An aerial photograph of a rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with a clear blue sky. The foreground shows the wing and tail section of an airplane, suggesting a high-altitude flight. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

# Listening to the Needs of Your Global Open Source Community

SCALE15x

Elizabeth K. Joseph  
@pleia2


# Elizabeth K. Joseph

- Been organizing Open Source communities since 2002
- Spent 6 years on the Ubuntu Community Council
- Spent 4 years on the OpenStack Infrastructure Team
- Joined Mesosphere as a DC/OS Developer Advocate in 2017

A photograph of an airplane wing in flight, viewed from the passenger's perspective. The wing is white and extends from the right side of the frame towards the center. Below the wing, a vast, rugged mountain range is visible, with peaks and valleys covered in snow or light-colored rock. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The text "8 Tips!" is overlaid on the image in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# 8 Tips!

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

An aerial photograph of a vast, rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with snow-capped peaks and deep valleys. In the foreground, the white wing and tail section of an airplane are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

Our starting point:  
My open source project is no longer a cabal  
(or, I don't want it to be)

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

# Tip 1

Provide a simple way for contributors to contact project owners

# Lots of options

- Email! Mailing list, or list of contacts
- Bug/ticketing system
- Chat channel (but be sensitive to time zones)
- Forum

# Tip 2

Acknowledge every piece of feedback

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

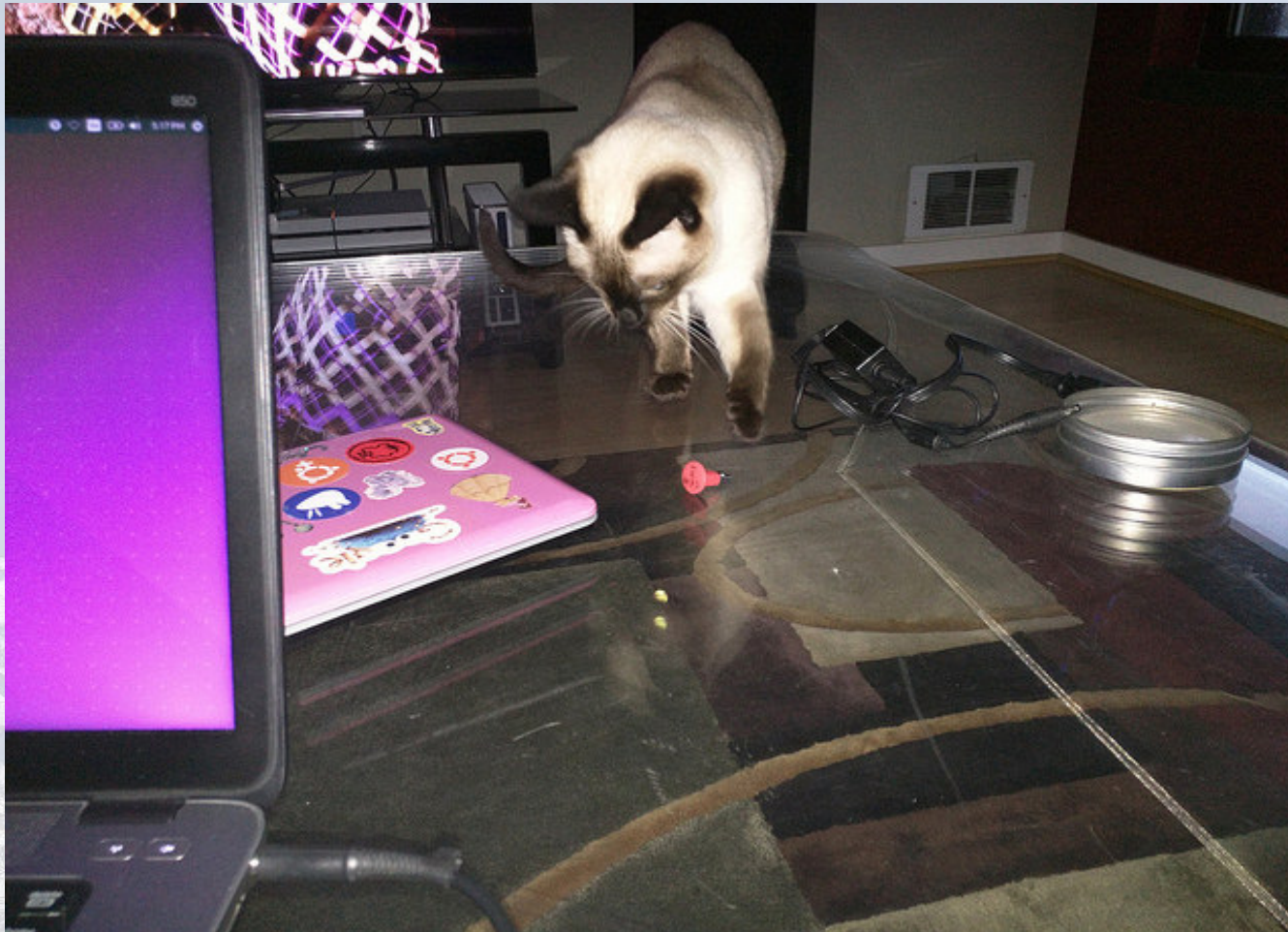
Even if you don't like the feedback,  
and want to hide



Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2



Even if you have a *Very Good Reason*  
for the way you're doing things



Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

Even if it makes you feel  
unappreciated



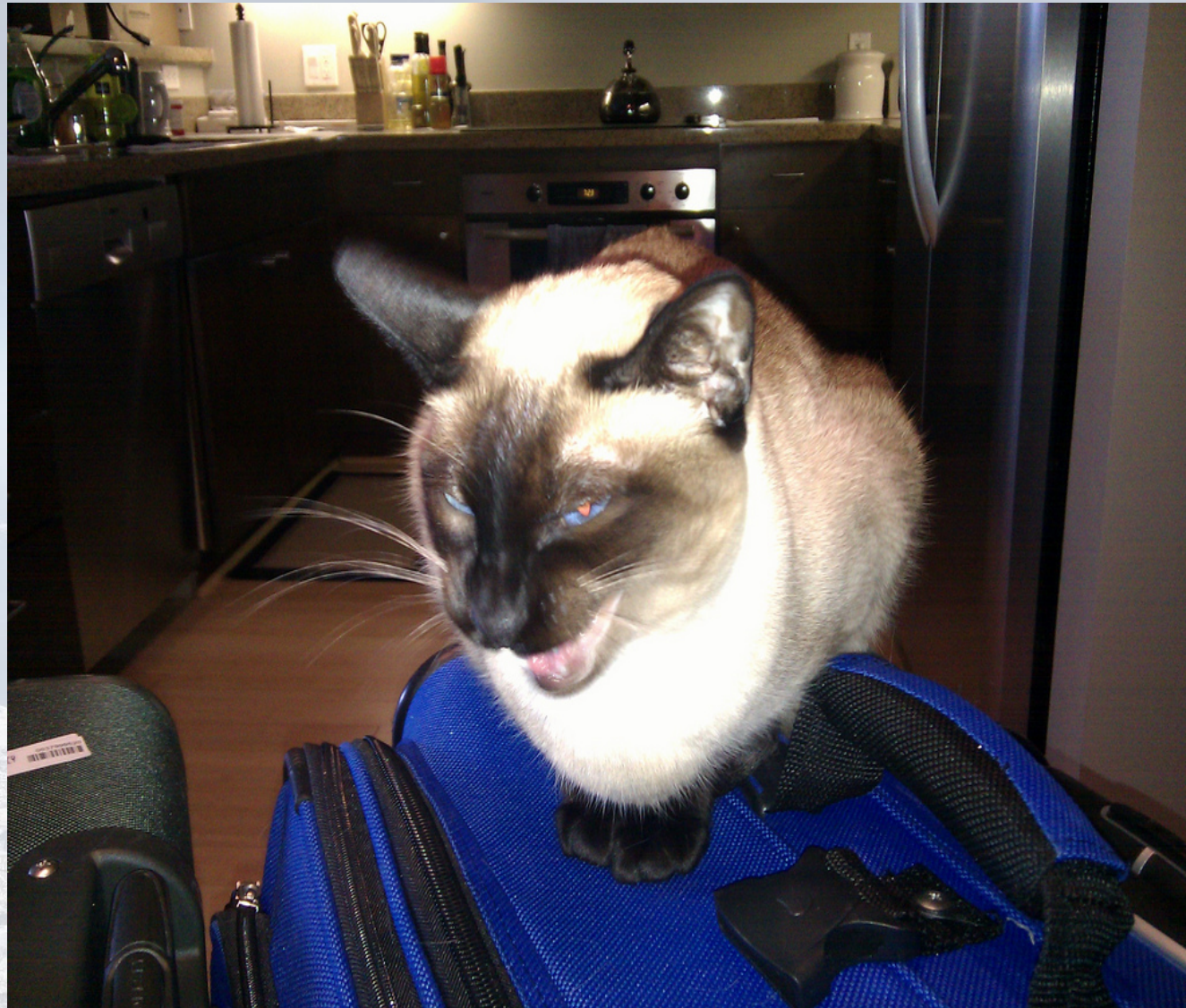
Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

# An actual exchange


“I’m curious as to why the infra team keeps ignoring the issue we are trying to bring to you attention for past three days?”

“well, the last two days were the weekend”

“That sounds like a reply I would get from IT from the 1990s”



Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

A photograph taken from an airplane window, showing the wing and tail section of the aircraft in the foreground. The background features a vast, mountainous landscape with rugged terrain and deep valleys, all under a clear, light blue sky. The text "And yet..." is overlaid on the image.

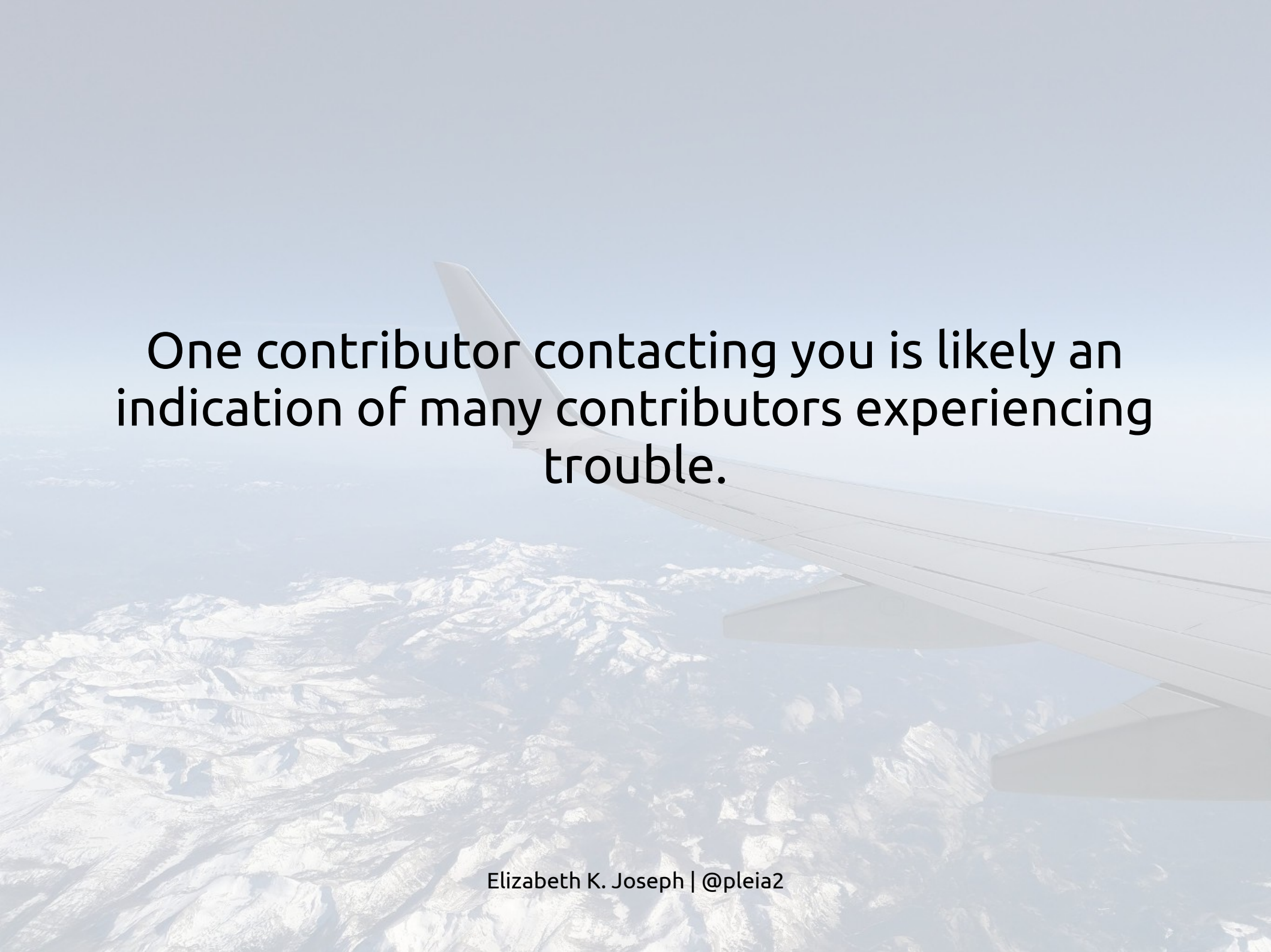
And yet...

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

A view from an airplane window showing a mountain range below and the wing of the plane on the right.

Don't let it fall into an unresponsive black hole.

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2


An aerial photograph of a vast, rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with snow-capped peaks and deep valleys. In the foreground, the white wing and tail section of an airplane are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

One contributor contacting you is likely an indication of many contributors experiencing trouble.

# Tip 3

Stay calm



A view from an airplane window showing a mountain range below and the wing of the plane in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue. The text is centered over the image.

It's not personal.  
They're likely very frustrated.

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

*Acting out of the goodness of your heart, or something*




Thanklessly  
Maintaining  
Open Source  
Software

ORLY?

*@ThePracticalDev*

Source: <https://twitter.com/ThePracticalDev/status/765215047580807168>

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

An aerial photograph taken from an airplane window, showing a vast, rugged mountain range with deep valleys and sharp peaks. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The wing of the airplane is visible on the right side of the frame, extending from the foreground towards the horizon.

In the end, the project will benefit!

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

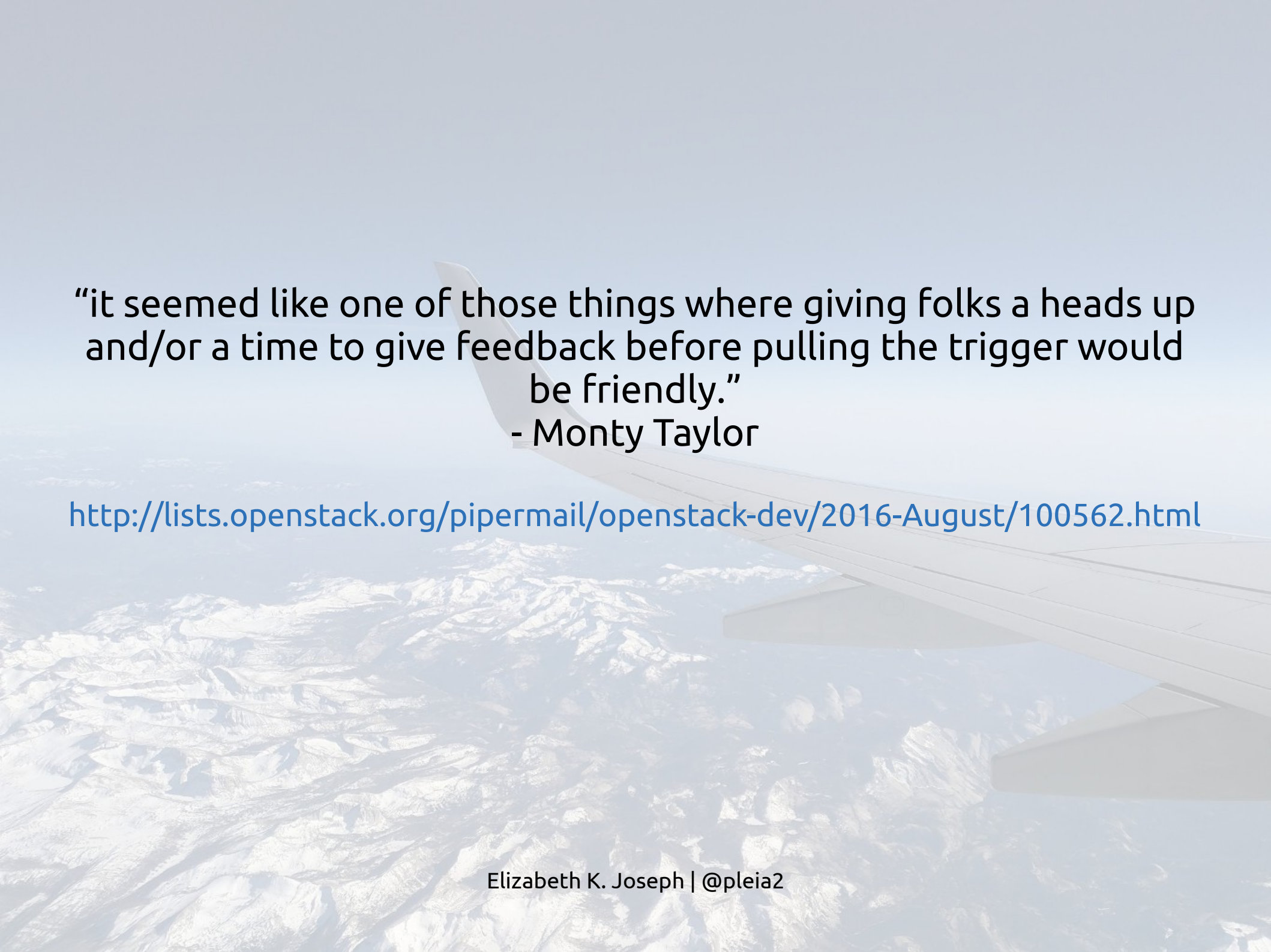
# Tip 4

Openly communicate potential changes and ask for feedback

An aerial photograph of a vast, rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with snow-capped peaks and deep valleys. In the foreground, the white wing and tail of an airplane are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

Mailing list thread  
Poll of your community  
Meeting topic

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

An aerial photograph of a vast, rugged mountain range with deep valleys and sharp peaks. In the foreground, the white wing and tail of an airplane are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

“it seemed like one of those things where giving folks a heads up  
and/or a time to give feedback before pulling the trigger would  
be friendly.”  
- Monty Taylor

<http://lists.openstack.org/pipermail/openstack-dev/2016-August/100562.html>

# Tip 5

Check in with teams

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

## Our current schedule:

- 2016-07-21 - Desktop 17:00UTC - Developer Membership Board 17:30UTC
- 2016-08-04 - Ubuntu GNOME 17:00UTC - Snappy Team 17:30UTC
- 2016-08-18 - Xubuntu Team 17:00UTC - Ubuntu Studio Team 17:30UTC
- 2016-09-01 - Ubuntu Technical Board 17:00UTC - LoCo Council 17:30UTC
- 2016-09-15 - Doc Team 17:00UTC - QA Team 17:30UTC
- 2016-10-06 - IRC Council 17:00UTC - Canonical Community Team 17:30UTC
- 2016-10-20 - Kubuntu Council 17:00UTC - Membership Board 17:30UTC
- 2016-11-03 - Ubuntu Mate 17:00UTC - Lubuntu 17:30UTC
- 2016-11-17 - Ubuntu Core/Phone/Desktop 17:00UTC - Server/Cloud team 17:30 UTC
- 2016-12-01 - Ubuntu Governance 17:00 UTC
- 2026-12-15 - Forums Council 17:00UTC - Core Apps/Phone 17:30UTC
- 2017-01-05 - QA Team 17:00UTC - Translations Team 17:30 UTC

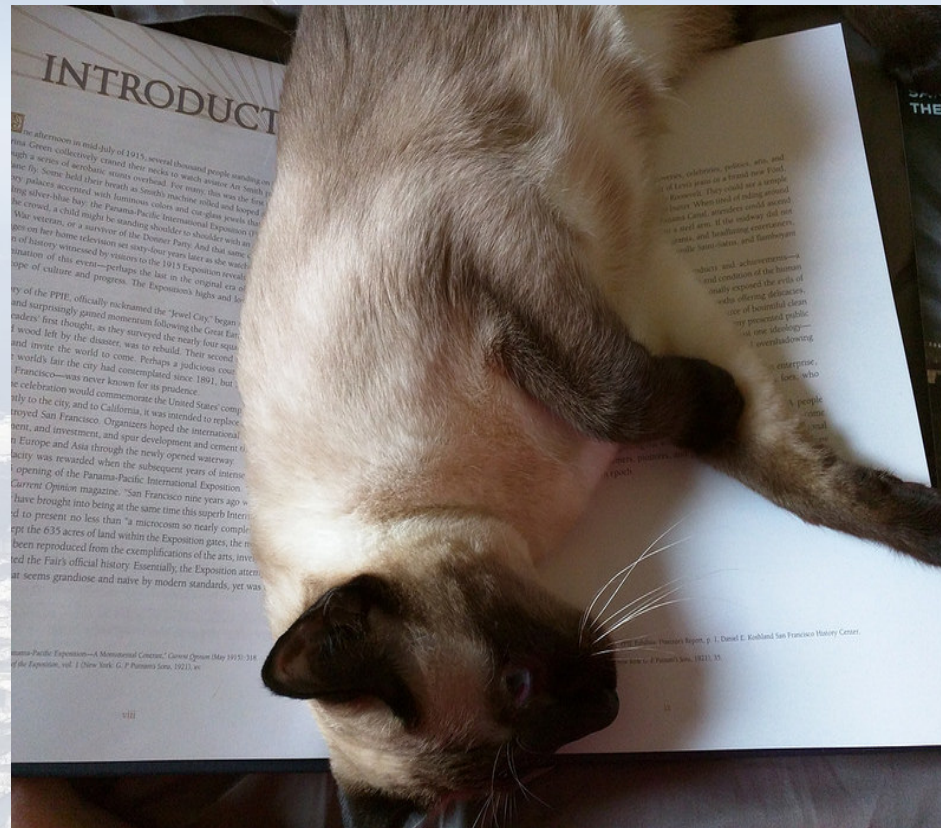


# Check In Questions

- Do you have any problems with tooling?
- Do you have any problems with processes?
- Do you have the resources you need?
- If one thing could make your life much easier, what would it be?
- What is working well?

# Tip 6

## Document your processes



Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

...but don't beat people with the  
documentation



# Tip 7

Read between the lines

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

An aerial photograph of a rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with a white airplane wing visible in the lower right foreground. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

You have a way for people to communicate with you

You acknowledge feedback

You document things

And still...

# “By the way...”

> Note that this will only be true if the change's parent commit in  
> Gerrit was the branch tip at the time it landed. Otherwise (and  
> quite frequently in fact) you will need to identify the SHA of the  
> merge commit which was created at the time it merged and use that  
> instead to find the post job.

Without wanting to diverge too much from the topic at hand, I believe this is why those of us who only occasionally want to look at post job output usually just give up! Keeping this in your head for the once every few months it's needed is hard ;)

# Workaround tool

I could never remember the formula for constructing the URL either, so I built this to help me: <https://pypi.python.org/pypi/git-os-job>

# Workaround DIY

An aerial photograph of a rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with a clear blue sky. In the foreground, the white wing and tail of an airplane are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. The mountains below are covered in snow and have a complex, layered appearance.

“I’ve been downloading several gigs of logs to do local analysis.”


Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2



# Tip 8

Stick to your principles

...the “customer” is not always right ;)

An aerial photograph of a rugged mountain range, likely the Himalayas, viewed from a high altitude. The terrain is characterized by steep, rocky slopes and deep valleys. In the foreground, the white wing and tail section of an airplane are visible, extending from the right side of the frame towards the center. The sky is a clear, pale blue, and the overall scene is captured in a slightly hazy, high-angle perspective.

But first you have to have some principles

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

# Developing principles

Have clear software choices

Do you only use open source?

Other tooling restraints?

Cost considerations?

Provide clear support instructions to set boundaries

We're able to support you in these ways...

Define what you're willing to compromise on

Threshold in which you'll consider a rework

Trust your high-level view

You know a lot about the project, use that

# Software transition

An aerial photograph of a mountain range, likely the Alps, seen from the perspective of someone sitting in an airplane. The wing and tail of the plane are visible in the foreground, and the sky is a clear, pale blue. The mountains below are rugged and covered in snow, with deep valleys and ridges.

**Is the Transifex open source project dead?**

Elizabeth K. Joseph | @pleia2

# In Conclusion

- Provide a simple way for contributors to contact project owners
- Acknowledge every piece of feedback
- Stay calm
- Communicate potential changes and ask for feedback
- Check in with teams
- Document your processes
- Read between the lines
- Stick to your principles

# Questions?

[lyz@princessleia.com](mailto:lyz@princessleia.com)

Elizabeth K. Joseph | [@pleia2](#)