

# Want to Expand Free Software?

## Learn to Connect and Engage with the World

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# Who I Am

- My name is Emmanuel
- They/Them pronouns
- Final Semester Student at Hampshire College
- Free Software User and Local Advocate

# What I've Done

- An active participant in smaller social circles
- Talked to people one-on-one about free software
  - Technical, ideological, social ideals
- Led small groups on discussions
- This is always a work in progress and could always improve

# “Why focus on individuals?”

- You might ask: "What difference does it make?"
- When you focus on individuals, you have many trials.
  - This lets you practice more!
- If you get good at this, you can scale up.\*
- You may become known as "that free software person"
- This spreads the message faster and has some of the engagement covered for you.

\* Not immediately, of course.

# Self Reflection

- Remember, even **you** started from humble beginnings.
- You're could be a great case study!
  - How did you get involved in free software, as a user?
- Thinking about our own struggles allows us to build empathy, which lets us connect with others on a deeper level. You want that.

Let's self reflect *right now!*

“How did you first get involved in free software?”

This is weird, I know.

*Don't make me call on you.*

# Working that Empathy

- Difficulties in using even single free software applications, let alone a whole OS.
- They might find change intimidating, even with friendlier free desktop and less friendly non-free, but somewhat familiar desktops.
- Understand that using **some** free software **is better than none** at all!
  - Over time, they might get use more.
- Ex. My own GNU/Linux usage patterns

# When Eyes “Light Up”

- Each person has their own personal reason for liking free software, at least initially
- Examples:
  - For me, it was about cost and literally the egalitarian nature of free software development.
  - I conducted a group discussion where every person had a different personal reason for liking the idea of free software
- In the latter example, I notice each person's eyes **light up**, like something got them interested
- See what kinds of things light people's eyes up



# Activity Time!

“In terms of free software,  
what lights your eyes?”

I know this is still weird for you.  
Just remember, normal is  
just a setting on my dryer...

# Avoiding “Eye Glaze” or Worse

- Some serious no-nos:\*
  - Don't criticize someone for what software they use!
  - Don't assume they are willing to make the same sacrifices you or someone you respect makes
  - Don't make “free software” a curse word
- But, you should
  - Have empathy
  - Understand that some people will still use significant amounts of non-free software, at least initially
  - Be really kind, attentive, and a good listener
  - Practice

\* No one does this at LibrePlanet, right? :)

# A Note About Comfort Level

You won't be a social butterfly your first day.  
Trust me.

Yet, we must all start somewhere!

:0 :| :) :D <3

# Homework!

This is merely a start, so play with these ideas and refine them.

**For those less comfortable**, try talking with people you know and branching out from there.  
**For those more comfortable**, try new ways of advocacy, like public speaking.

In all cases: practice, practice, **practice!**

One final activity...

# Happy Hacking!

Questions? Feedback?

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