How Neovim Made Me A Better Software Developer

About Me

TJ DeVries

- Most important:
    - Husband and a father to 3 wonderful kiddos
- Most relevant:
    - Neovim Contributor
    - Author of Telescope.nvim
    - Live Streamer
    - YouTuber
    - Generally, I like memes as well! (failwind.nvim, vim9jit, etc)

How Neovim Made Me A Better Software Developer

(Not What You Might Think!)

Definition: Better Software Developer

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- Software Developer:
  - Career primarily revolves around writing code to solve problems

Definition: <u>Better</u> Software Developer

- Software Developer:
  - Career primarily revolves around writing code to solve problems

- Better:
  - Hard to get metrics for this
  - Not necessarily "Good at Leetcode"
  - Closer to:
    - "Coworkers enjoy working with my code"
    - "Coworkers enjoy working with me"
    - Git blame is not my enemy

Clarification: "Neovim"

- All the arguments I'm making in this video equally apply to vim - but since this is about my story, I'll just keep it simple and say "Neovim".
    - Side Note: Neovim was actually the first editor I ever used outside of stuff like Eclipse in my computer lab at school!

Goals

- `*vim` users have a different perspective when interacting with `*vim`
- Non-`*vim` users have a different perspective about `*vim` users

No, Please No.

No, Please No.

"It's written in C, it must be fast!"

No, Please No.

"HA! YOU USE A BROWSER TO EDIT TEXT!!"

No, Please No.

"Only noobs use VS C*de"

No, Please No.

"It looks cool in the coffee shop/interviews"

Yes, But No.

Yes, But No: Responsiveness

- Better than "C IS FAST!!"
- Latency bothers me
  - … but does not make me a better or worse developer!
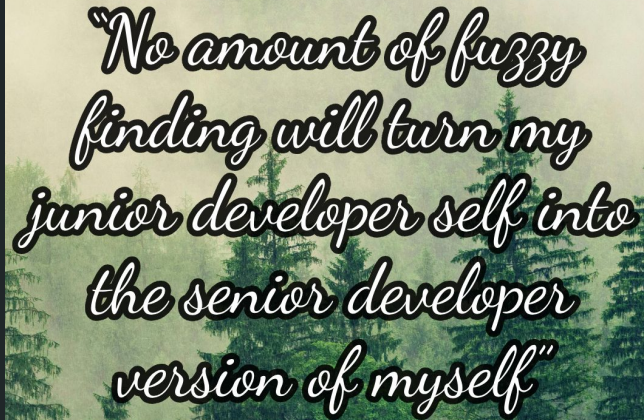
Editor latency in Windows (text file):

Editor	Min, ms	Max, ms	Average, ms	SD, ms
GVim	0.2	1.2	0.9	0.2
IDEA (zero-latency)	0.1	21.2	2.9	2.7
Notepad++	0.1	5.9	4.3	0.8
Emacs	4.2	19.2	5.3	1.1
Sublime Text	6.2	35.2	8.2	2.0
Eclipse	0.1	20.8	10.1	1.6
Netbeans	7.3	31.6	11.8	3.9
IDEA	0.1	83.7	24.7	12.0
Atom	29.2	85.5	49.4	7.2

Yes, But No: Vim Motions

- Editing text
  - Seen people go very fast w/ multicursor in Sublime Text
    - Shoutout to Ginger Bill (creator of Odin)
  - With crazy combos and refactoring tools in Jetbrains
  - And now, AI can do a ton of stuff (sometimes good, sometimes bad!)

Yes, But No: Plugins
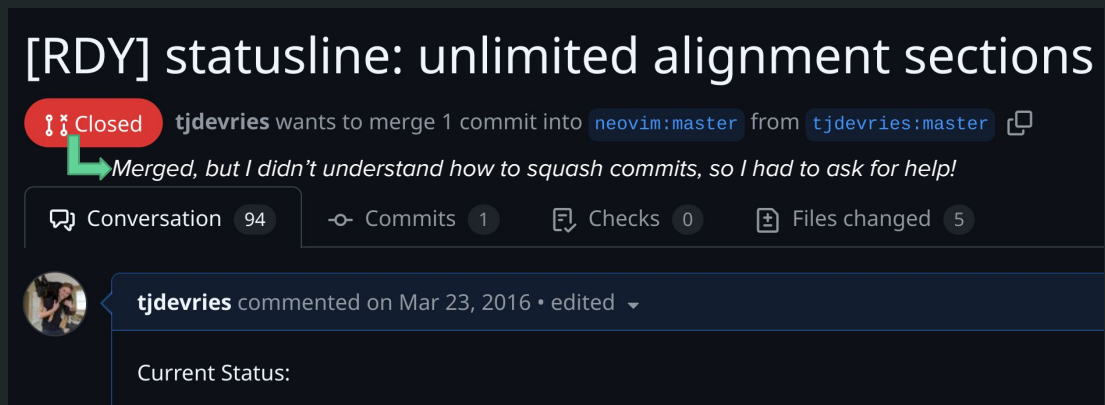

"No amount of fuzzy finding will turn my junior developer self into the senior developer version of myself"

– Me, Writing this Presentation

Yes, But (Just Barely) No.

Yes, But (Just Barely) No: Open Source

- I do think OSS can be a great tool for improving as a software developer...
- ... but it is hard to replicate all of the factors

Shougo / **denite.nvim**

ode · Issues 1 · **Pull requests** · ▶ Actions

Filters ▾ · 🔍 is:pr is:closed author:tjdevries

✕ **Clear current search query, filters, and sorts**

0 Open · ✓ **3 Closed**

⑂ **Fix not recognizing different options**
#119 by tjdevries was merged on Dec 16, 2016

⑂ **Async gather**
#20 by tjdevries was merged on Sep 26, 2016

⑂ **[RFC] Menu source** `pending fix`
#7 by tjdevries was merged on Sep 23, 2016
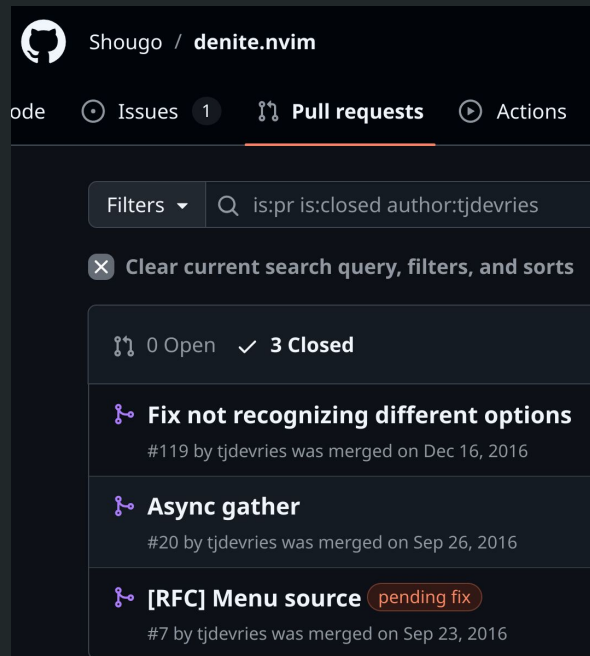
[RDY] statusline: unlimited alignment sections

⑂ Closed · **tjdevries** wants to merge 1 commit into `neovim:master` from `tjdevries:master` 📋

Merged, but I didn't understand how to squash commits, so I had to ask for help!

💬 Conversation 94 · ✑ Commits 1 · ✓ Checks 0 · ± Files changed 5

tjdevries commented on Mar 23, 2016 · edited ▾

Current Status:

Yes, But (Just Barely) No: Joy

- Programming (at least for now) is a career
  - This makes it much more like a marathon than a sprint
- Personalized Development Environment (PDE)

Yes, But With Stories

Story 1: My Corporate Experience

- First Corporate Software Job
  - Epic Systems (Sorry, not Fortnite)
  - *To be clear, this is not really Epic's fault...*
  - *... This is just real life!*

- Product
- Customer
- Release Cadence
- Iteration

Story 2: My Configuration Experience

- Product
- Customer
- Release Cadence
- Iteration

A Customer

- ... I can talk to
    - Although I would not recommend talking to yourself out loud!
    - Unless you work from home ;)
- ... I can trust they'll give feedback
    - Because I'm the one having the feelings!
-

A Product

- … I can understand
- … I can easily care about
- … I can evaluate

A Release Cadence

- ... of one second or less!
- ... backwards incompatibility!

An Iteration Cycle

- ... fundamentally different from my corporate experience

Practice

- You can't get good at basketball by only reading about shooting a basketball
- You can't get good at software by only reading about writing a program

You need a playground to test out the ideas and gain intuition and taste for how they work.

Attitude & Response

-

Practice: As The Consumer

- Debugging
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Relationships
- Iteration speed

Confession

And so here's where I finally have to admit…

… This talk isn't actually about Neovim. It's about finding a playground for you to practice coding! For me, that was Neovim. For you, it might be something else! And that's OK!

Find Your *vim

One Last Encouragement...

Make It *vim