

# **Surviving C.S.**

**a 2019 talk by Graham Mitchell  
comprising 54 slides**

# Software Engineer at Vrbo



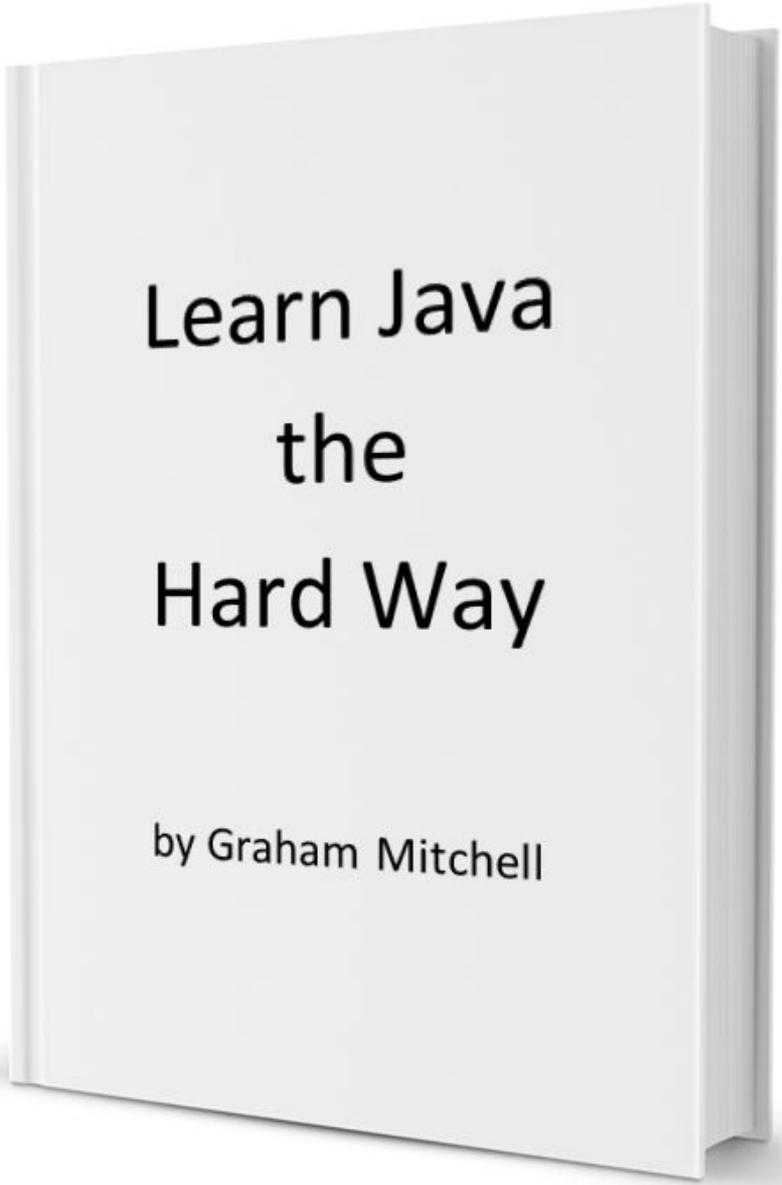
# Software Engineer at HomeAway



HomeAway®

**20 Years**  
**at**  
**Leander High School**





Learn Java  
the  
Hard Way

by Graham Mitchell

**You don't  
have to be  
“good at  
computers.”**



**driver's ed**

**auto shop**



**There are a thousand  
things you won't know.  
It's okay.**

**Nobody knows  
everything.**

I TRY NOT TO MAKE FUN OF PEOPLE FOR ADMITTING THEY DON'T KNOW THINGS.

BECAUSE FOR EACH THING "EVERYONE KNOWS" BY THE TIME THEY'RE ADULTS, EVERY DAY THERE ARE, ON AVERAGE, 10,000 PEOPLE IN THE US HEARING ABOUT IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

FRACTION WHO HAVE HEARD OF IT AT BIRTH = 0%

FRACTION WHO HAVE HEARD OF IT BY 30  $\approx 100\%$

US BIRTH RATE  $\approx 4,000,000/\text{year}$

NUMBER HEARING ABOUT IT FOR THE FIRST TIME  $\approx 10,000/\text{day}$

IF I MAKE FUN OF PEOPLE, I TRAIN THEM NOT TO TELL ME WHEN THEY HAVE THOSE MOMENTS. AND I MISS OUT ON THE FUN.

"DIET COKE AND MENTOS THING"? WHAT'S THAT?

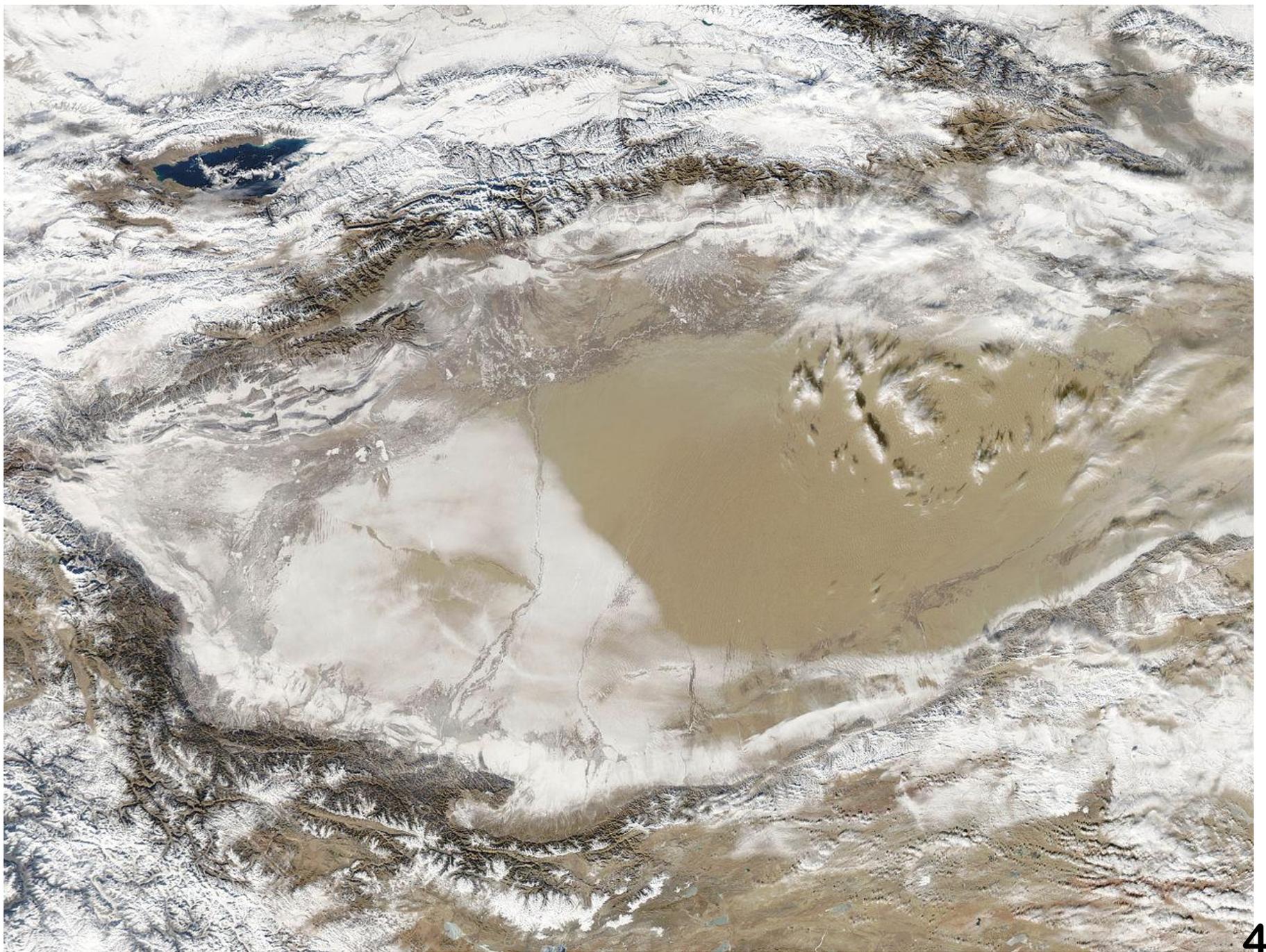
OH MAN! COME ON, WE'RE GOING TO THE GROCERY STORE. WHY?

YOU'RE ONE OF TODAY'S LUCKY 10,000.



**“I guess  
I’m one of today’s  
lucky 10,000!”**

**Nothing is obvious.**



**Nothing is obvious.**

**confusion + exposure**



**“obvious”**

**confusion**

**+**

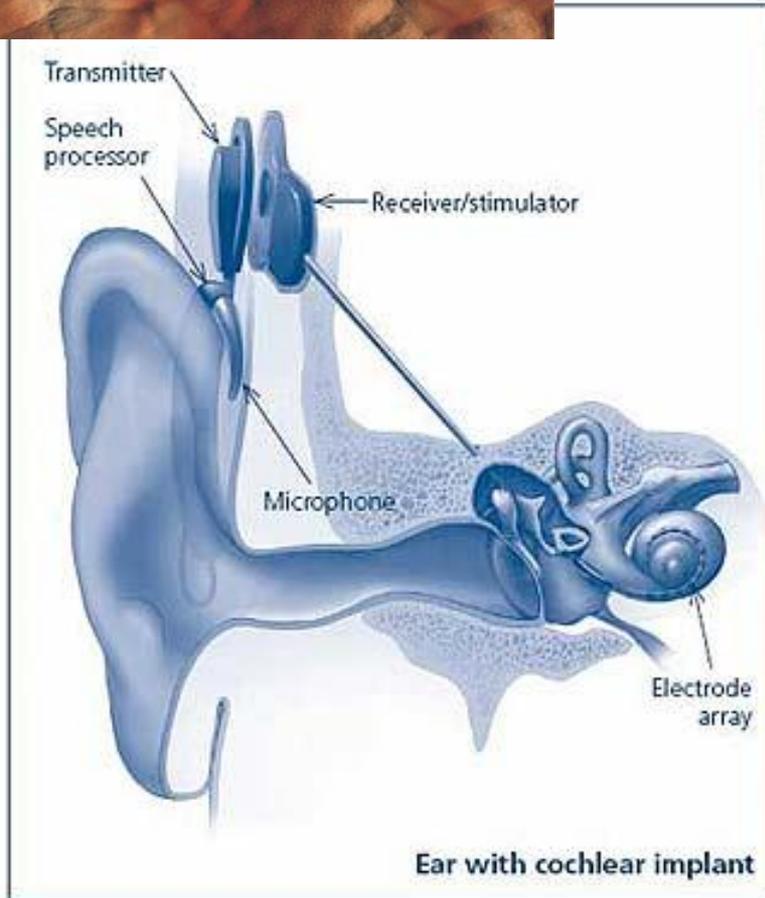
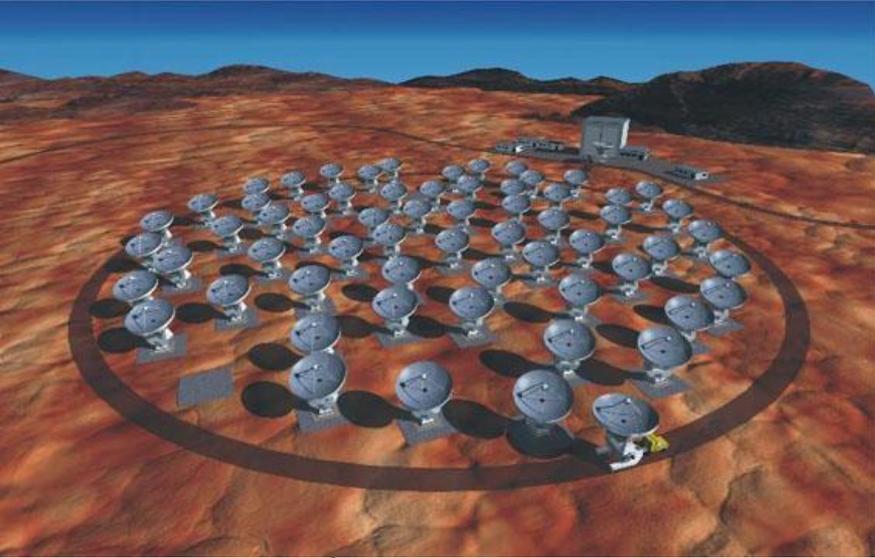
**(exposure × aptitude)**



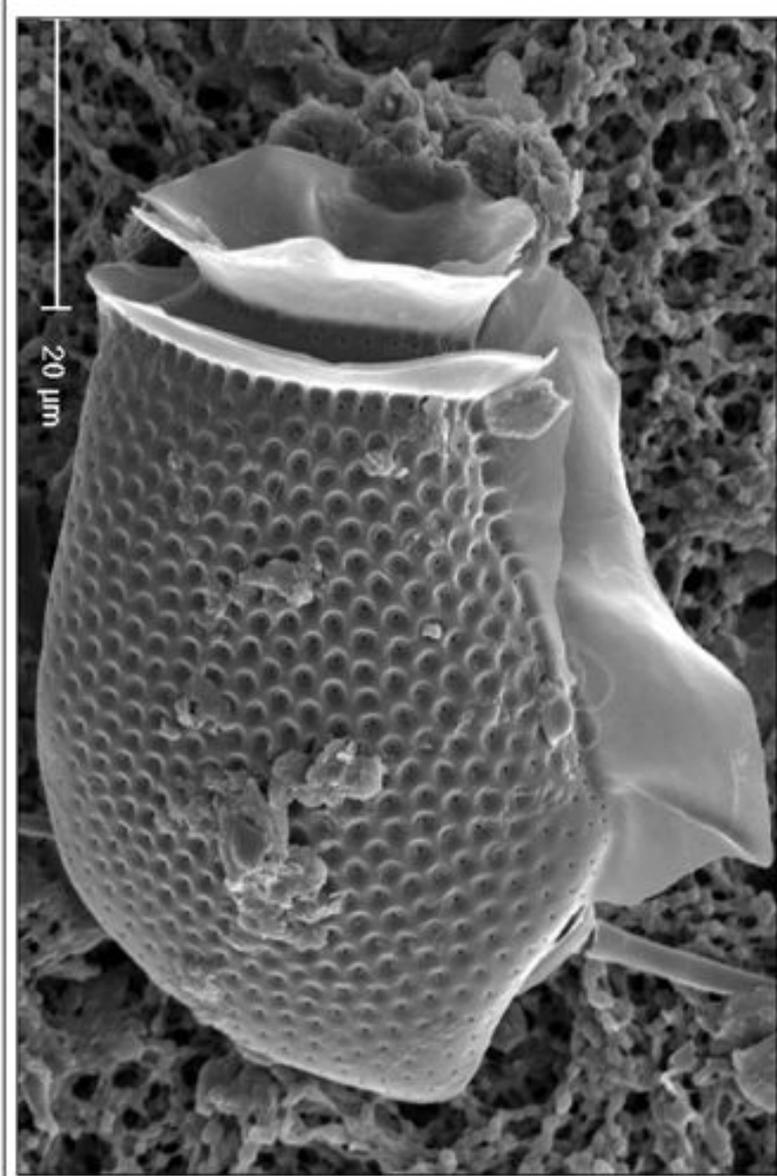
**“obvious”**

**Code is used to solve  
problems.**

**And not just  
“computer” problems.**



NIH Medical Arts

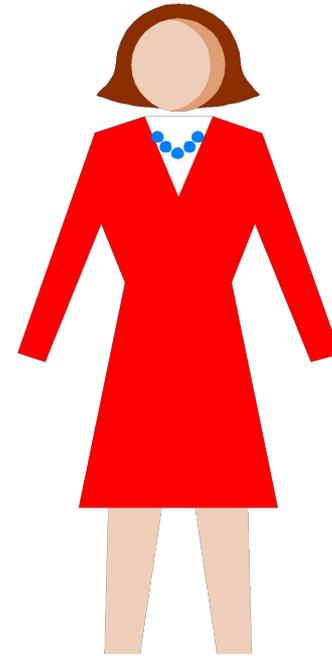




**Boys**



**Bob**



**Alice**



1. When Bob learns something *about* Alice, but not *from* Alice, then Bob might seem **creepy**.



**2. When Bob wants to tell Alice something without *talking* to her, it probably feels **creepy**.**



**Relationships grow  
by *talking*.**

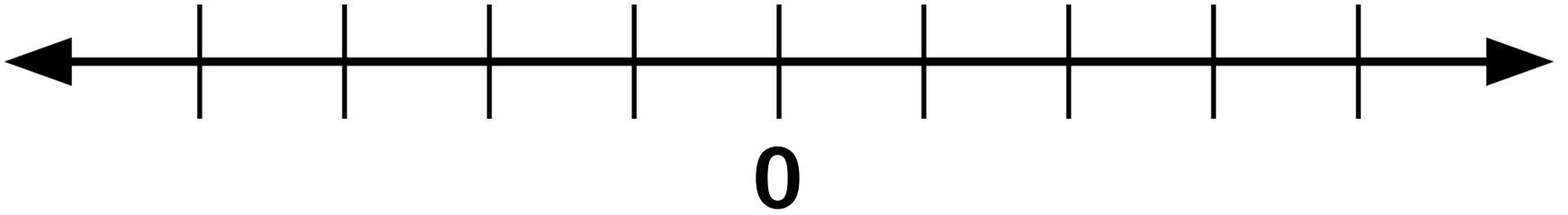
**In person, if possible.**

**3. Even if Bob knows everything *about* Alice, it does not mean that Bob *knows* Alice.**

**And it usually doesn't make Alice want to know things about Bob.**

**And it doesn't feel good.**





**4. If Alice “likes” Bob,  
then she might be  
flattered when he says  
or does nice things.**



**4. If Alice “likes” Bob,  
then she might be  
flattered when he says  
or does nice things.**



**If not, she will probably  
be creeped out even if  
he says or does the  
same things.**



**5. If Alice isn't interested in Bob, then *nothing* Bob can say or do is going to change her mind (probably).**

**Alice may only change her mind by watching Bob interact with others for a long time.**



**If she's not interested,  
*leave her alone.***

# People might think you're creepy if:



- You follow people around
- You call someone (or email or text or IM) and you haven't asked them first
- You wait for people to show up where you know they're going to be
- You touch people and they rarely touch you back
- You are always the initiator or the one doing the 'seeking behavior'
- You're always trying to buy/do nice things for someone you're not dating
- You leave anonymous notes

# You can tell they're probably not interested if:



- They don't look at you when you're talking
- They never seek you out in a group
- They never ask questions when you're talking
- They have closed body language

# On Relationships

# Stages of typical relationships:

**0. unknown**

**1. strangers**

**2. acquaintances**

**3. friends**

**4. dating**

**5. boyfriend/girlfriend**

**6. engaged**

**7. married**

**“Creepy” is when you  
want something  
from another person  
and  
you pursue or express it  
in a strange way.**

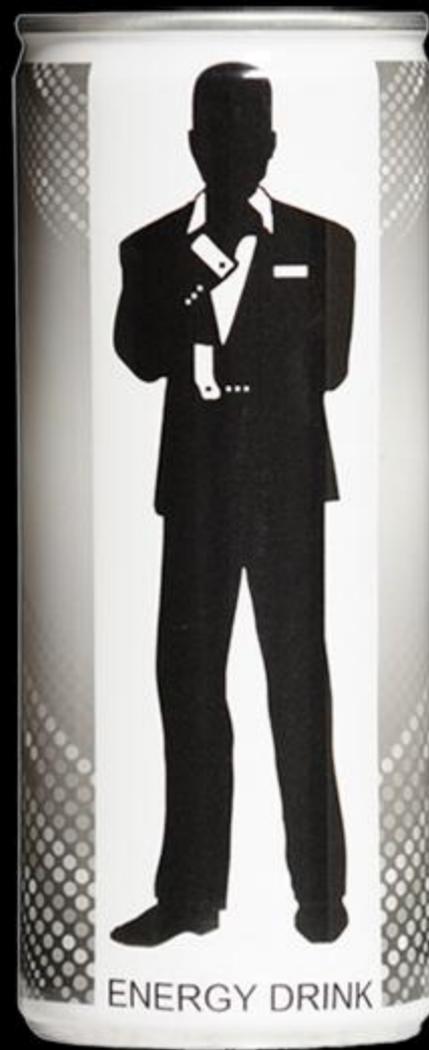
# On Popularity

# Social norms are usually:

- arbitrary
- temporary
- subtle
- non-verbal



(drink me)



**Popularity is a stupid,  
shallow game.**



**In 1995,  
I discovered that people  
sometimes tell me things  
they don't mean.**



**7% words used**

**38% tone of voice**

**55% nonverbal**



**Only a fraction of  
communication is  
based on words.**

**Most is non-verbal.**

“Bella,” my mom said to me — the last of a thousand times — before I got on the plane. “You don’t have to do this.”

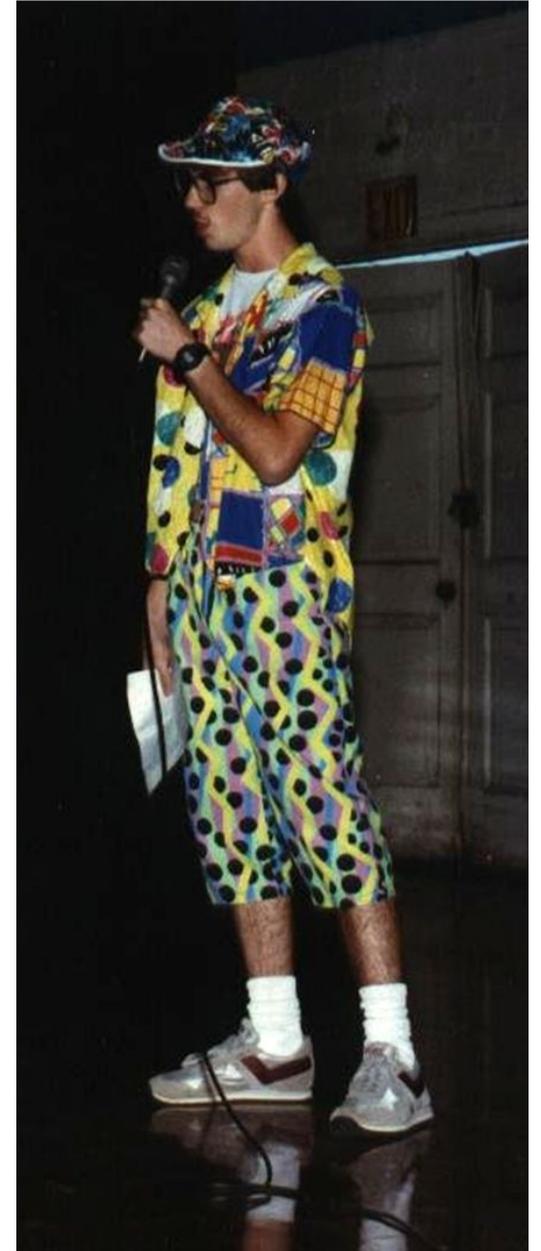
My mom looks like me, except with short hair and laugh lines. I felt a spasm of panic as I stared at her wide, childlike eyes. How could I leave my loving, erratic, harebrained mother to fend for herself? Of course she had Phil now, so the bills would probably get paid, there would be food in the refrigerator, gas in her car, and someone to call when she got lost, but still...

“I *want* to go,” I lied. I'd always been a bad liar, but I'd been saying this lie so frequently lately that it sounded almost convincing now.

**from Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*<sub>13</sub>**

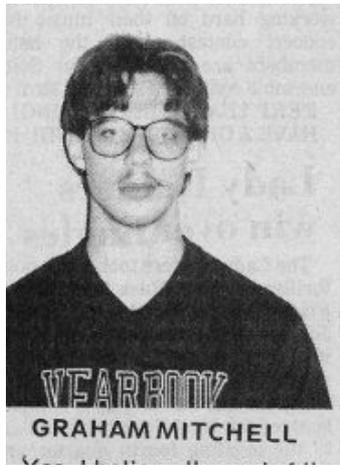






# Graham Mitchell

“former” weirdo

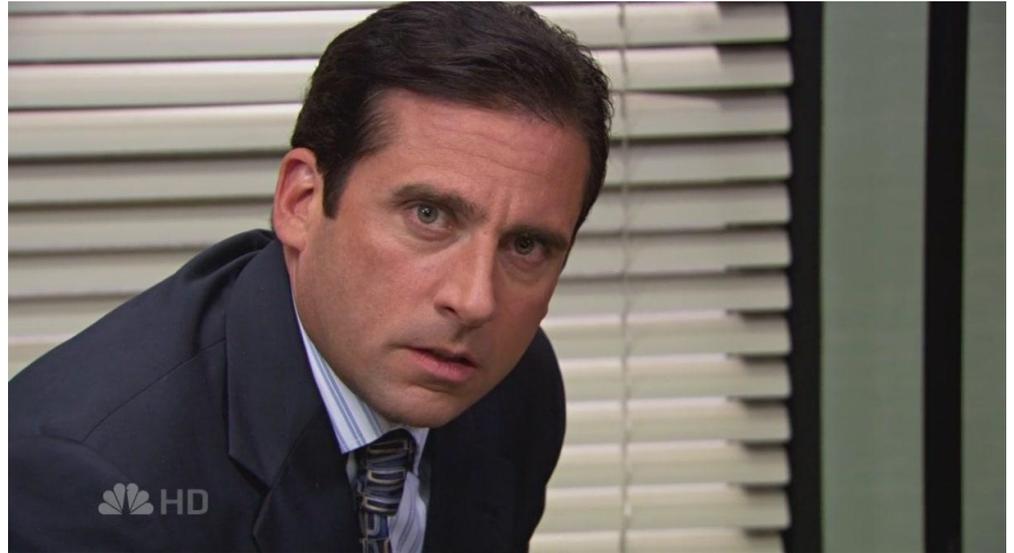




deaf ?



# Most people value feelings over truth.



**When you're accustomed  
to rejection, kindness  
feels like attraction.**

**It's okay to  
be direct.**



**It's okay to  
be direct.**



**Kind, but  
direct.**

# Summary

**1. Get as much practice as you can.**

**2. “One of today’s lucky 10,000”**

**3. Be direct but kind.**

**Don't** **Be** **Creepy**

**<http://dontbecreepy.com/>**