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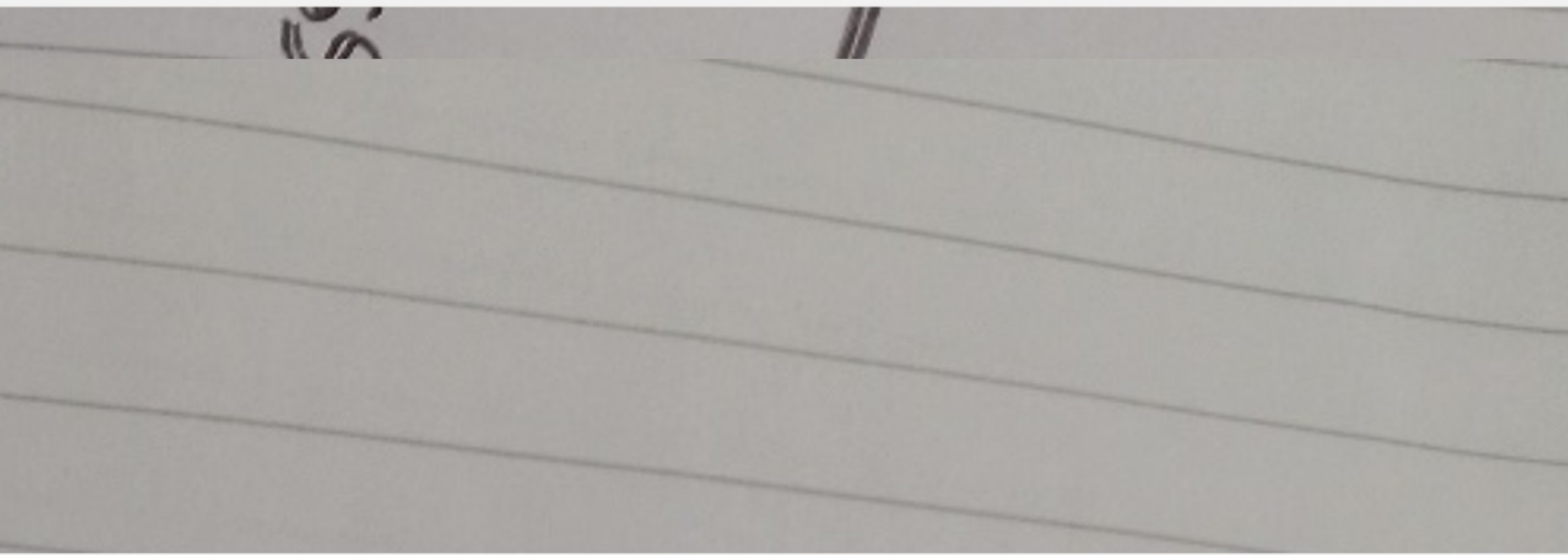
## Agile retrospectives are underrated

The retrospective (retro) is my favourite of the SCRUM meetings. Why? A good retro enables you to discover everything you need to improve. One of the key principles of agile is to inspect and adapt, i.e. to change something.

Sticking with the mantra *fail, but fail fast*, a retro should be held at the end of every iteration so you can learn each step of the way. And trust me, it really works. Giving people space to air their views helps the team to avoid common pitfalls, promotes self-organisation and gives a sense of empowerment and accountability to every team member.

### Group therapy

User Experience (UX) Designer, Astrid Paris summed it up well in her post [Agile Retrospectives as Group Therapy](#). Talking about what has happened might be stressful or uncomfortable, but you can support one another as a team and help one another to find ‘insight and specific strategies to improve the situation.’ In this way, Astrid says that a retro can be a lot like relationship therapy.



Retros are an essential and valuable part of any agile project.

### Structure

When I was just learning how to facilitate retro, my main concern was about the flow of the meetings. I needed to add some structure to ensure that I could hold the room (and not just by my childish wit). I opted for a retro starfish board to give a visual presence in the room.

The five categories help team members to express what’s working and what isn’t. Be honest but non-accusatory – a delicate balance! – and remember this is your chance to be the first to talk about your own practice.

Talking about your own practice will help the team to understand what your working needs, and you will be surprised how quickly your team pulls together to support you with solutions – both in your retro and afterwards, in your next project.

With everyone working together, problems quickly become solutions. And the more you talk... the more others will come forward with their own self-reflection, team insight and new ideas.



Retros are a great time to reflect on the things you did well.

### Positive outcomes

Just as a retro is important for growth, it is equally important to acknowledge what your team excelled at.

Retros are a great time to reflect on the things you did well. We often forget to give one another well-earned praise (especially if we are managers), so this is the time to clap each other on the back and walk out with a warm fuzzy feeling about how amazing you all are.

### Action!

Retros are an essential and valuable part of any agile project. However, your retro will be much *less* valuable, if actions and strategies aren’t put in place for the future. If actions don’t get implemented, things don’t improve, and ultimately this can lead to ‘retro fatigue’ where teams are unwilling to participate in the retro anymore, because ‘What’s the point anyway? Nothing ever changes!’

Set actionable improvement measures, so your teams can continue to learn and become even more A-MAZ-ING.

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