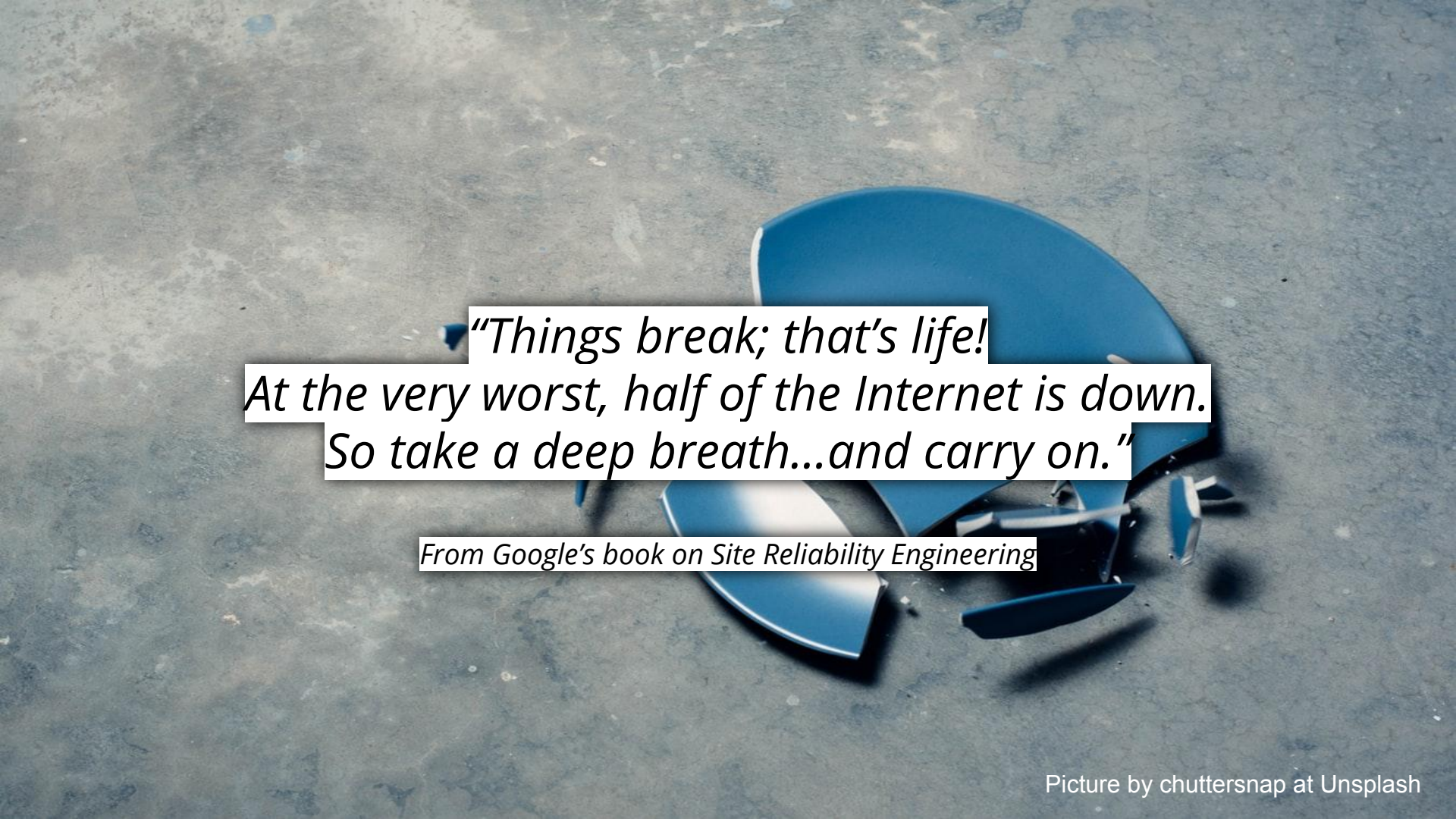




# Introducing Postmortems

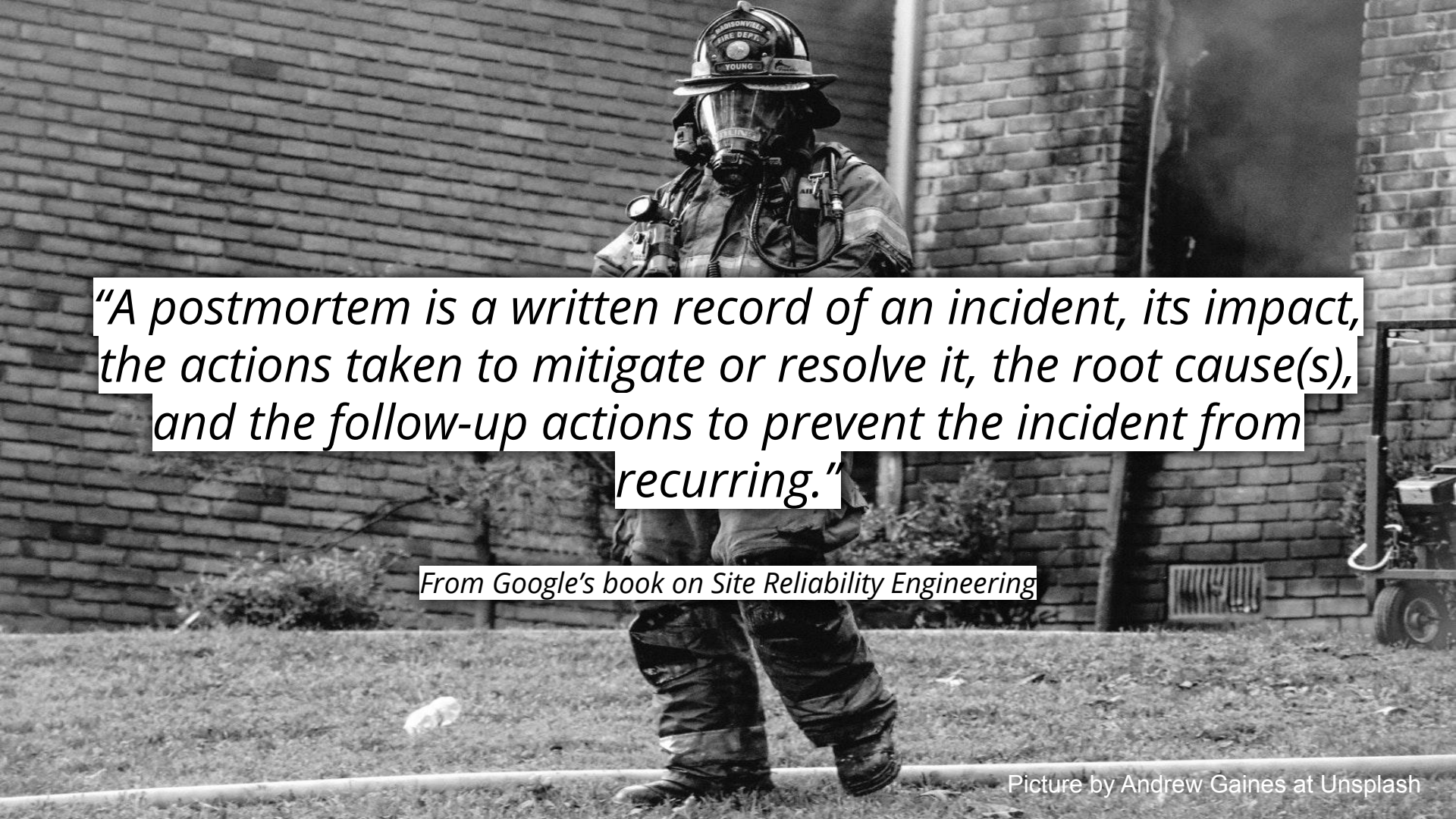
Learning from Failure

Picture by Matt Howard at Unsplash

A blue hard hat is broken into several pieces, lying on a grey concrete floor. The largest piece is at the top, with several smaller fragments scattered below it. The scene is lit from the top left, casting soft shadows.

*"Things break; that's life!  
At the very worst, half of the Internet is down.  
So take a deep breath...and carry on."*

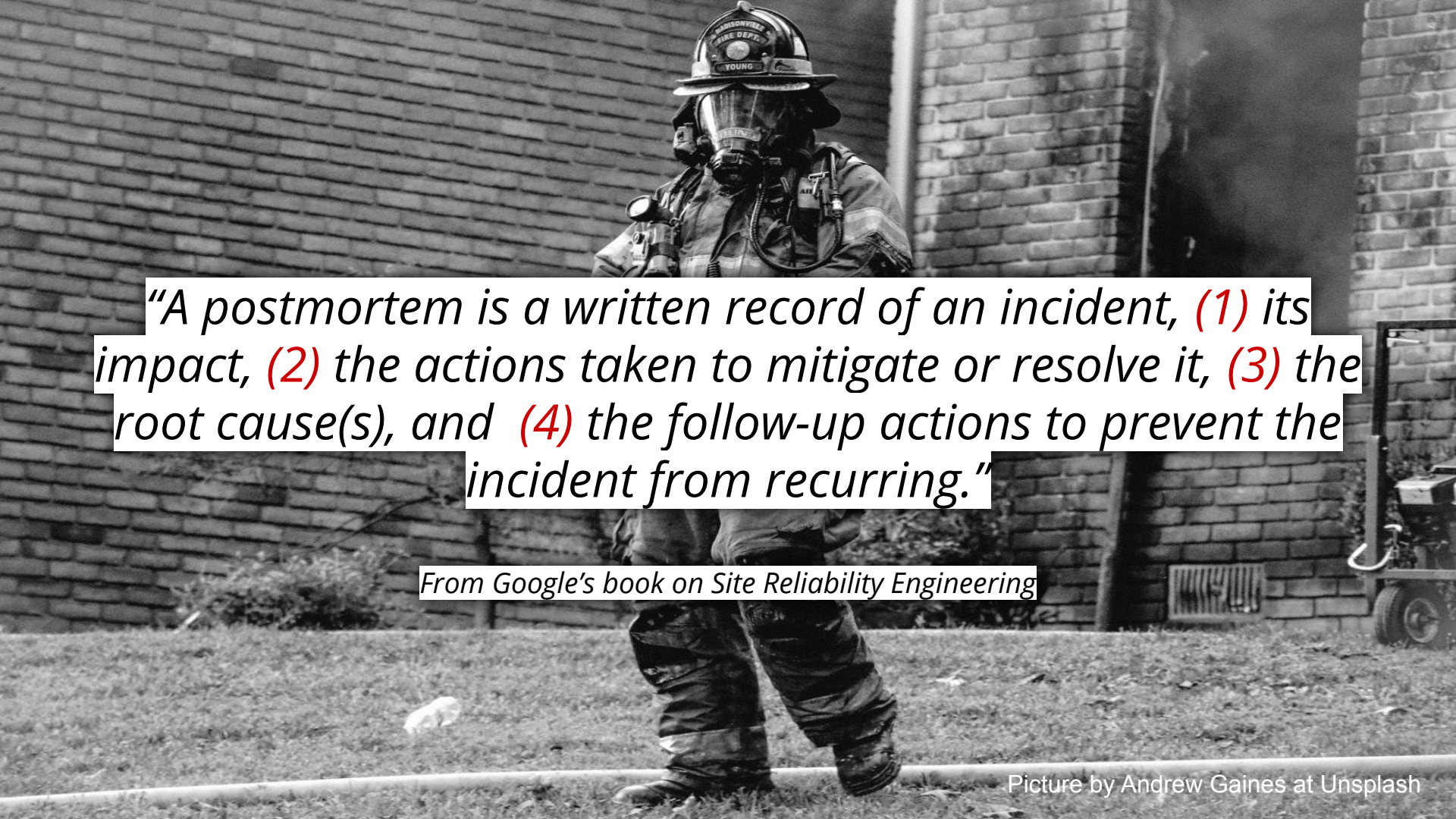
*From Google's book on Site Reliability Engineering*



*"A postmortem is a written record of an incident, its impact, the actions taken to mitigate or resolve it, the root cause(s), and the follow-up actions to prevent the incident from recurring."*

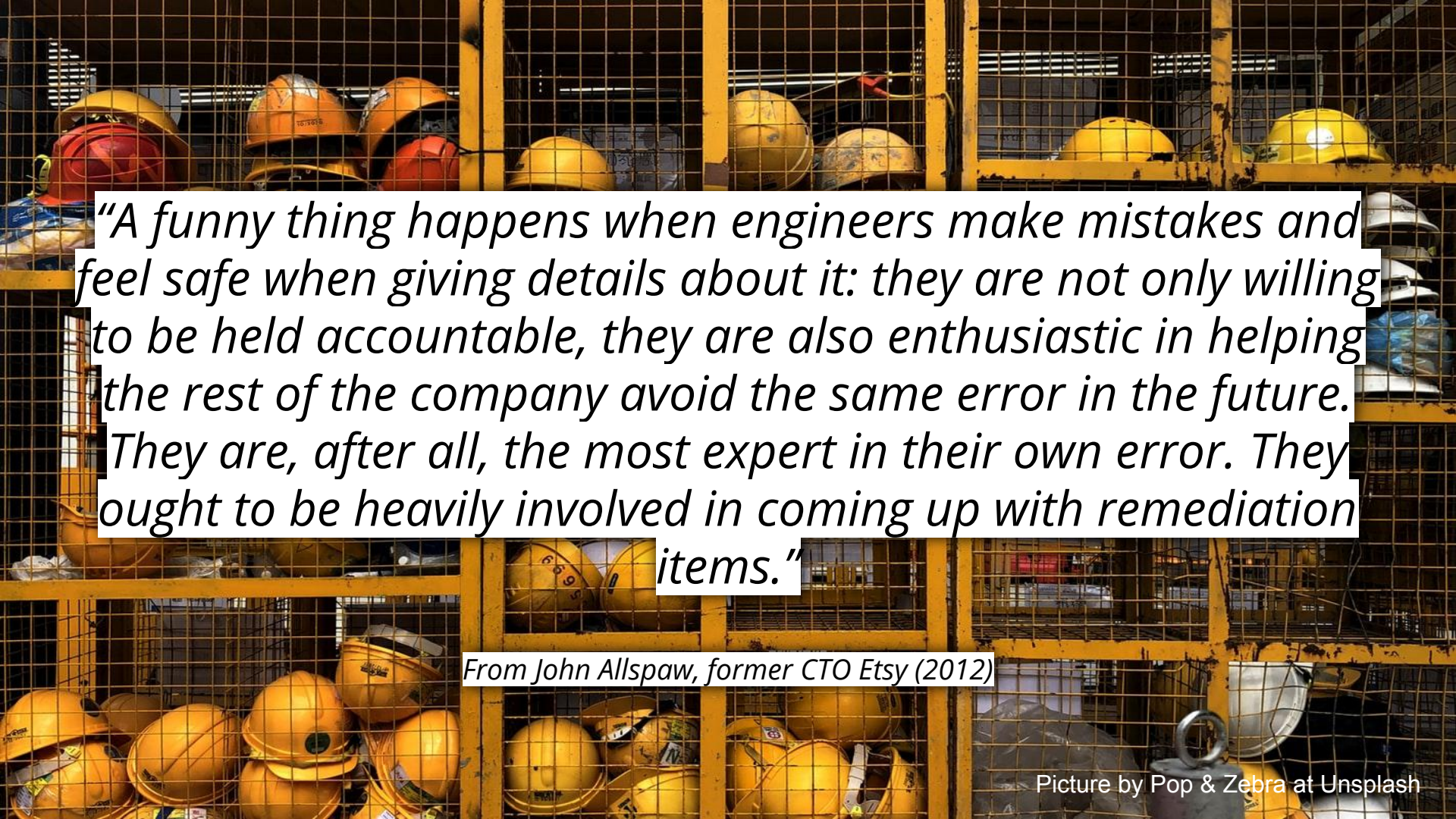
*From Google's book on Site Reliability Engineering*





*"A postmortem is a written record of an incident, (1) its impact, (2) the actions taken to mitigate or resolve it, (3) the root cause(s), and (4) the follow-up actions to prevent the incident from recurring."*

*From Google's book on Site Reliability Engineering*



*"A funny thing happens when engineers make mistakes and feel safe when giving details about it: they are not only willing to be held accountable, they are also enthusiastic in helping the rest of the company avoid the same error in the future. They are, after all, the most expert in their own error. They ought to be heavily involved in coming up with remediation items."*

*From John Allspaw, former CTO Etsy (2012)*



# Example Postmortem

<https://landing.google.com/sre/book/chapters/postmortem.html>

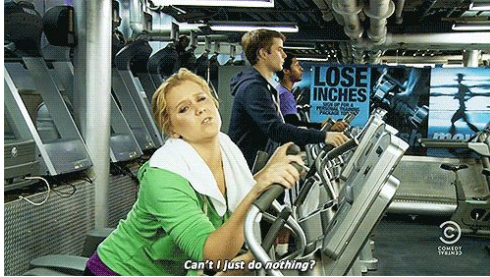
Picture by Matt Howard at Unsplash



## **TIP 01:**

### **SET A THRESHOLD**

*Trigger postmortems on severity level and allow team leads or management to request a postmortem.*



## TIP 02:

# DON'T PROCRASTINATE

*Wait too long and important details might be lost or forgotten.*

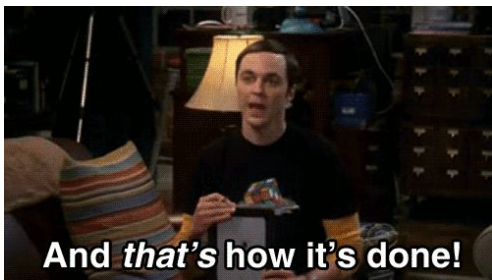




### **TIP 03:**

## **ASSIGN ROLES AND OWNERS**

*Delegate the postmortem draft to a specific person who is familiar with the incident.*



## TIP 04:

# WORK FROM A TEMPLATE

*A template can keep you from leaving out key details.*



## **TIP 05:**

### **INCLUDE A TIMELINE**

*A timeline helps the reader to quickly size up what happened.*





## **TIP 06:**

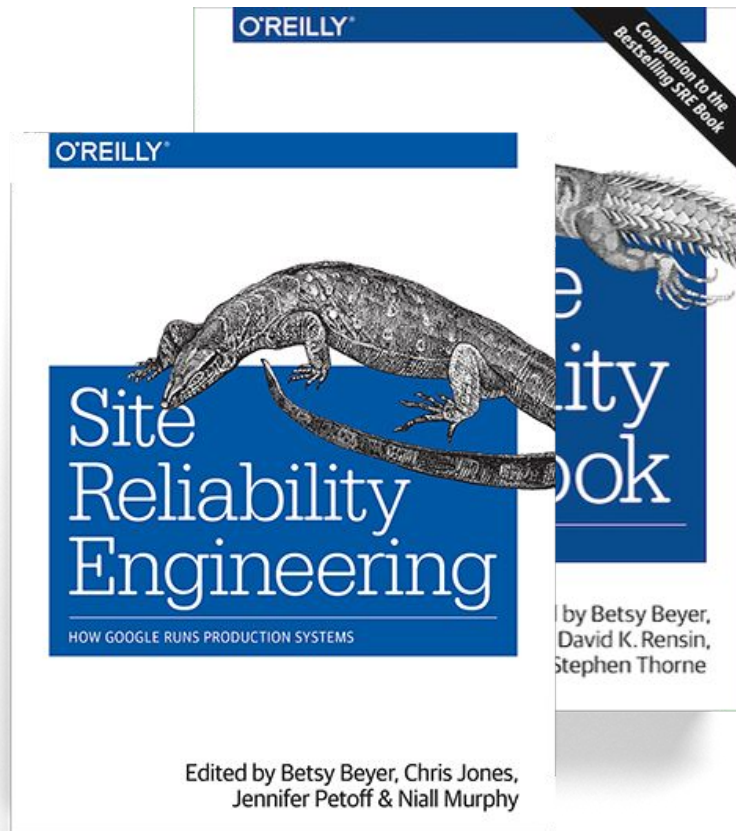
### **KEEP IT BLAMELESS**

*Focus on systems and root causes without casting blame onto people or teams.*

# Site Reliability Engineering

“Fundamentally, it’s what happens when you ask a software engineer to design an operations function.”

Ben Treynor, VP of Engineering at Google



# Questions?

