Building a Community: The Story of Learn Teach Code

Liz Krane
@LearningNerd
“I wouldn't want to belong to any club that would have me as a member.”

— Groucho Marx
You're going to make some cats very happy one day.
INTROVERTS

UNITE SEPARATELY IN YOUR OWN HOMES
“I am a great believer in luck. The harder I work, the more of it I seem to have.”

— Coleman Cox, “Listen to This” (1922)
Just start.
Then learn by doing.
How do communities create value?
CAN'T WE ALL JUST SIT AROUND THE FIRE AND KUMBAYA??
Social capital: the value of connections among individuals
“The single most common finding from a half century’s research ... is that happiness is best predicted by the breadth and depth of one’s social connections.”

— *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam, p.332
“...people who are socially disconnected are between two and five times more likely to die from all causes, compared with matched individuals who have close ties with family, friends, and the community.”

— *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam, p.327
“I got my very first internship, and later my very first developer job, through this group when I met someone who needed an intern for his startup company. That was also the time I was dying to get real-world experience from the industry, so you could say this group is a godsend. Keep learning, collaborating, and coding with other people, and you never know who or what will come across your path to success. Rock on, Learn to Code LA!”


“I credit this meetup with really getting me on the path to Code”

— Pete on Jan 28, 2016.
August 2014

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10
2:00 PM SocialLA Anxiety Managers
Yes New Members: Meet and Greet!

MONDAY, AUGUST 11
7:00 PM Alhambra and Pasadena Spanish Conversation Group
Yes Monday Spanish Conversation Night at Honey Badger Cafe in Alhambra
5 Spanish Speakers went

TUESDAY, AUGUST 12
7:00 PM Sierra Club Griffith Park Section: Evening Hikes and More!
Yes Sierra Club Griffith Park Tuesday Evening Hike

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14
8:00 PM Introverts in LA
Yes Friday Meetup

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17
5:00 PM Westside Geeks & Nerds
Yes WGN Pizza Social!

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19
7:00 PM Sierra Club Griffith Park Section: Evening Hikes and More!
Yes Sierra Club Griffith Park Tuesday Evening Hike
• Introverts in LA
• Westside Geeks & Nerds
• Socia(LA)nxiety Managers
• Quantified Self Los Angeles
• Los Angeles redditors
• Los Angeles Free Concerts
• The Greater L.A. Skeptics Meetup Group
• DTLA Rendezvous
• Draw Anything! LA
• Women Who Code LA
• Heart Centered Toastmasters
• Alhambra and Pasadena Spanish Conversation Group
• Sierra Club Griffith Park Section: Evening Hikes and More!
• Writers With Drinks LA
• L.A. Foodies
• Los Angeles Makerspace
• Down But Not Out LA "dbnoLA"
• Girl Develop It Los Angeles
• LAdynerds
• The Santa Monica Salsa Meetup Group - Salsa Familia!
• Los Angeles Bitcoin
Wow, you suck at math.

Wow, girls suck at math.
Just start.
Then learn by doing.
Whether you’re a total beginner or a coding ninja/guru/Jedi Master, we’re here to learn about programming and computer science in a fun, informal environment -- and also to provide moral support to fight the fears and frustrations that come with learning a new skill or transitioning to a new career. Here’s what we’ll do at Learn to Code LA:

- **Learn programming fundamentals** through a variety of languages and platforms together in small groups or pair programming -- everything from short tutorials to day-long hackathons/learnathons!

- **Co-working and casual learning** -- work on your own projects independently while enjoying the company of like-minded people.

- **Discussion groups**, especially for language-agnostic topics. (Maybe even a book club?)

- **Project show-and-tell** -- get feedback, generate ideas, or just show off your mad skillz!

- And other random, fun activities like geeky movie nights and joint events with other meetups!
Community Building Stage 1: Making friends
Recipe for success:

1) Desperation
Recipe for success:

1) Desperation
2) Consistency
Ask for help.
Offer to help.
Meet the other organizers!
Meet the other organizers!
Community Building Stage 2: Connect your connections
Community Building Stage 2:
Connect your connections
Generalized reciprocity:

“I’ll do this for you without expecting anything specific back from you, in the confident expectation that someone else will do something for me down the road.”

— *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam, p. 21
“A society characterized by generalized reciprocity is more efficient than a distrustful society, for the same reason that money is more efficient than barter.”
“If we don’t have to balance every exchange instantly, we can get a lot more accomplished. Trustworthiness lubricates social life.”

— Bowling Alone by Robert Putnam
Community Building Stage 3: Managing Scale
Intimacy doesn’t scale.

— Clay Shirky
Metcalfe’s Law

1 connection

10 connections

66 connections
Collective dynamics of 'small-world' networks

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Networks of coupled dynamical systems have been used to model biological oscillators\textsuperscript{1, 2, 3, 4}, Josephson junction arrays\textsuperscript{5, 6}, excitable media\textsuperscript{7}, neural networks\textsuperscript{8, 9, 10}, spatial games\textsuperscript{11}, genetic control networks\textsuperscript{12} and many other self-...
Figure 9-1: Two ways of connecting ten people. The left-hand network shows everyone connected to everyone else, which quickly becomes too dense to scale to even moderate numbers of people. The right-hand network keeps people connected but maintains a sparser network.
JavaScript

Here Comes Everybody by Clay Shirky
Here Comes Everybody by Clay Shirky
What’s next?
What’s next?
I have no clue.
Questions?
Stories?

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