Learning Through Mentoring

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@ArgesRic

Show of hands

- Who here has a mentor?

- Who here is currently mentoring or has mentored someone?

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About me

- Software engineer, started Numergent.

- Doing software professionally for 20+ years, from writing low-level code to running distributed teams to starting companies.

- Have had the opportunity to mentor people in different areas.

- Currently taking over technical leadership at XapiX.

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What's in it for you?

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There's a *lot* you can learn while mentoring someone.

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But first, let's talk about movies

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Giant movie nerd warning.

… so of course, I looked at movies for examples.

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Most movie mentors suck.

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Show of hands again...

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Why movies?

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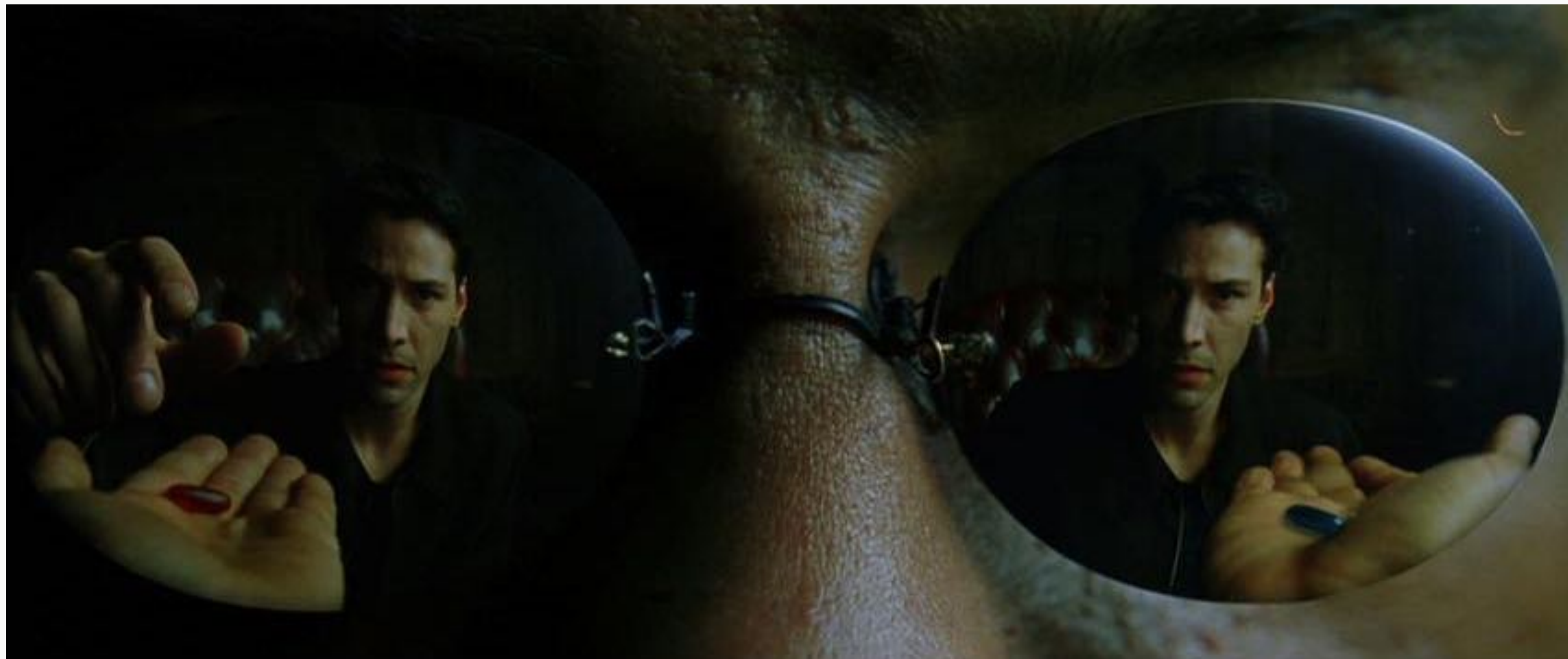
Media informs identity.

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Willingness

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Movie mentors just "show up".

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It implies you should be on the lookout for pupils.

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When the Mentor is ready, the Mentees will appear.

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Confidence

Are you *ready* for mentoring people?

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Imposter syndrome will bite down *hard*.

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Advise feels easier.

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Agreeing to be a mentor is agreeing to being available.

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They are asking you for a reason.

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Get comfortable with not knowing.

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It's not about you.

You are not here to call the shots.

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Ask questions.

Your job is not to provide answers.

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Benefit!

It'll get you comfortable with uncertainty.

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Deceiving yourself into confidence is not the same as having a clue.

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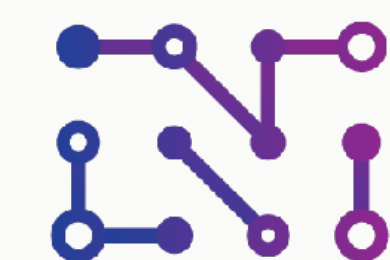# ... and speaking of answers

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I'd actually say Obi-Wan is a
teacher.

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A teacher is there to impart knowledge.
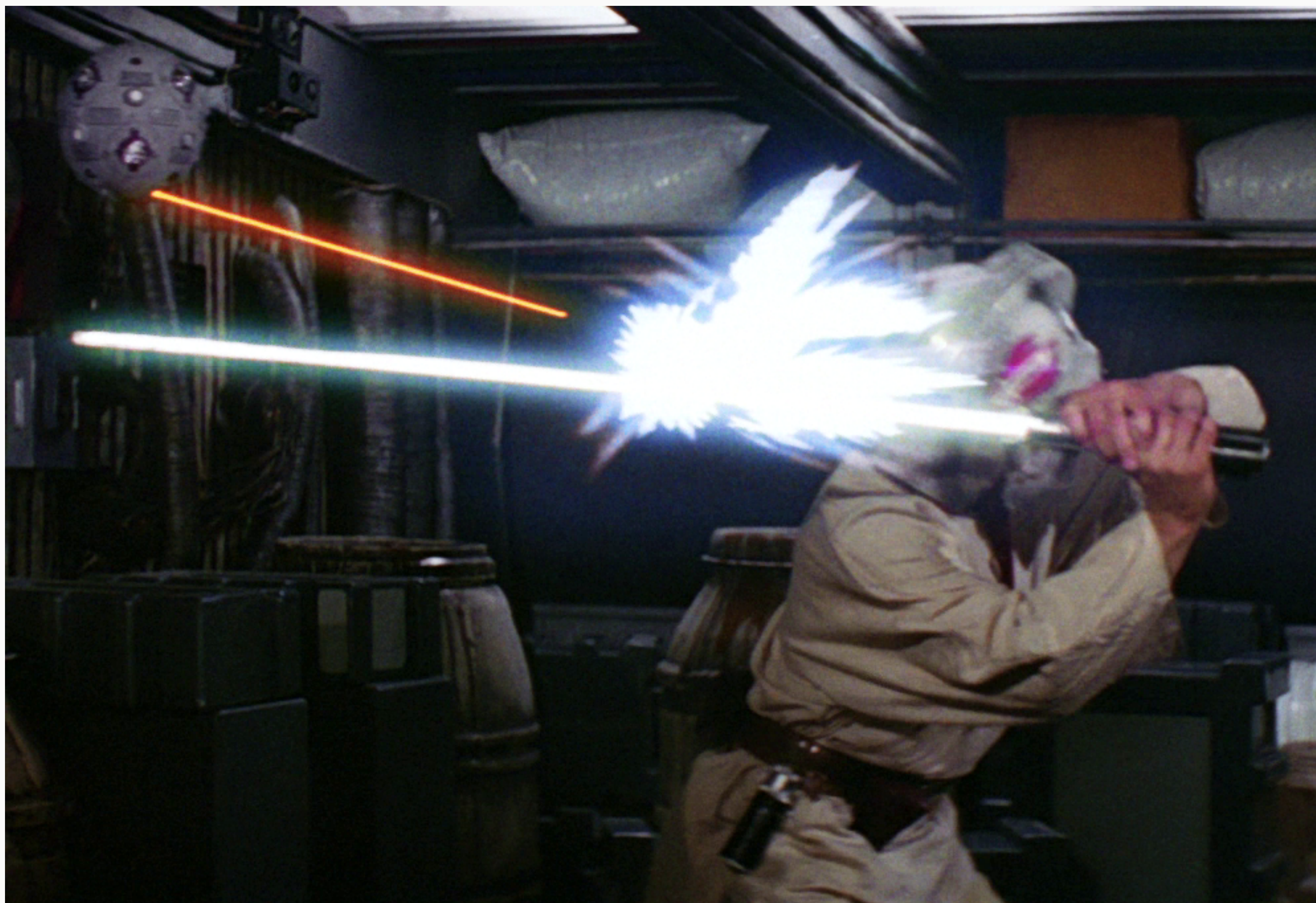
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Chances are they know more about their area than you do.

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A mentor is there to provide *guidance*.

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Ask questions instead of providing answers.

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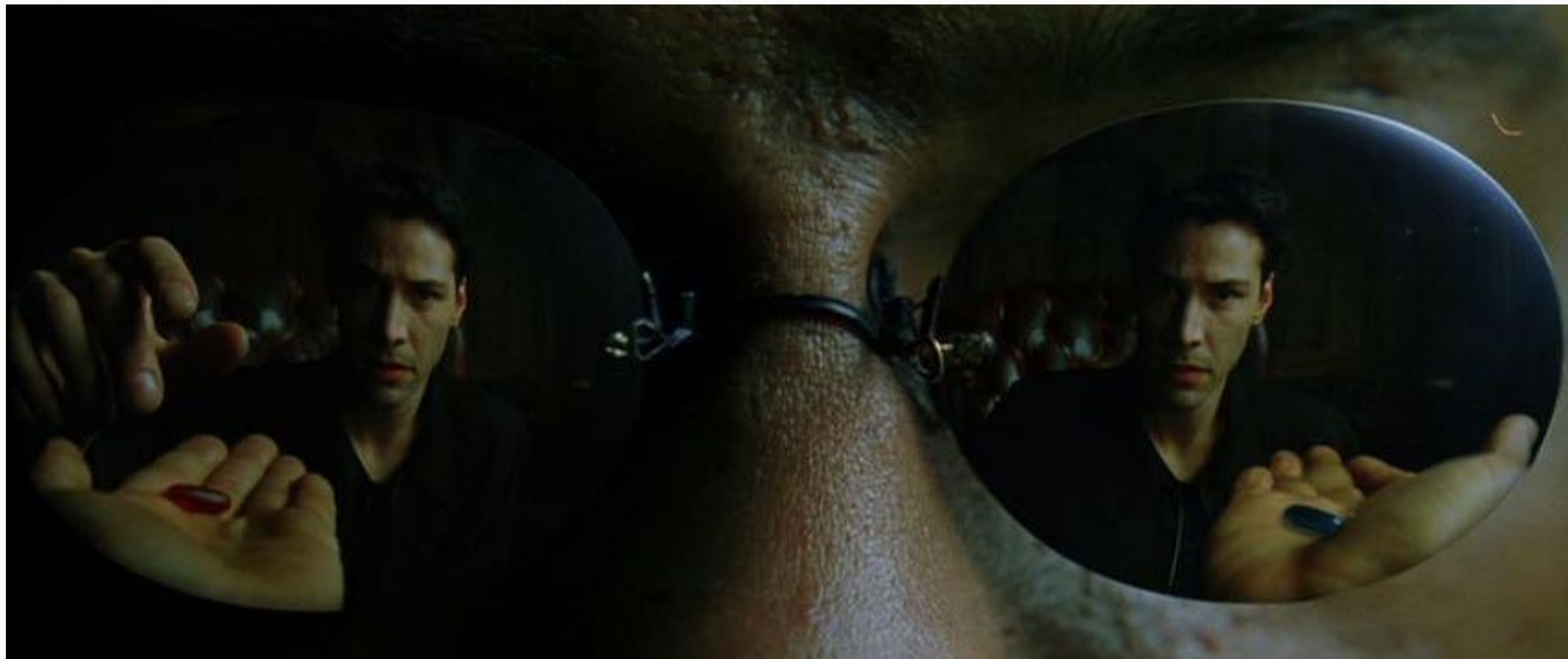
"Do you believe that my being stronger or faster has anything to do with my muscles in this place?"

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"Do you think that's air you're breathing now?"

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Help your mentees figure out which questions they aren't asking themselves.

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Ask open questions.

It's about stimulating the thought process.

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Benefit!

You'll stop yourself from jumping to a solution.

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Be approachable

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You have to be approachable.

You have to volunteer.

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Fletcher is brilliant.

Fletcher is a famed conductor.

Fletcher knows his stuff.

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Be more like Lester.

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Speaking of portrayals...

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Did anyone spot the common factor?

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Literal graybeards.

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Don't make that mistake.

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If you see a call for mentors, volunteer.

If someone asks, say yes.

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Why bother?

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There's a lot you can learn while mentoring.

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It helps articulate your ideas.

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We build bubbles around ourselves.

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Feed off of other people's learning.

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Delegated personal growth.

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Improvement requires exertion.

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We've all been helped in the past.

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Be open.
Be willing.
Be approachable.

You'll be better off for it.

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... and by the way ...

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Be brave enough to ask someone to mentor you.

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Thank you!

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Questions?

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