

(March 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!

Happy St Patrick's day! I'm 1/8 Irish (one of my grandmothers was half Irish and half French) so I'll be cracking open a can of Guinness this evening to celebrate. And this newsletter comes to you from Redmond, where Kimberly and I are teaching our flagship IEPTO1 class online this week and next!

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 remaining live, online classes for spring 2021 are as follows:

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
 - Currently running...
- **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 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

The latest book I've read is Hilary Mantel's [Bring Up the Bodies](#). This brought my total year to four, equaling last year's paltry total! I first read this back in 2012 but I'm about to start the final novel in the Wolf Hall trilogy (this is #2) so wanted to get back into the story. This book covers the nine months in 1535-6 leading up to the execution of Anne Boleyn, all through the eyes and thoughts of Thomas Cromwell (chief minister to Henry VIII, who the trilogy is about). It's an excellent page-turner, masterly written like Mantel's other historical novels. Highly recommended for any fans of historical fiction, but start with [Wolf Hall](#) first.

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.

I was asked last week where SQL Server stores default values for columns that have non-NULL defaults. You can read about the answer in my blog post [here](#)...

Ponderings...

(From Erin this time – enjoy!)

Two podcasts I listen to regularly are [Dare to Lead and Unlocking Us](#) from Brené Brown. She is a research professor (PhD) at the University of Houston, has written [several books](#) (I recommend them all), and her Ted Talk on the [power of vulnerability](#) has over 52 million views. While she studies topics that seem intangible to me (courage, shame, empathy), she has a line that I love, “Maybe stories are just data with a soul.” Many of you know that I love data, and so I appreciate that Brené endeavors to find data in spaces that seem so tricky – like emotion.

My love of Brené is not today's topic. Rather, I want to focus on something I heard in her most recent [Dare to Lead podcast](#), which was a two-parter with Dr. Susan David, who is also a researcher of emotions. All content from Brené has a wealth of practical insight and wisdom for daily life, but a lot of what she talks about is also applicable in the work environment (her book,

Dare to Lead, is based on her research and targeted to those who want to be leaders). One of the most profound moments during the podcast with Susan Davis occurred during the second part when they were talking about leadership and how one of the most important things you can do as a leader, and as a parent, is to make sure that people feel seen. To say to them, “I see you.”

I believe these three words are incredibly powerful, not just for leaders and parents, but for everyone. For all of us. Particularly as we continue to move through and eventually beyond this pandemic. Covid has wreaked havoc on not just a social and economic scale; it has upended our individual and collective emotional and mental well-being. The end of this pandemic will likely unveil a new epidemic as it relates to mental health, which is a separate discussion entirely. My bigger point is whether you are a leader – a business owner, CEO, or managers – or whether you are an employee, colleague, parent or friend – you have the ability to help just by saying “I see you.” This is an essential act that people need in order to begin to process emotions.

When you interact with another, regardless of whether they are upset and struggling to hold it together, are frustrated because they do not know how to solve a technical problem or do not understand how something works, or whether they’re stuck trying to figure out how to word a difficult email...they don’t necessarily need you to *fix it*. They just need to be **heard**. As Brené says, “I see you; I see the struggle. I get it. You’re not alone.” Maybe you do know the answer and can solve the problem, but before you propose the solution, acknowledge the challenge they are facing. Tell them you see them *and* their struggle. And then offer to help.

#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](#)

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

Video Demo

The video this time is taken from my Pluralsight course [SQL Server: Understanding and Performing Backups](#). In the demo I explain why a full backup sometimes needs to include extra transaction log if there's an active transaction at the time the full backup performs its initial checkpoint operation.

The video is 5.5 minutes long and you can get it in MP4 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

- **IEAzure:** Immersion Event on Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, and Azure Managed Instance
 - Completed
- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
 - Currently running...
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
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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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