



Room4More

THE BUILT4MORE NEWSLETTER

On growth, change, and what coaching actually is. Signal over noise.

ISSUE 06 • SEPTEMBER 2026 • 7 MIN READ

IN THIS ISSUE

- 01 They left the career, the money was working, and what broke was the diary.
- 02 Coaching, decoded: the friendships didn't end. The thing holding them up was switched off.
- 03 Four voices from four different rooms, one text message worth sending, and a question with a name in it.



EDITOR'S NOTE

I have started over in enough countries to have learned something I would rather have known earlier: the people go last, and they go quietly. The job is arranged, the house is arranged, and then one evening some months later you notice the phone has stopped doing what it used to do on its own.

For years I read that as a verdict on me. It mostly isn't one. It is usually something a great deal more ordinary, and a great deal easier to do something about.

— *Philippe*

THE COLD OPEN

01

Everyone does the sums on the exit. Nobody does the sums on the diary.



Someone posted in r/leanfire at the start of September. They had left their career the year before. The money was working, and by every measure they had set themselves beforehand the exit was a success. Then they wrote the sentence that makes it an issue of this newsletter:

“My corporate friendships vanished gradually. Now, I’m considering getting a job again just to have a builtin community... I’m trying to figure out if work is a valid solution to loneliness or a trap.”

LEFT THE CAREER LAST YEAR · R/LEAFIRE · 2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Notice what is being weighed. Not whether they miss the work — whether a job would answer something a job was never for. They put both possibilities in one sentence and leave them sitting there. Seeing the shape of a problem and finding the handle on it turn out to be two different jobs.

The same week, elsewhere, somebody put a proposition to one of the big self-improvement rooms: that the advice people follow to sort themselves out is costing them their friends. Four thousand two hundred people upvoted it.

And then, underneath, someone replied with no argument at all. Just the words to send:

“I’m sorry I’ve ghosted you guys, I fell into an isolating mindset, can we catch up over dinner sometime on me?” ... “It hasn’t been too long and it’s not too late.”

THE REPLY, 6,420 POINTS · R/SELFIMPROVEMENT · 3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Six thousand four hundred people upvoted the reply. Not a verdict on anything, and the two scores are not a ballot between them. Just a lot of

people, on a Thursday in early September, stopping at a ready-made sentence they could send.

The friendships didn't end. The scaffolding came down.

THE MYTH

A real friendship survives on its own. So if yours have gone quiet, that is information about you — you let it slide, you got absorbed, you were not the friend you meant to be.

What's actually going on

Most adult friendships are held up by three things nobody arranges on purpose. Regular contact you did not have to schedule. A common subject you did not have to find. And a reason to be in the same place anyway. Shared work supplies all three, free, for years. So does a street, a school gate, a team, a town.

None of that is the friendship. It is what the friendship was standing on.

Take the structure away — you leave, they leave, you move, the project ends — and usually nothing dramatic happens. That is the part that fools people. A friendship held up this way tends not to collapse when the scaffolding goes. It thins. Calls get further apart by increments too small to notice at the time. The thinning is only visible once it is finished, which is to say, from the far side, when you look up and cannot remember the last time.

Then the silence gets filed. The mind puts it under *evidence about me*. It does not file it under *evidence about structure*, because the structure

was never visible — scaffolding rarely is, while it is holding something up. So a change in circumstances gets reclassified as a verdict on character.

Here is the test, and it costs nothing to run. Think of the friendship that has gone quietest. Now ask what you two used to have automatically, without arranging it, that you no longer have. If you can name it in under five seconds — the same floor, the same client, the same Tuesday — then what you are looking at is a missing structure, not a missing feeling.

And there is a fair chance the other person is doing the same sum in reverse, with your silence sitting on their side of it. Nobody had to fall out for that to happen. It is also why a first move is so often more welcome than the person making it expects.

SAME PEOPLE · SAME AFFECTION · ONE THING MISSING



WITH THE SCAFFOLDING

Contact, a subject, a
reason to be there.

Nobody arranged any of it. It
simply held.



WITHOUT IT

Nothing ends. It thins.

Visible only from the far side, when
you look up.

From the outside it looks like drift. It was a structure coming down.

2 MIN · TRY IT NOW

Send the text

One person. This week.

You probably already know who. A name tends to arrive somewhere in the paragraphs above, and then you talk yourself out of it on the grounds that too much time has gone by. Which is the reasoning that made the time go by.

Two minutes is enough, because the message is short and the message is not an explanation. Do not account for the gap. Do not apologise across three sentences. Do not open with a summary of your year. Name the person, say you would like to see them, propose something with a day in it.

The gap is not the subject. The dinner is the subject.



Four voices, one fortnight, all circling the same thing.

Over the last fortnight four people described this in their own words, in four different rooms, none of them aware of the others.

“There’s something called ‘crowded loneliness’ where we have cognitive dissonance because we don’t ‘feel’ like we should be lonely because we’re surrounded by tons of [people].”

A FOUNDER, IN A COMMENT · R/STARTUPS · 25 AUGUST 2026

That phrase turned up in a comment on a founders’ forum rather than in a paper. Note what it describes. Not an empty diary — a full one. The people are there all day, which is precisely what makes the feeling unsayable, because on the face of it you have no grounds. Being surrounded is not the cure for this. Quite often it is the disguise.

“the more lies that people tell, they just self-report on how much they lie in their everyday life, the more lonely they feel.”

DR LEANNE TEN BRINKE · THE DIARY OF A CEO · 7 SEPTEMBER 2026

This is people reporting on themselves, which is worth holding loosely. What is worth keeping is the direction: it is not the big deception that shows up, it is the small kind one — the fine, the good, the no problem at all. Each is a tiny decision to be easy to be around rather than known. They are also, on any given Tuesday, the polite thing to do. Which is what makes this hard rather than obvious.

“The thing is, someone often will. Humans were made for community.”

A REPLY, 97 POINTS · R/SELFIMPROVEMENT · 6 SEPTEMBER 2026

The “someone” is whoever might turn up when you are struggling, and they are arguing with a post that said nobody would. It was written underneath a post whose title carried the line that ran through the self-improvement rooms all fortnight: *“No one cares. No one is coming to save you.”* Read one way, the line it argues with is simply true and worth accepting: nobody is going to make the decision for you. Read the other way, as a rule about needing people at all, it licenses doing everything unaided. That is the route by which someone entirely able to manage ends up managing alone.

“It didn’t work for us and we had to change the situation in fundamental ways to rescue our marriage and to rescue our careers.”

ANGELA DUCKWORTH · THE SCHOOL OF GREATNESS #1977 · 8 SEPTEMBER 2026

This is the researcher whose work on grit sold five million books, describing a stretch in her own marriage that effort did not fix. What she says they changed was the situation, not the amount of trying. Coming from her, that is not a small admission, and it is the same argument as this issue in a different room: some things do not yield to trying harder, because what is missing is not effort.



“People tell me they have lost touch with everyone, and then we count. It is usually four or five names, and usually every one of them is someone they last saw through work. Nothing was lost. An arrangement ended, and it took the Fridays with it.”

FRANZ KOHLER

Built4More coach · coach, facilitator & explorer

BEFORE & AFTER

04

BEFORE

“I told myself I’d become one of those people who’s just bad at keeping up. Which was strange, because for twenty years I’d been rather good at it. There were four names, when I finally sat down and counted.”

AFTER

“Two of the four turned out to have been waiting. One of them said, almost the same words back to me: I thought it had been too long. We have a standing Thursday now. It’s in the diary, which feels like cheating, and it isn’t.”

Nothing needed repairing. The Thursday simply has to be arranged now, where it once arranged itself.



“I haven’t lost anyone. I just can’t think when I last saw any of them.”

Said with a small laugh, and then a pause that went on rather too long. There is no event to point at, no argument, nobody who did anything wrong — which is exactly why it goes unexamined for years. Grief with a cause gets attention. This kind just gets absorbed.

Q *“This is a very comfortable story. My friendships went quiet because I didn’t call. Isn’t ‘it was structural’ just a nicer way of saying I couldn’t be bothered?”*

A It would be, if it stopped there. So let me be plain about what the structure does and does not cover.

An explanation is not an excuse. The scaffolding explains why the calls thinned without anyone deciding they should — that part is real, and it is worth having, because the alternative is a verdict on your character that the evidence does not support. What the scaffolding does not do is make the call. It never did. It only ever made the call unnecessary.

So the honest position is both at once. You are not a bad friend, and the dinner is still not going to book itself. Those two things sit together perfectly well, though something usually argues that you have to pick one. That argument is worth resisting, because a person who has settled on being bad at this will not send the message. The message would be an admission. So the belief arranges its own evidence.

Take the shame off. Leave the responsibility on. Then book the dinner.



“I ask people who they would call at four in the afternoon about nothing in particular. Often there is a long pause, and then a name in another time zone. It is not that nobody here is kind. It is that kindness at four in the afternoon takes about two years to build, and nobody warns you about the two years.”

SANDRA CARACOL

Built4More coach · emotional therapy & conscious parenting

Which friendship went quiet without either of you ever deciding it should?

A name will come up faster than you expect, and the second thought — that too much time has gone by — is not information about them. It is a rule you wrote yourself, some time ago, and never read back.

Hit reply and tell me the name — or just how long it has been. It comes straight to me, and I read every one.

— WHERE TO FROM HERE

Curious what this looks like for you?

The first conversation is exactly that — a conversation. No pitch, no homework, no framework to memorize. We start where you are and look honestly at what's in the way.

Start a conversation

Four moments we tend to work with. If one of them sounds like where you're standing, that's a good place to begin.

Living Abroad

Leaving Finance

Founders & CEOs

Relocating Partner



built4more.org · info@built4more.org · [@iam_built4more](https://twitter.com/iam_built4more)

You're reading this because you're curious about growth — that's the only requirement. If it's useful, forward it to someone standing at the edge of a change.
Unsubscribe anytime; no hard feelings.