My career and path into the tech industry

RUTH CHEESLEY
MAUTIC PROJECT LEAD

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RUTH CHEESLEY (she/her)

18+ years using and contributing to open source projects

Located in Ipswich, UK

Working full time for Acquia as Mautic Project Lead

noti.st/rcheesley for my talks, slides, resources

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THE OPEN SOURCE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE COMPANY

We provide the world's most ambitious brands with technology that allows them to embrace innovation and create customer moments that matter. At Acquia, we believe in the power of community — giving our customers the freedom to build tomorrow on their terms.

94% Customer Satisfaction Rating

Leveraging **Drupal,** the largest open source community, and **Mautic,** the world's first open source marketing automation platform

3,500+ customers, including 1,800 enterprises

30+ Fortune 100 customers

1500+ Employees

Global Partner Program

DISRUPTING THE MARKETING WORLD

✳ Open source marketing automation platform launched in 2015 (mautic.org / github.com/mautic/mautic) - completely free to download and use. Anyone can (and does) contribute to make it better.

✳ Allows you to learn from your visitors and personalise their digital experience across email, web, SMS, browser notifications, and more, automating marketing tasks.

✳ Comparable commercial solutions from £1,000+ per month.

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A LOT OF PEOPLE!

✳ 200,000+ organisations using the software in 65 languages worldwide.

✳ 10,500+ community members.

✳ 1,000+ community contributors.

✳ Multiple businesses sell hosted Mautic services as a 'Software as a Service' or SaaS model.

A WIDE AND VARIED ROLE

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

✳ Setting up ways for people to help make Mautic better by volunteering or being paid to contribute to Mautic, and making sure that they are appreciated for their contributions

✳ Establishing teams and empowering people to do what they love

✳ Setting the culture and the governance of the community

✳ Providing leadership - I am the top of the 'pyramid' in the leadership structure

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Photo by Caleb Chen on Unsplash

A WIDE AND VARIED ROLE

PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

✻ Reviewing, testing and approving new features and bug fixes

✻ Setting the roadmap and future direction of the product

✻ Establishing Strategic Initiatives and finding ways to encourage people to work on them

✻ Collaborating with companies who rely on Mautic for their business to ensure Mautic remains competitive in the market
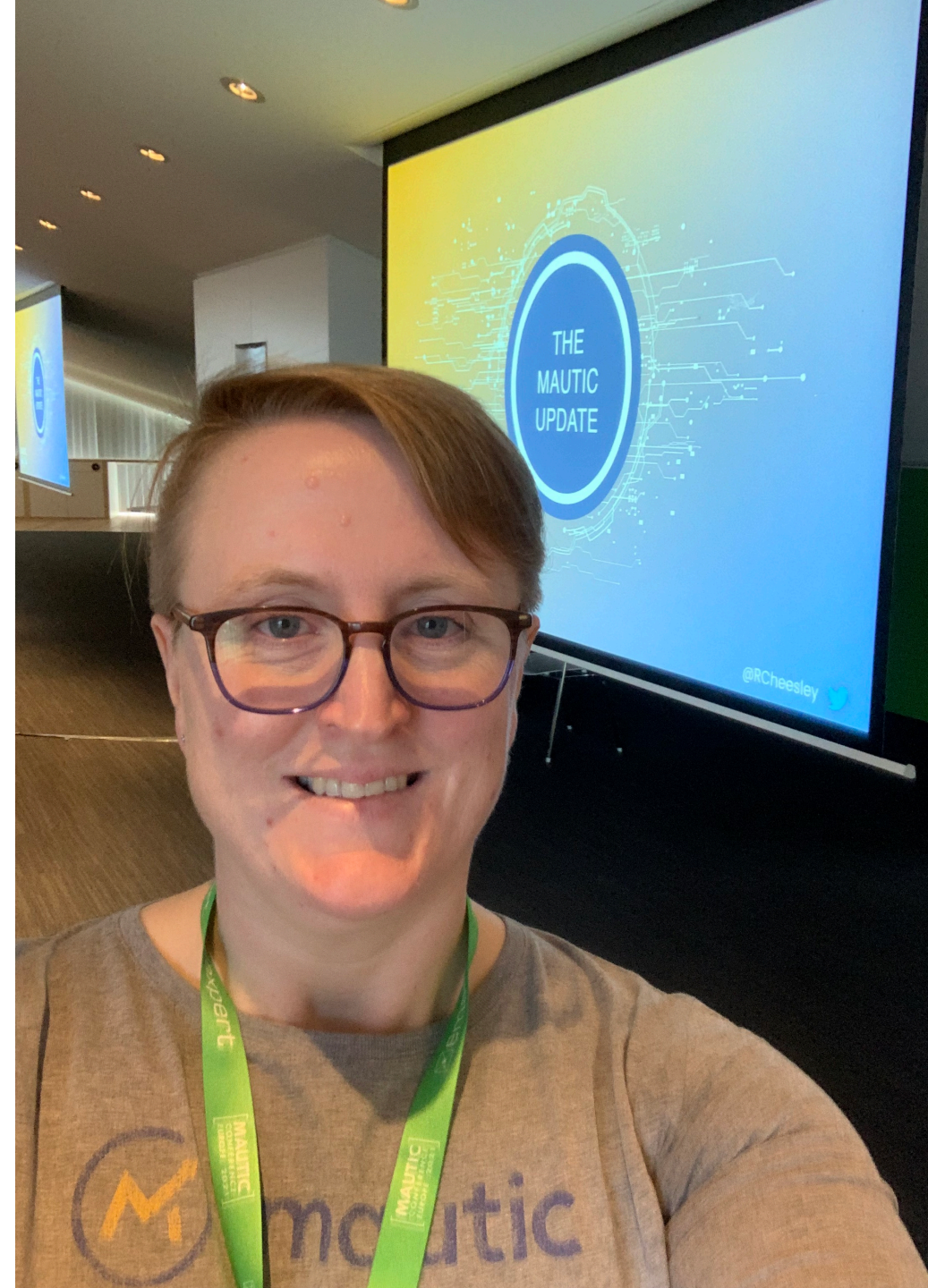
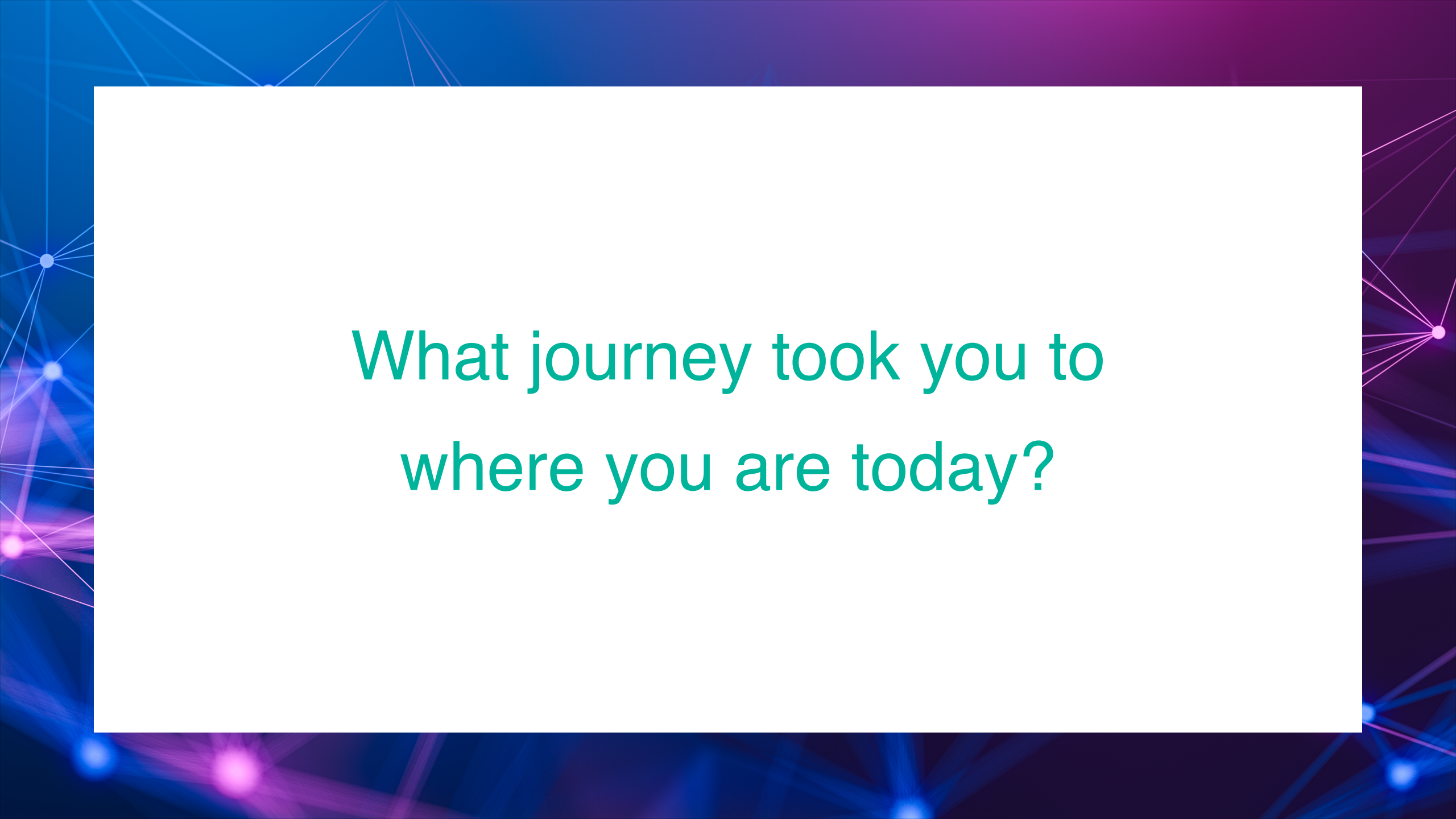✻ Collaborating with and learning from other open source projects

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A WIDE AND VARIED ROLE

EVERYTHING ELSE!

✳ Anything we can't find a community contributor to do, I end up doing! Everything from testing features to running a release to creating graphics and posts for social media!

✳ Organised two online world conferences last year, and our first in person conference in Belgium

✳ Speaking at events around the world about Mautic, and how we're building our community

✳ Supporting local teams with organising community-based events, and usually speaking at them (lots of travel!)

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What journey took you to where you are today?

NOT THE TRADITIONAL ROUTE!

PHYSIOTHERAPY

Started out doing Sport Science then Physiotherapy at Uni - tech was never a career suggested despite being geeky!

IT / WEB DEV

Worked part time jobs at uni on a computer helpdesk, got a job as an IT Technician and then health data analyst, then created a digital agency doing web design

COMMUNITY

Volunteered in Open Source communities in many ways over the years (documentation, user groups, writing content) resulting in leadership roles in several communities

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JOOMLA! COMMUNITY

SUPPORTING JOOMLA! USER GROUPS

Part of the User Groups team, helping people set up local communities.

ESTABLISHING THE JOOMLA! MARKETING TEAM

Setting up and running the Joomla! Marketing Team

RE-WRITING THE JOOMLA! CODE OF CONDUCT

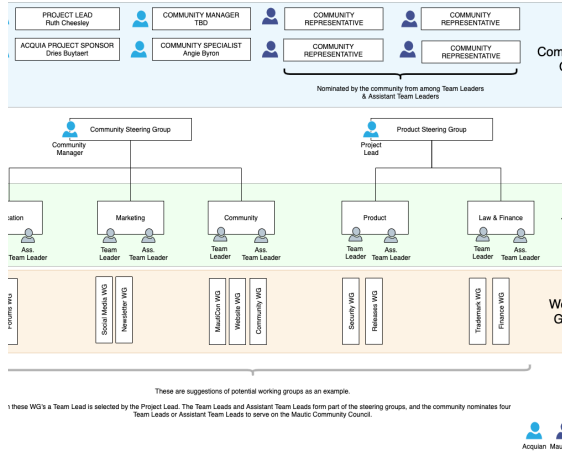Updating and improving the CoC and creating a Conflict Resolution Team

GOOGLE SUMMER OF CODE MENTOR

Mentored project to implement a microdata library in Mautic

MAUTIC

ESTABLISHING A GOVERNANCE MODEL

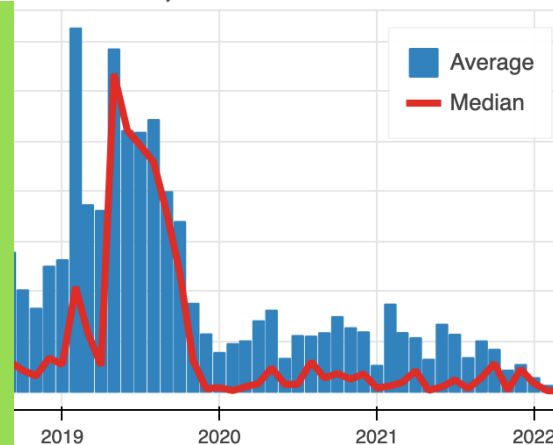Establishing how the community would be run, what the leadership structure would be.

Mautic Commun Partner

CREATING A PARTNERS PROGRAM

A fair & equitable way to recognise/promote orgs who financially & practically support Mautic.

REDUCING BACKLOG OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Getting through the 600+ issues and 400+ pull requests in the backlog

ORGANISING MAJOR EVENTS

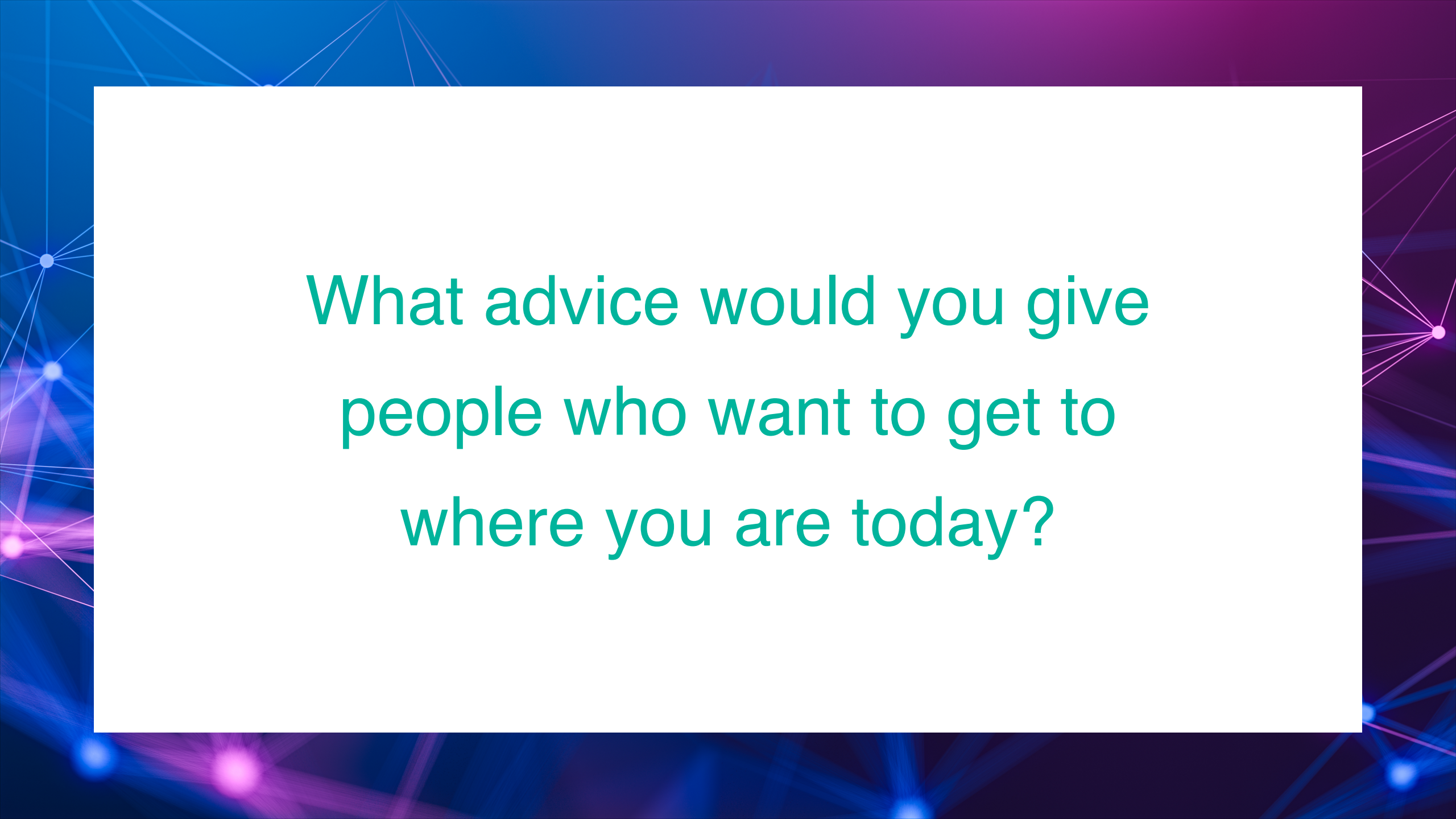Organised online and in-person international conferences

BEING A WOMAN IN TECH

FIND YOUR PEOPLE!

✳ Life is what you make of it

✳ Find (or build) communities of people who support you and your values

✳ If you think something needs to change, change it (ideally with friends)

✳ https://witchat.github.io (ping me for an invite)

What advice would you give people who want to get to where you are today?

ASK HOW YOU CAN HELP

* Find some open source tools that you use, and/or which you are interested in

* Find a way to contribute
    * Help test bug fixes!
    * Writing content
    * Creating visual resources
    * Managing their social media
    * Writing / improving documentation?
    * Organise a Meetup and invite speakers - great way to build your network!
    * Help others - answer support questions, write blogs about things you have struggled with and the solution

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START NETWORKING

* Start networking with people working in the career area you want to work in
  * Get yourself a professional LinkedIn profile, regardless of whether you have any job experience to date
  * Search for people using keywords relevant to the career area
  * Write a short, professional note to accompany the connection request. Ask them if they would be up for having a coffee (in person or virtual!) to chat about their work as you are interested in their line of work

* Ask everybody you meet who are the one or two other people in their network that they think you should meet, and ask them to make the introduction

FOLLOW YOUR INTUITION

✳ Don't just go for the salary/kudos - aim to do something you really care passionately about

✳ Follow your intuition and be honest with yourself. If you think you should be in a different career area, then change.

✳ Recognise that you will have to work hard to start and to transition careers, but it is worth it!

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AUTHENTICITY

✳ Have the confidence to be who you are, not who you think other people expect you to be

✳ Exemplify what you want to see in the world around you

✳ Remember that everything can change - just some things take more time and energy than others!

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What questions can I answer?

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noti.st/rcheesley for talks and resources

ruthcheesley.co.uk for my personal website

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