

Practical 4 Summary

In the fourth session of the Summer Sprint 2026, Mike Jay focuses on the principle of "**Staying Near the Signal**" — the art of discerning and protecting faint but important signals (openings) in helping conversations while respecting readiness. Using ChatGPT as a live demonstration tool, he models selective, process-led inquiry within the S:DISS-X framework.

The session begins with a casual greeting ("Hi, how are you?") followed by a deliberate ping: "Could you identify anything important to work with?" This surfaces a key theme — the difference between **what wants attention** and **what is actually ready to be worked with**. Jay explains that problems often "choose us" due to personality dynamics and subconscious patterns, limiting surface-level free will. He contrasts scripted responses (common in open-ended questions) with genuine reflection, noting that good problem-solvers pause and deliberate.

Jay demonstrates the **benefit chain** technique — gently probing deeper into importance and motivation (staying within IMULL) — to reveal layers without forcing the conversation. A central teaching is that **readiness is information**. If something isn't ready, the helper should not push but instead protect the signal, using restraint and small, testable movements. He highlights how AI's low friction (fast responses) contrasts with human conversation, requiring intentional pacing.

Key concepts covered include:

- **Actionability:** Favoring small movements that test reality without over-committing or violating readiness.
- **Levels and transitions:** Entering, nodal, and exiting states of systems; staying within ~1/3 level for assimilation.
- **Paradigmatics:** Capability, bias, style, role, and system dynamics that influence helping.
- **Seeding closure:** Ending sessions with forward-looking threads (e.g., "What kind of small movement can test reality without violating readiness?") to maintain continuity.

Jay shares personal insights, including a story about losing physical balance while building in the Philippines, linking it to confidence and system transitions. He references the meta-paradigmatic framework **IRA** (Attention, Relation, Intention, Alignment, with Helping as background process).

The practical emphasizes **less is more**, avoiding heavy interrogatory (who/what/when/where/why/how), resisting premature solutions, and using pings/probes to locate the other party's current state. Jay stresses that the system works for humans and AI alike, supports style differences, and promotes immersion learning over fire-hose lectures.

Overall, Practical 4 teaches helpers to remain patient and present near emerging signals, build genuine leverage through readiness-aligned action, and create sustainable developmental

conversations rather than transactional fixes. It equips participants to navigate complexity while preserving the delicate balance between attention and actionable progress.