

# What's the future for meaningful work?

Professor Katie Bailey FAcSS

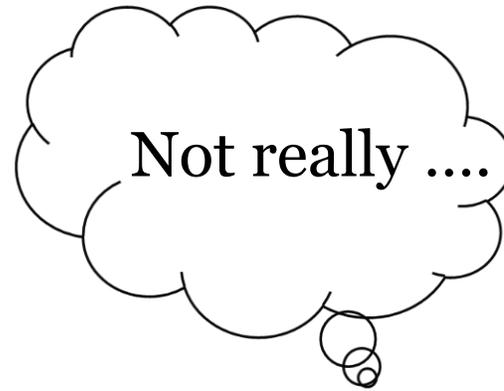
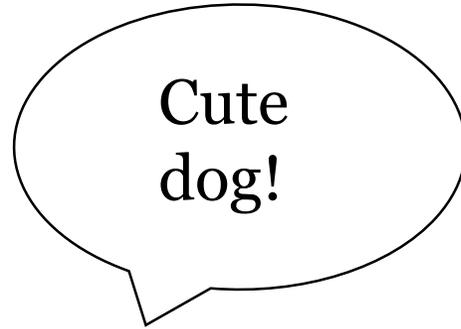


# What is meaningful work?

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- It makes a contribution
- It has a purpose
- It stretches and challenges us
- We care about it

# Meaningful work is ...



A person is working in a dimly lit room. They are using a laptop on the left and a tablet on the right with a stylus. A lamp is visible in the background, casting a warm glow. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Meaningful work isn't ....

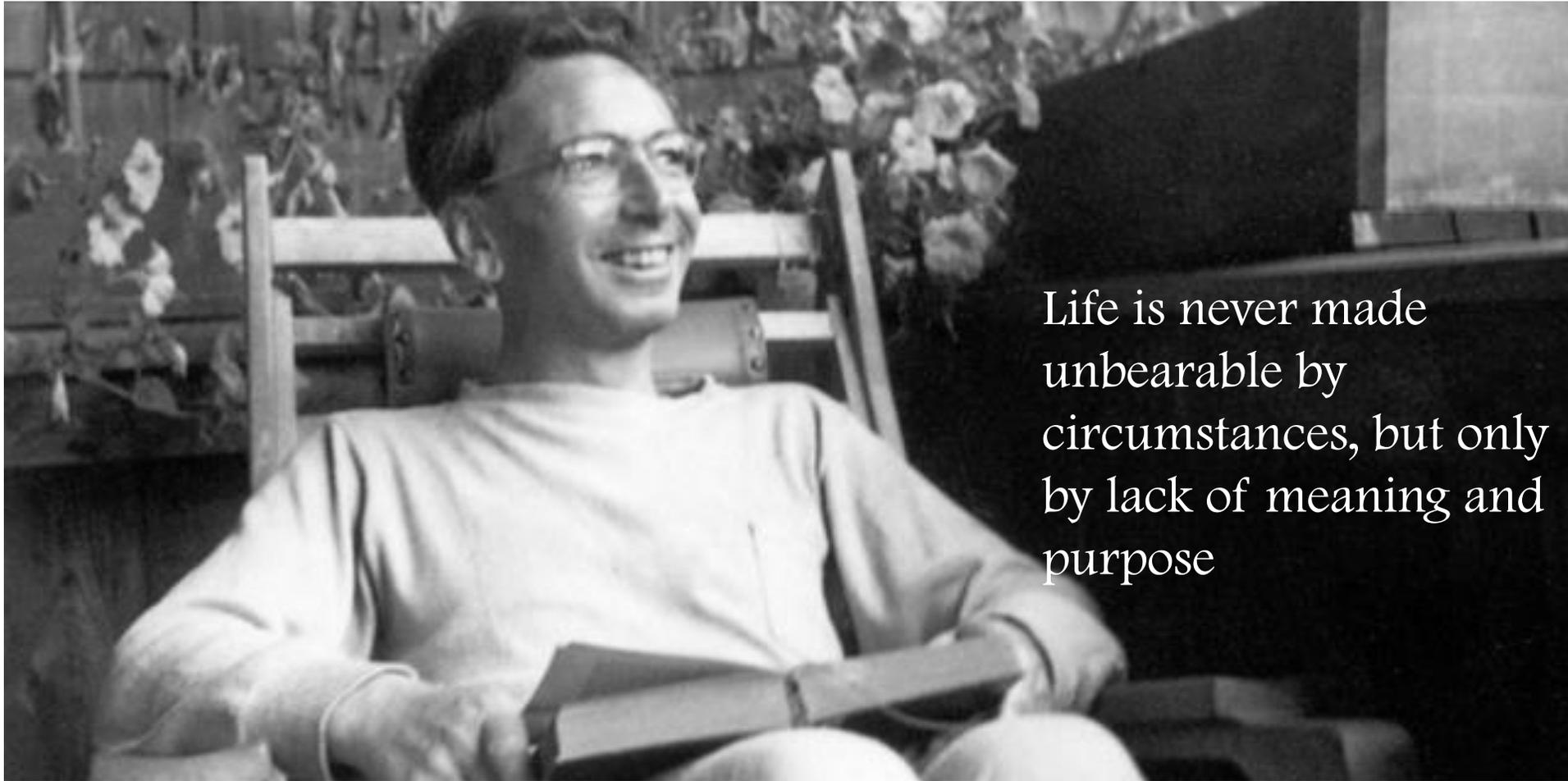
easy work

a 'quick fix'

easily controlled

only for the elite

the latest 'fad'

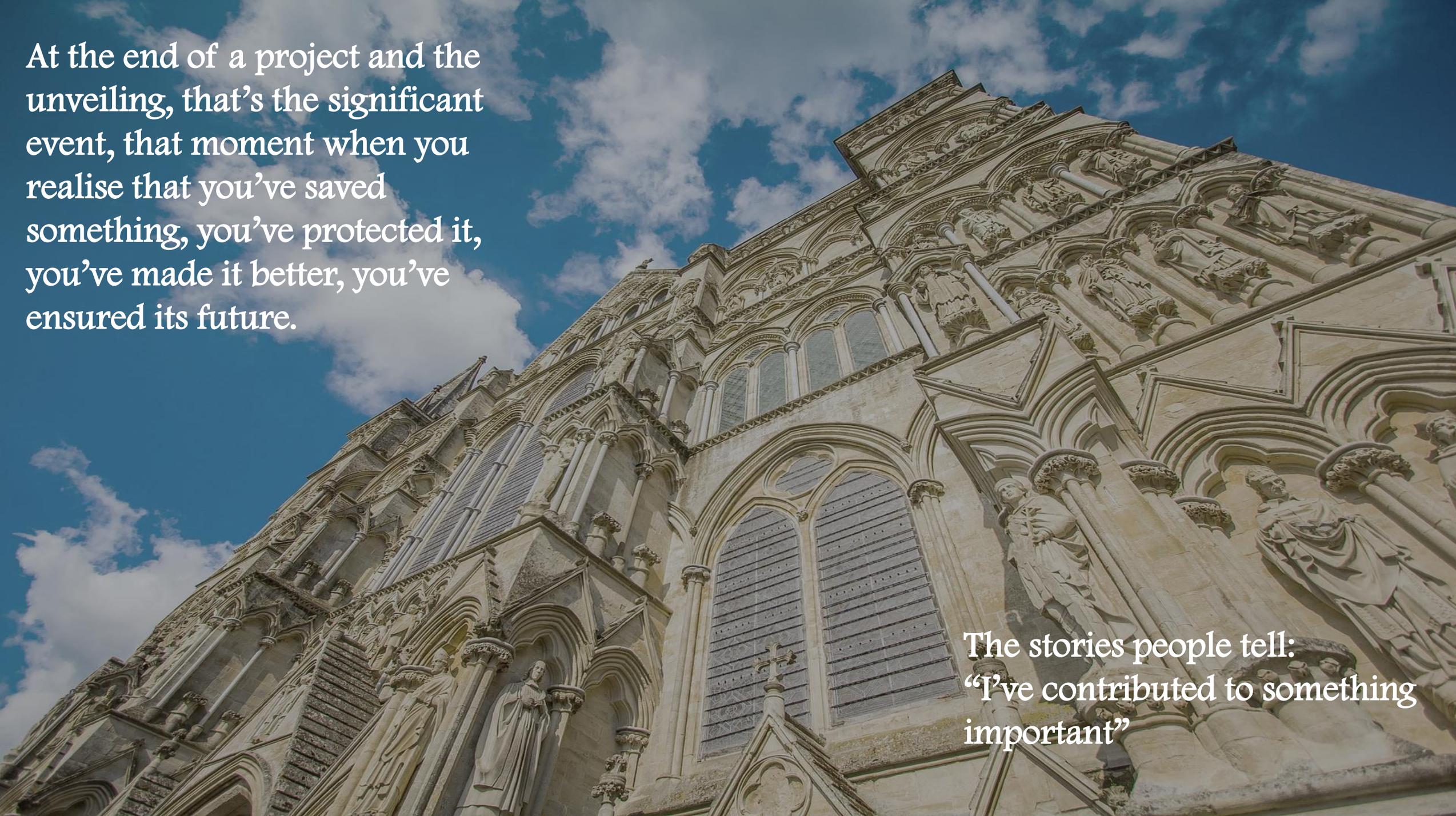


Life is never made  
unbearable by  
circumstances, but only  
by lack of meaning and  
purpose



The stories people  
tell:  
“I’ve done my best  
work”

When you get there, it’s an absolute mess and  
everything and you clean it all up and it looks  
lovely when you’ve finished ... it makes you feel  
like you’ve actually done something.



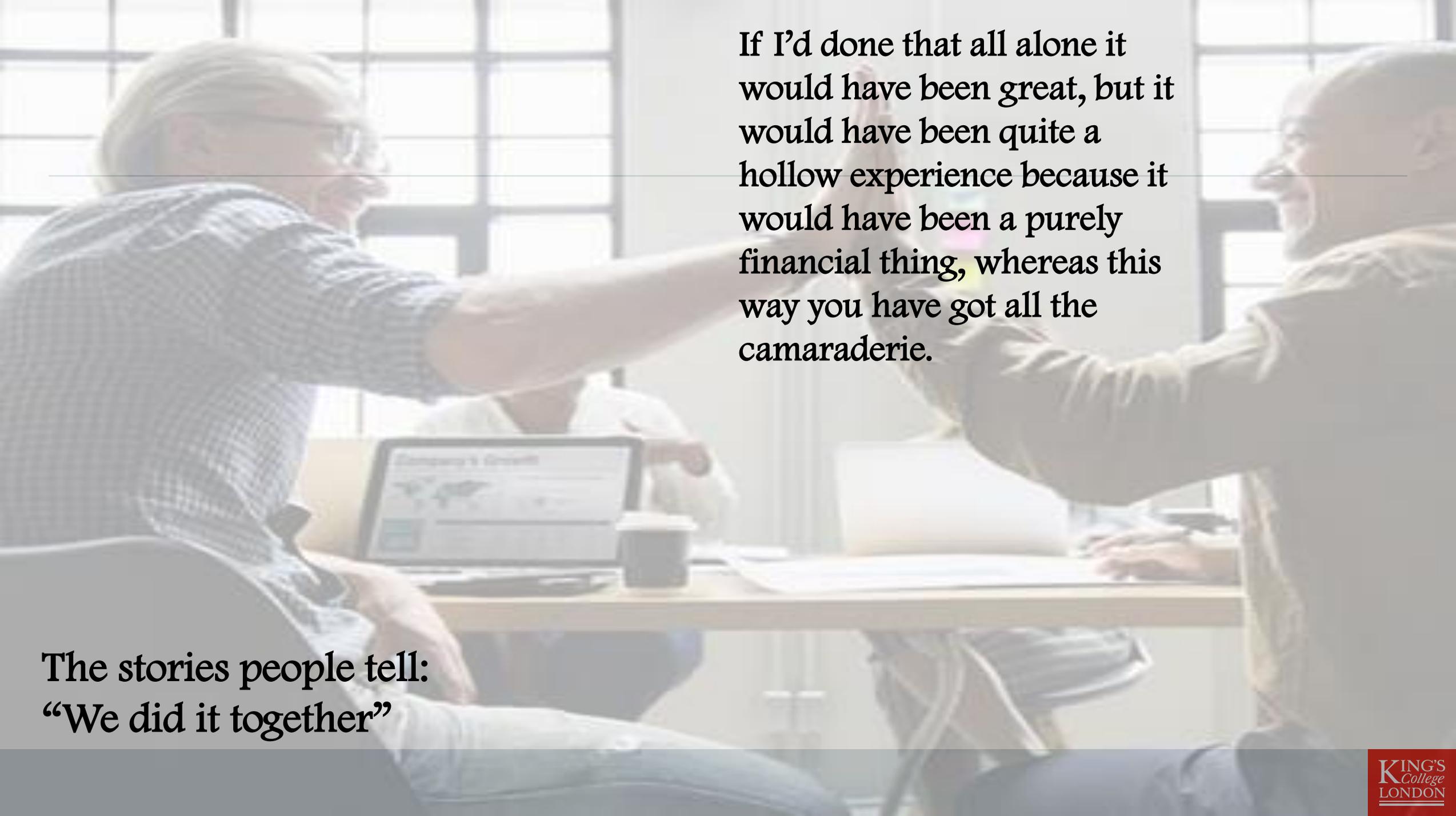
At the end of a project and the unveiling, that's the significant event, that moment when you realise that you've saved something, you've protected it, you've made it better, you've ensured its future.

The stories people tell:  
“I've contributed to something important”

It's times like that when the patient passes that I think – this is why I came here, to do this, to look after people from beginning to end, you know?

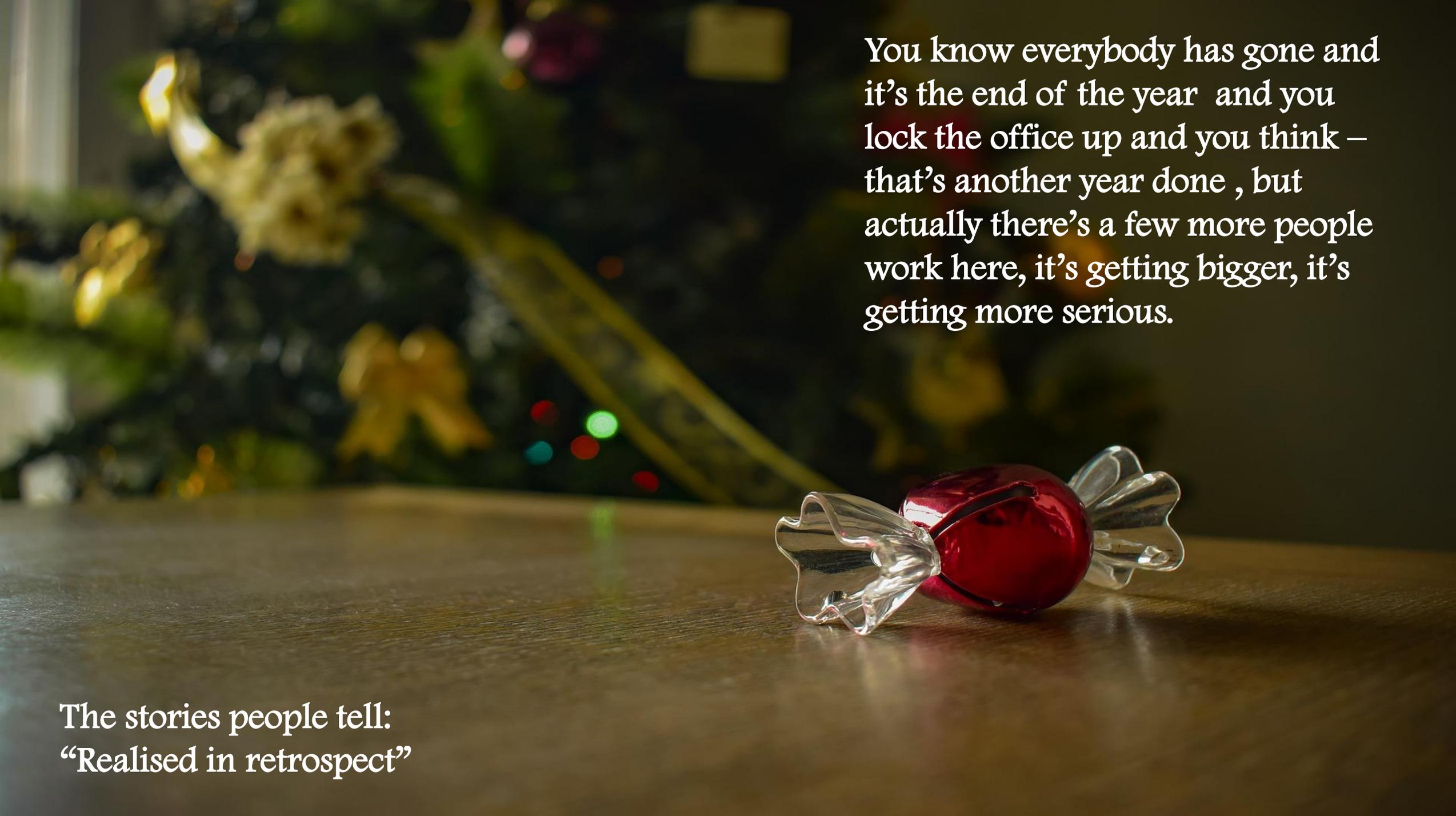


The stories people tell:  
“It wasn’t easy, but I  
did it”



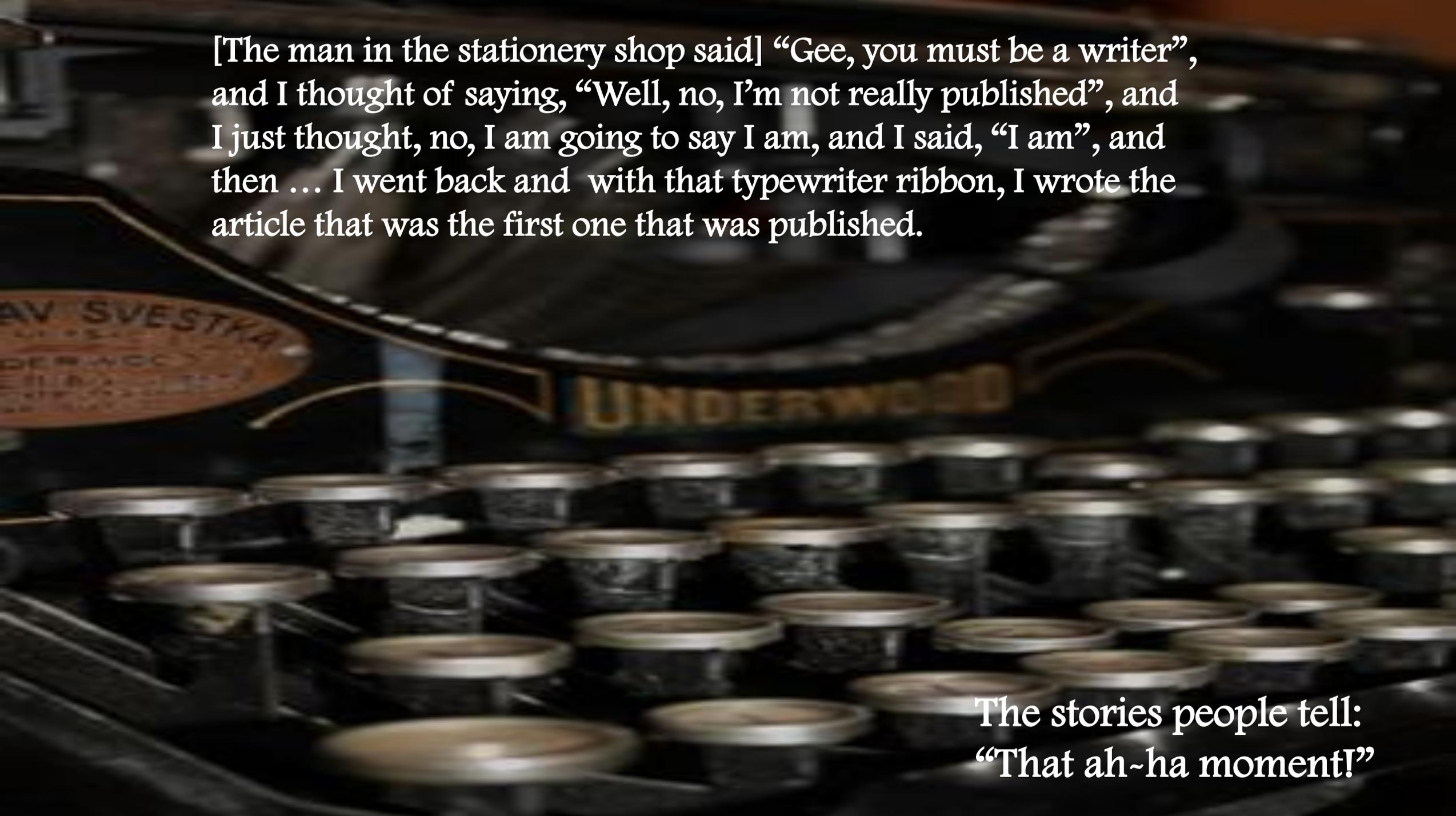
If I'd done that all alone it would have been great, but it would have been quite a hollow experience because it would have been a purely financial thing, whereas this way you have got all the camaraderie.

The stories people tell:  
“We did it together”

A close-up photograph of a single red candy with clear, crinkled paper wrapping, resting on a dark wooden surface. In the background, a Christmas tree is visible, decorated with gold and white ornaments and colorful lights (red, green, blue). The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source coming from the background, creating a soft glow and highlighting the texture of the candy and the wood.

You know everybody has gone and it's the end of the year and you lock the office up and you think – that's another year done , but actually there's a few more people work here, it's getting bigger, it's getting more serious.

The stories people tell:  
“Realised in retrospect”



[The man in the stationery shop said] “Gee, you must be a writer”, and I thought of saying, “Well, no, I’m not really published”, and I just thought, no, I am going to say I am, and I said, “I am”, and then ... I went back and with that typewriter ribbon, I wrote the article that was the first one that was published.

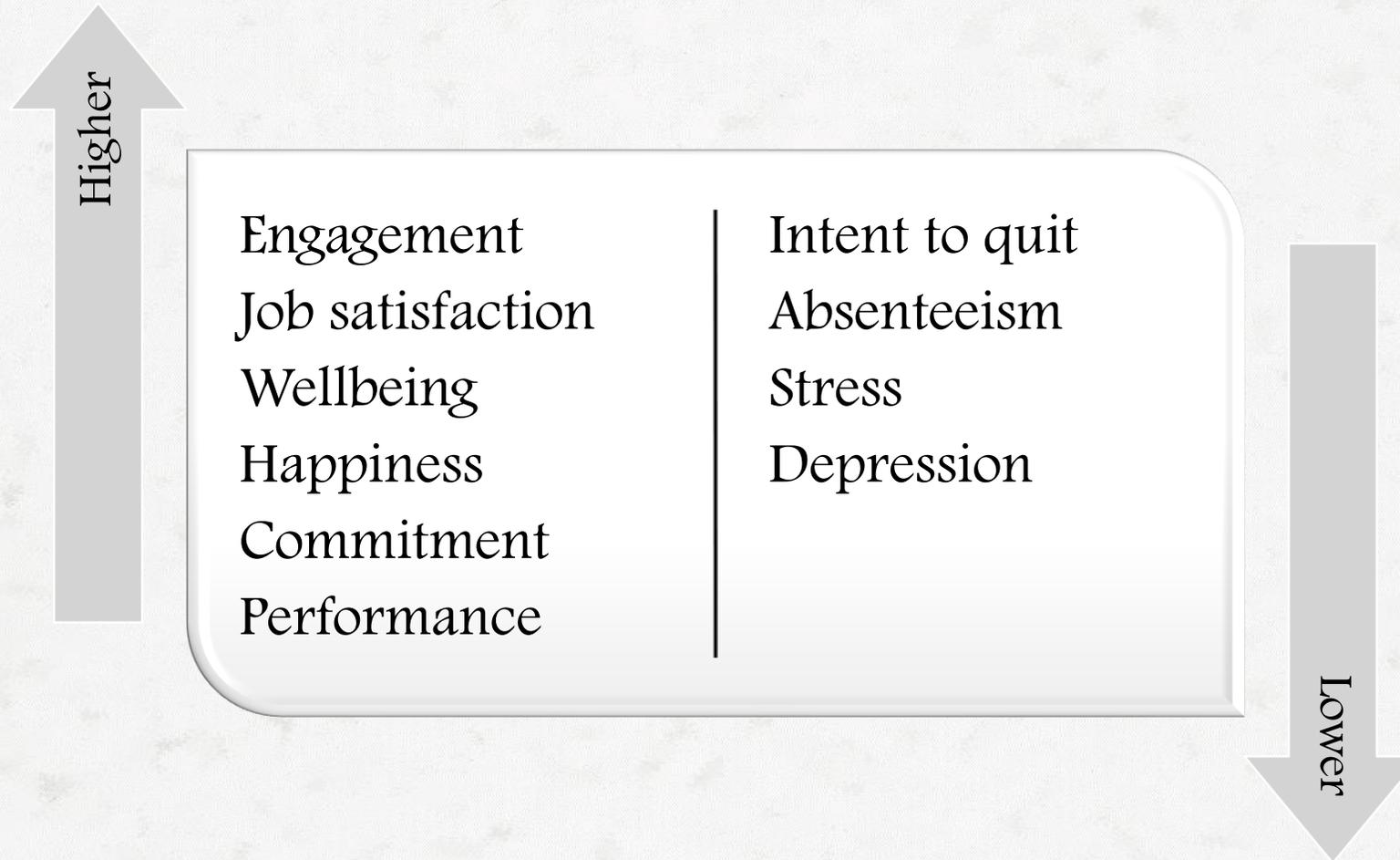
The stories people tell:  
“That ah~ha moment!”

A woman wearing a black headscarf and a white apron over a dark top is looking down at a tray of freshly baked, golden-brown bread. The tray is part of a wooden rack filled with many more loaves of bread. The background is slightly blurred, showing more bread and the interior of a bakery.

My grandfather was a baker, and I  
wanted to make him feel proud.

The stories people tell:  
“It’s very personal”

# Meaningful work matters



Top two long-term career goals for Millennials, Gen X *and* Baby Boomers:

# Make a positive impact on my organisation

# Help solve social and/or environmental challenges

Almost half of all workers would take a 15% pay cut to work for an organization with an inspiring purpose





**Is your work meaningful? Why (not)?**

# Where do employers fit in? The 7 Deadly Sins

1. Values mis-match
2. Lack of recognition
3. Pointless work
4. Unfairness
5. Disempowerment
6. Isolation
7. Risk



# Meaningful work ecosystem

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Man  
Bites  
Dog





# **Seymour House Day Nurseries**

**N E V E R S T O P L E A R N I N G**



**What good (and bad!) practice have you seen?**

## Future trends: challenges or opportunities?



AI and digitalisation



Growing precarity



Increased individualisation in work  
and society



Multiple careers across the life course

# Challenges on the road to meaningful work

How can individuals achieve both meaningful work and a meaningful life?

How can the balance between self-actualisation and contribution be optimised?

Can work be subjectively meaningful if it is morally questionable in some way?

If meaningfulness is highly personal, how can it be managed?

How often and how intensively do people have to experience their work as meaningful?





**How do you see the future of meaningful work?**

**Thank you:  
and may your work always be  
meaningful (but not too much)!**

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# Our London location

■ King's locations   ■ London landmarks

- 1 King's Strand Campus
- 2 King's Bush House
- 3 Royal Courts of Justice
- 4 Maughan Library
- 5 Palace of Westminster
- 6 London Eye

- 7 South Bank arts complex
- 8 Tate Modern
- 9 St Paul's Cathedral
- 10 King's Waterloo Campus
- 11 Shakespeare's Globe
- 12 Waterloo station

- 13 St Thomas' Hospital
- 14 City of London financial district
- 15 King's St Thomas' Campus
- 16 King's Guy's Campus
- 17 The Shard
- 18 Guy's Hospital

