

(February 17th, 2021)

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!

This newsletter comes to you from Redmond, where we had a lovely weekend watching the snow fall while making Lego.

Last chance to register for our Live, Online IEAzure class that starts next Tuesday, February 23rd – see below for details!

Take care and stay safe out there!

SQLskills News

Live, ONLINE classes in 2021: our classes this year will be live-streamed online, as it's not feasible to run in-person classes for the foreseeable future. Just like our last deliveries, we'll be running them as a series of half-day sessions. Students loved the split training days, from the comfort of watching in sweatpants to the ability to still get some of their regular duties accomplished. We had rave reviews for the format. And, all attendees of a live class receive lifetime streaming access to the recording of the entire class – something we'd never done before this year!

Our upcoming live, online classes for spring 2021 are as follows:

- **IEAzure:** Immersion Event on Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, and Azure Managed Instance
 - Six half-days: February 23-24-25 and March 2-3-4, 2021
- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
 - Ten half-days: March 15-16-17-18-19 and March 22-23-24-25-26, 2021
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
 - Ten half-days: April 12-13-14-15-16 and April 19-20-21-22-23, 2021
- **IEQS:** Immersion Event on Solving Common Performance Problems with Query Store
 - Three half-days: May 4-5-6, 2021
- **IEVLT:** Immersion Event on Very Large Tables: Optimizing Performance and Availability through Partitioning
 - Four half-days: May 17-18-19-20, 2021

These classes are available for registration individually or as part of a discounted bundle. You can get all the details on our [training options page](#) or just go directly to our [new shop](#). However, before you buy, be sure to review all of the new options and discounts; we're very excited to offer our new Blackbelt Badge and Bundles!

Streaming recordings of all classes: we've built a new system that allows you to buy streaming access to all our 2019 and 2020 class recordings. All classes are available for a complete year of access and a few heavily discounted courses for 90 days of access, plus you can purchase them individually or as part of a discounted bundle. You can get all the details in our [training options page](#) or just go directly to our [new shop](#).

Kandio job candidate assessments: we've teamed up with Kandio to produce technical assessments to help companies screen candidates for job recruitment. If you want to make sure someone really knows what they say they know, check out the assessments [here](#).

Book Review

Well, I have been reading more, but haven't finished another book since the last newsletter, so here's one from way back in 2009: Michael Cox's [The Meaning of Night: A Confession](#). Superlative story telling! I've been reading this (long) one for a few months on and off. It's a compelling tale of a man discovering his true origins and trying to win back what is his, with twists and turns along the way - written as a confession from the point of view of the man himself. Dark and brooding, mixed in with life in England in the 1850's. 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 sent me an email asking for some advice on storing and retaining backups, as they'd recently suffered a SAN failure where the backup were stored with the database, and lost several weeks of work. I already had a post about this, and you can read about it [here](#)...

Ponderings...

I want to start out this Ponderings by sincerely thanking everyone who emailed me or commented about depression, after the last newsletter. It definitely seems that there's a lot of it about, from situational depression (like I think I have – doctor video appointment this afternoon!) caused by the traumatic last 12 months, or long-term depression that some of you have told me about, including close friends about which I had no idea. All the supportive messages are much appreciated and I think I'm slowly on the mend.

One thing that stood out for me was the number of people who thanked me for having the courage or bravery to speak out publicly about my feelings. I really had no idea that there was so

much stigma attached to an admission of depression in wider society. I honestly didn't think I was being brave, I just thought it would be helpful for others in the community to hear about a problem that they might be suffering from too, possibly without realizing it. I'm a pretty open person, and used to sharing thoughts and feelings here and places like Twitter and Facebook, but now I understand the stigma, and I understand the comments.

My Mentoring Class of 2020 has been patiently waiting for replies in email threads for a while, as I've been dealing with things this year, but I've already seen some great examples of courage from them, which might show some of you that it's possible to do what you've been scared or concerned about doing.

Public speaking: several people want to start speaking at user groups but are scared of public speaking. I used to be too, and I still am when it comes to speaking about anything I'm not *used* to talking about, or random questions in a live interview. I didn't really start speaking in public a lot until TechEd 2006 in Boston (where I met Kimberly!), and I agonized about it for weeks, and spent a lot of time training myself to not say err or um (write a long technical paragraph, learn it by heart, and then practice reciting it, starting over each time you say err or um – took me about a week on my hour-long commute to Microsoft). Some people say the most frightening thing for them is public speaking, as you're laid bare for all to see. The more you do it, the easier it becomes, but I still get butterflies before any public speaking. And I say booooo to anyone who derides a new speaker for making mistakes.

Changing jobs: I think 8 people from my Class of 2015 ended up changing jobs, and it looks like several of the Class of 2020 will as well. Sometimes it's a no-brainer because the current job is a dead-end, or the working conditions or benefits are bad, or the new job has much more money/benefits/responsibility/something else. Sometimes it can be a leap of faith, so to speak, because you're not sure whether it's the right move or you'll succeed in your new role. I had that dilemma in 2007 when deciding to leave a very successful career at Microsoft to join Kimberly at SQLskills, doing training and consulting, that I'd never done before, *especially* considering that I was a new public speaker. It turns out it was the best move I could have made, and I'm glad I had the courage to leave Microsoft.

And there are plenty more examples of things that require courage:

- Going for a promotion
- Going for an interview
- Quitting a job without a new one lined up
- Standing your ground in a technical argument
- 'Fessing up' to a professional mistake
- Making an HR complaint about inappropriate behavior or language
- Delivering honest feedback to a friend/coworker/subordinate/manager
- Receiving honest feedback from a friend/coworker/subordinate/manager

- Saying ‘no’ when you’re already over-worked

And there are so many more, both at work and in non-work life.

My message: plenty of things in life take courage. We all have courage within us to confront difficult situations. Sometimes it may be buried deep and take some coaxing out (like overcoming my dread of public speaking). Don’t be afraid to find your courage!

#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.

The theme for the #TBT section this time is replication, still a hugely relevant and useful technology. Here are some resources for you:

- Joe’s Pluralsight course on [SQL Server: Transactional Replication Fundamentals](#) that has 2 hours explaining what replication is, how to set it up, how to monitor and troubleshoot it, and how to combine it with other HA technologies
- Whitepaper on [SQL Server Replication: Providing High-Availability Using Database Mirroring](#) that I wrote for Microsoft back in 2008, but is still completely relevant today and can be extrapolated to working with Availability Groups too.
- Old whitepaper on [Proven SQL Server Architectures for High Availability and Disaster Recovery](#) that I wrote for Microsoft in 2010, and isn’t listed on their site any more, but has an interesting set of architectures, including one using peer-to-peer replication.
- And a bunch of blog posts:
 - [In defense of transactional replication as an HA technology](#)
 - [REPLICATION preventing log reuse but no replication configured](#)
 - [The Transactional Replication Multiplier Effect](#)
 - [When is the Publication Access List required?](#)
 - [Transactional Replication Use Cases](#)

And check out the [Repltalk blog](#) that’s been a fount of replication knowledge since 2010.

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

Video Demo

Troubleshooting plan changes can be tricky, particularly when it’s not due to parameter issues, but changes in statistics. In this demo Erin walks through a method for finding more information about statistics in the plan, and another option for testing different statistics.

The video is just over 12 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format [here](#).

The demo code is [here](#).

Enjoy!

Upcoming SQLskills Events

Our 2021 classes will be entirely online in the spring and they're open for registration!

With our new streaming system, you can now choose to attend a live, online event or purchase a recording to watch at your leisure, either individually or as part of a bundle. And all attendees of live events get lifetime access to the class recordings too!

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](#)
- [Community blog posts about our classes](#)
- [Immersion Event FAQ](#)

LIVE, Online Immersion Events:

Spring 2021

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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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