

(March 31st, 2020)

If you know someone who would benefit from being an Insider, feel free to forward this PDF to them so they can sign up [here](#).



Note: As an Insider, you can read all prior Insider newsletters [here](#).

Quick Tips for our Insider friends!

Hey Insiders,

This newsletter is coming to you from Redmond, where we're hunkered down for an extended period of social distancing. I hope you all stay safe and healthy!

Recordings of our live, online classes are available to buy, and we have a **special discount for new clients through April 30** – all the details are below!

SQLskills News

Online class recordings: you can buy recordings of all our online classes, for as little as US\$299 each. See [here](#) for all the details.

New client discount: we've dropped the price of our health check to US\$2,495 for all new clients between now and the end of April. Send us an email [here](#) for more details

Live, IN-PERSON classes: our Chicago classes have moved to October:

- IEPTO1: Performance Tuning and Optimization, Part 1 – October 19-23
- IE0: Accidental/Junior DBA – October 21-23
- IECAG: Clustering and Availability Groups – October 19-20
- IEReporting: Using and Administering SSRS/PowerBI – October 21-22
- IEPTO2: Performance Tuning and Optimization, Part 2 – October 26-30
- IEAzure: Azure SQL DB, Azure VMs, Azure Managed Instance – October 26-29

You can get all the details and registration information through the class schedule page [here](#).

SQLBits: Kimberly, Erin, and I will all hopefully be presenting at [SQLBits](#) in London in September. Our precons are:

- Paul: [Performance Troubleshooting using Waits and Latches](#) SOLD OUT!!
- Erin: [Performance Tuning with Query Store in SQL Server and Azure](#)
- Kimberly: [Statistics4Performance: Internals, Analysis, Problem Solving](#)

SQLintersection: The Spring show has been canceled and everything has moved to the Fall show in Las Vegas in December. More details here nearer the time.

Finally, even if you can't join us in person, I've put out a call for **remote user group sessions for 2020!** If you'd like one of us to present for your user group, check out my blog post [here](#).

Book Review

The latest book I've read is Adam Higginbotham's [Midnight in Chernobyl: The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Nuclear Disaster](#). I was almost 14 in 1986 when Chernobyl happened and remember the fears over how much radiation would reach Scotland (a bunch did, affecting farms). This book is really excellent! I've never read an involved account of what happened and this was a page turner. It's also hugely interesting as my Dad was a reactor control engineer on Royal Navy submarines for many years, and used to teach reactor control theory in the Royal Navy school at HMS Sultan in England. From Amazon: "Drawing on hundreds of hours of interviews conducted over the course of more than ten years, as well as letters, unpublished memoirs, and documents from recently-declassified archives, Adam Higginbotham has written a harrowing and compelling narrative which brings the disaster to life through the eyes of the men and women who witnessed it firsthand. The result is a masterful nonfiction thriller, and the definitive account of an event that changed history: a story that is more complex, more human, and more terrifying than the Soviet myth." Highly recommended!

The Curious Case of...

This section of the newsletter explains recent problems we've helped with on client systems; they might be something you're experiencing too.

Last week someone asked me how allocation unit IDs are calculated. I already had a post on that, so you can read through my explanation [here](#)...

Ponderings...

(From Erin this time – enjoy!)

Hi friends, I wanted to check in with everyone. Most importantly, I hope you are healthy. There's a lot going on right now and I don't want to talk directly about COVID-19. I want to talk about **you** and how you're doing.

Many of us have had to make adjustments, whether that's working from home, still working from home but now having other family members at home too, or figuring out what to do with our kids who now need to attend school online. In addition, there's the overall stress from the unknown and concern about our personal health as well as the health of our friends and family,

and in some cases, maybe even concern about our financial future. And then, on top of alllllll that, there's work.

In last week's Insider newsletter, Tim talked a lot about preparedness; today I'm asking you to think about what you're doing right now *for you*. Your mental and emotional health are **just** as important as your physical health right now, and both are critical to getting through this phase, no matter what role you play in your family or in your company. If you're not holding it together, you're not going to be able to help anyone let alone yourself.

If you're not doing so already, I gently recommend that you limit the amount of time you spend on social media reading about the coronavirus, the economy, politics, what's happening, etc. I'm not recommending that you bury your head in the sand; I hope that you are staying up on the latest in terms of science and facts, but it's very easy to get lost in the what-ifs and the unknown.

After you take that time to get updated on the current status of the world, perhaps you take some time to think about what this means for you. Maybe you even process how you're feeling and what you're thinking. If you do that, you must then do something to care for you. That can be as simple as a conversation with a friend or family member to connect, or a huge hug or hanging out with one of your kiddos or a pet. We have to acknowledge how we feel and how things affect us, but we cannot live in it.

Last week my family watched *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3224458/>), in which Tom Hanks portrays Mister Rogers. There was a line that has stuck with me, and I think is appropriate here. Mister Rogers and Lloyd (main character) are having a conversation about feelings, and Mister Rogers says, "Anything mentionable is manageable." So true. When you name the feeling or what you're thinking, then you can get a handle on it. Even if you can't solve or fix it, knowing what it is and acknowledging it prevents it from taking over.

Part of taking care of you also means a list of coping skills or activities. These are the things that create space in your mind, lift your spirit, create a connection, or make you laugh. For me, this includes watching movies, working out, puzzling, baking, doing yard work, and journaling. Make sure you have your own list, and every day aspire to do at least one of those tasks. My new routine includes sitting outside on my back porch every morning, with my morning beverage, listening to nature. It's only about 45 F where I live, so I bring my blanket and just sit and breathe. I tend to end my work day out there too. Fresh air can be extremely powerful.

We see you. We know this isn't easy, but we can get through this, and we will. One day at a time. If you need help, reach out. If you need to talk to someone, reach out. If you find it overwhelming, know that you're not alone. Please take care of you.

#TBT

(Turn Back Time...) Blog posts we've published since the previous newsletter plus some older resources we've referred to recently that you may find useful.

Producing a performance baseline and other monitoring is the theme this time, so here are some resources for you:

- Erin's Pluralsight course on [SQL Server: Benchmarking and Baselineing](#) that has 3.5 hours covering what metrics to capture and how to capture them.
- If you're still using Trace/Profiler, Erin's Pluralsight course on [SQL Server: Replacing Profiler with Extended Events](#) will be really beneficial.
- And a bunch of blog posts:
 - Erin: [SQL Server Baselines Series on SQLServerCentral.com](#)
 - Erin (from our Accidental DBA series): [\(Day 18 of 30\): Baselines](#)
 - Erin: [\(Day 19 of 30\): Tools for On-Going Monitoring](#)
 - Jon: [\(Day 21 of 30\): Essential PerfMon counters](#)
 - Paul: [Capturing IO latencies for a period of time](#)
 - Paul: [Capturing wait statistics for a period of time](#)

Here are some blog posts we've published since the last newsletter:

- Erin: [Using relog: Creating a smaller file](#)
- Erin: [How was a plan forced?](#)
- Erin: [An approach to index tuning – Part 1](#)

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

Video Demo

In this week's demo video, Jonathan takes a look at a new change in SQL Server 2019 Configuration Manager that allows you to import a certificate from a .PEM or .PFX file directly to the appropriate certificate store for SQL Server client transport encryption. This new change also validates that the certificate meets the requirements for transport encryption and provides warnings of potential issues.

The video is just under 5 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format [here](#).

The demo code is available [here](#).

Enjoy!

Upcoming SQLskills Events

Our 2020 classes have moved to October and are all open for registration!

You have multiple learning opportunities as every event has a different focus as well as different benefits – from deep-technical training in our Immersion Events to a more broad set of topics at SQLBits / SQLintersection! And, of course, one benefit you'll always get from in-person events is networking; we hope to meet/see you at an event soon!

To help your boss understand the importance of focused, technical training, we've also added a few items to help you justify spending your training dollars with us:

- [Letter to your boss explaining why SQLskills training is worthwhile](#)
- [So why do you want to come to our training? And the winners are...](#)
- [Community blog posts about our classes](#)
- [Immersion Event FAQ](#)

LIVE, IN-PERSON Immersion Events:

Chicago, IL, Fall 2020

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
 - October 19-23
- **IEReporting:** Immersion Event on Using and Administering SSRS and Power BI
 - October 21-22
- **IE0:** Immersion Event for the Junior/Accidental DBA
 - October 21-23
- **IECAG:** Immersion Event on Clustering and Availability Groups
 - October 19-20
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
 - October 26-30
- **IEAzure:** Immersion Event on Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, and Azure Managed Instance
 - October 26-29

Click [here](#) for the main Immersion Event Calendar page that allows you to drill through to each class for more details and registration links.

Summary

We hope you've enjoyed this issue - we really enjoy putting these together.

If there is anything else you're interested in, we'd love to hear from you - [drop us a line](#).

Thanks,
Paul and Kimberly

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