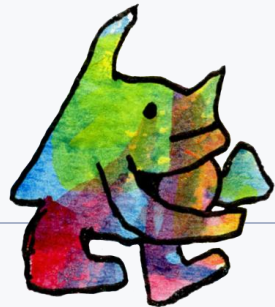
25 years in tech

Developer

Tech Lead

Application Architect

Writing a book



The scene: my first week...

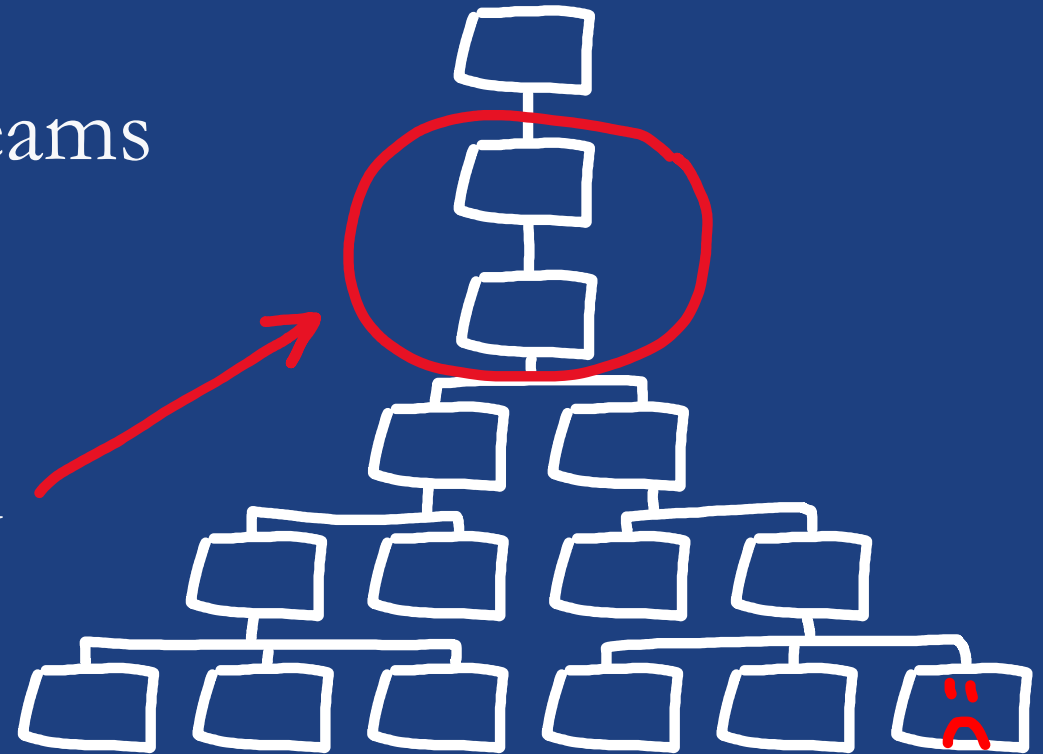
Shared services for ~15 Dev teams

On a call with Ops

The project is behind schedule

Senior management is involved

And I now own it...



By the end of the call, *I am pacing...*

I can see how bad the conflict is.

I've resolved conflicts like this before.

I'm determined to resolve this one, too.

What we tried

Trust

Trust

They're our colleagues

We're their customer! (and blocked)

They'll track the work

But they...

Aren't keeping track (no one is)

Avoid commitments

Don't do what they say

And will deny having said it

Trust is low

What we tried

Trust
Clarity

Clarity

Setting clear expectations

Meet every week

What we need, why, who, when...

They agree

But they...

Don't follow through

And still say they're "done"

At least there's *some* progress?

What we tried

Trust
Clarity
Connection

Connection

Making 1:1 connections

Let's just talk, as peers

How is this for you?

Let's make this better, together

But they...

Are polite but distant

And don't want to talk about it

We can't tell what's going on

What we tried

Trust
Clarity
Connection
Collaboration

Collaboration

They're busy, so...

- Offer to work side by side

- Do what we can up front

- Make suggestions, share expertise

But they...

- Reject all of it

- Redo the work we did

- And break stuff :(

They don't trust us either?

What we tried

Trust
Clarity
Connection
Collaboration
Intention

Intention

(2 minutes early)

Listen with **curiosity**

Speak **clearly** and **respectfully**

Be of **service**

Look for **shared purpose**

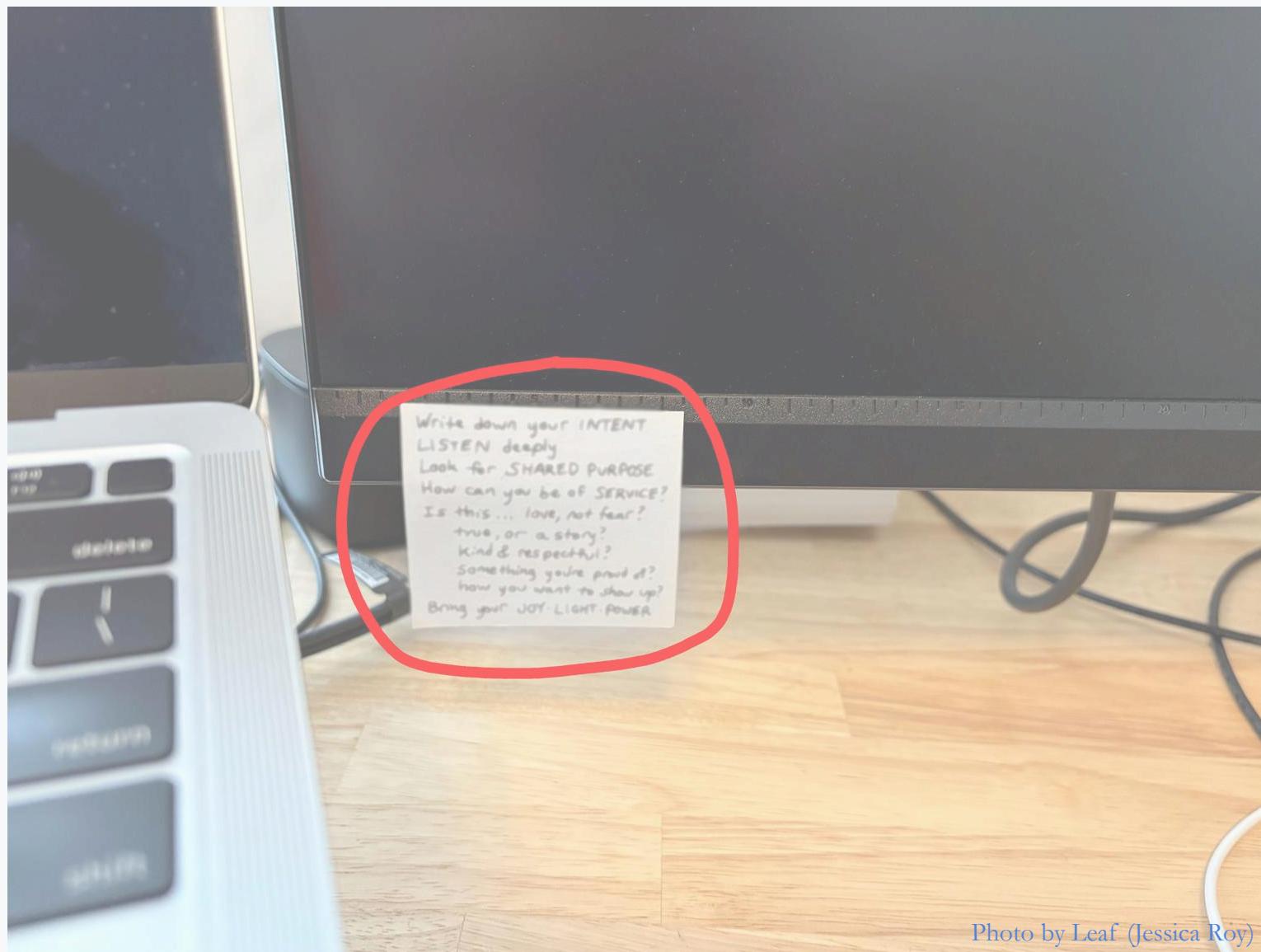


Photo by Leaf (Jessica Roy)

Questions

Is it...

... **kind?**

... **true**, or a **story?**

... *how I want to show up?*

But...



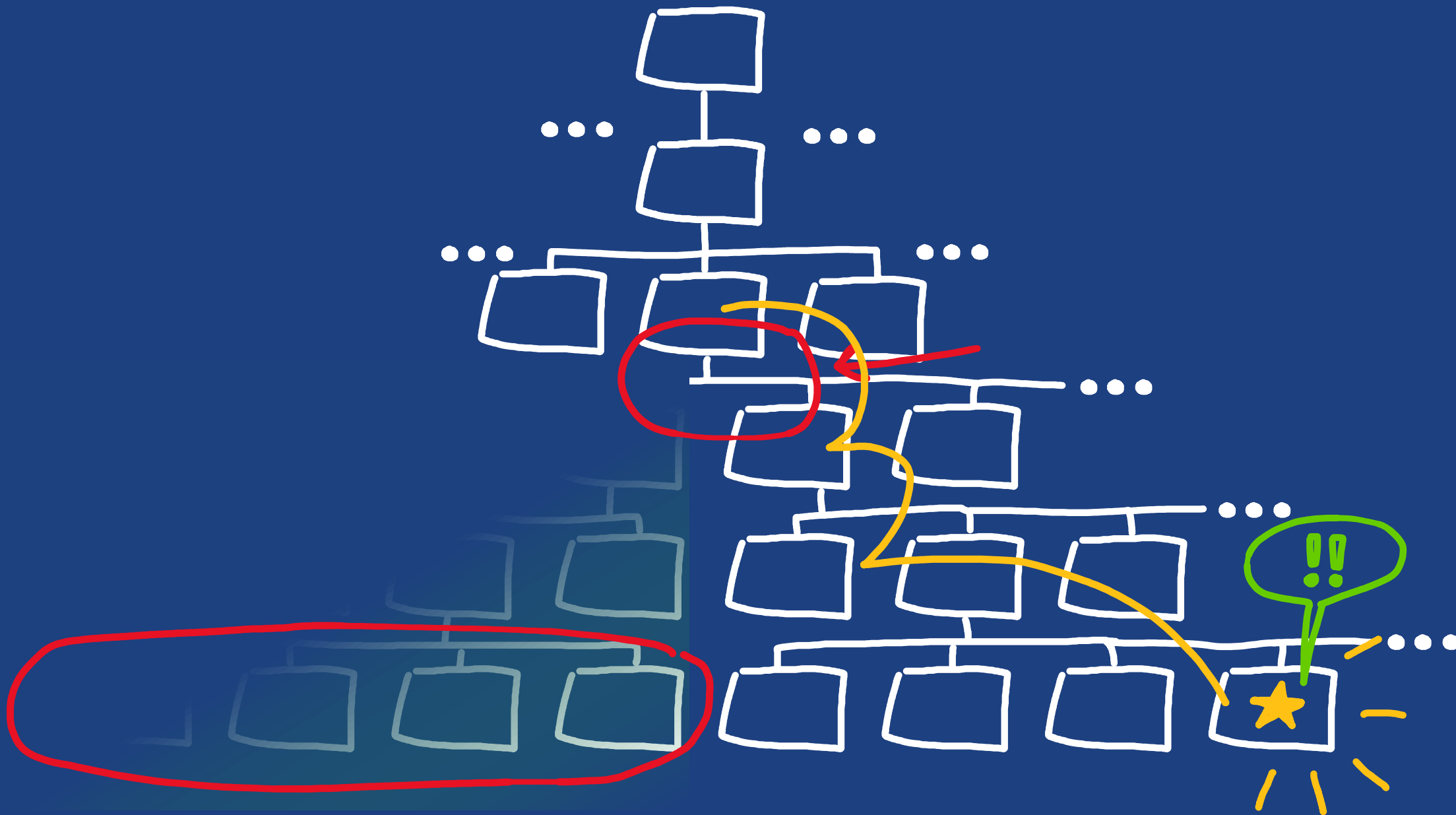
Everything is
still awful.

*When will they realize that
we're all on the same team?*

“

*When will they realize we're
all on the same team??*

—“Them”



I can see how bad the conflict is.

I've resolved conflicts like this before.

~~I'm determined to resolve this one, too.~~

This wasn't mine to fix.

Continuing to try to be the hero was only hurting me.

Takeaways

Trust, clarity, connection, collaboration, intention...
are all still worth trying.

How do you want to show up?

Know when it's time to redirect your energy.

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Want to talk about how AI is affecting developer experience?
leaf@beyondwritingcode.com



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