

I. Introduction

A. Who am I?

1. Introductio! Name, occupation, but keep it _brief AF_ while being descriptive. Something short, memorable. Maybe where you can find me on GitHub? Maybe add that to the Updates
2. My views are my own! They don't represent my employers or colleagues

B. Disclaimers

1. **No. I don't think any of us are especially qualified to speak on burnout;; we are all just people in different stages of burnout; it is a universal human condition; and I can only share my lived experience and what I've learned through therapy**
2. **Heteronormativity and being a male in tech**
 - a) **I'm white**
 - b) **People assume because of my skin color and gender identity that I belong in spaces by default**
 - c) **People assume tech is a meritocracy but it is not**
 - d) **People who tell you it's a meritocracy are selling you something**
 - e) **If your work doesn't give you this permission or you feel too junior to say no, or pressured in some way, that is an enormous red flag about that**
 - f) **You should try to self-select out of the organization if at all possible**
 - g) **Use me as a resource**
 - h) **I am giving you permission to say it. This is very exciting to me b/c I am on a literal platform getting to say these things without interruption or fear of reprisal. My permission may not go far enough in your organization but I'd love to talk to your boss about it**
 - i) **And to the bosses in the audience, this is your reminder that people should tell you no. We'll get into that a bit later**
3. **A lot of us in tech happen to be neurodivergent. That's expressed in a lot of different ways. I am a 99th-percentile extrovert and sometimes that scares people, as most of us here draw energy via time _away_ from people. Many of us have ADD or ADHD — and when we work in programming it's very easy for that to go undiagnosed. ADD isn't all squirrels and sunshine — being able to focus on things for a long time is typical of folks with ADD, myself included. I won't go too much into the autism spectrum and other forms of neurodivergence but I will note that therapy is worth trying and if you are new to trying it you need to be prepared to re-evaluate where you are on the 'actual vs. perceived' knowledge graph in the therapy space. Try therapy. And if you've tried it, remember it's not a one-time cure-all but rather a service.**
4. **Your mileage may vary**
5. **I'm not a lawyer; even if I were, I'm not your lawyer**
6. **Batteries include, but they don't work**

II. What's burnout anyway?

A. the best DevOps teams I've been a part of have one thing in common. A one-pizza team consisting of two to three team members that have an impossible amount of work on their collective kanbans. We continue to work beyond concerns for our health and well-being; we sacrifice time and time away from work for the lovely benefit of hurting ourselves

B. Is burnout bad? Nine out of ten doctors say yes, and the tenth doctor was unable to find the time to fill out our survey

III. Why do we burn out?

A. Inner drive,

Notes on No Fire Burns Forever — “I’m not a fire!” — Yes, yes you are. Or at least you are providing the grist for one. Creative things are called sparks, storms, ‘the light in your eyes,’ ignition, get-up-and-go, etc for a REASON

NOTES also on internal/partially-applied list slide for Promises: Promises we made in the past (Curse you, past me, eternal nemesis. And future me? Oh, I am gonna give it to that guy

NOTES: our belief in the self as protagonist, a tendency to play hero ball

B. Internal and external customers (note what those are)

1. Boss says “please can I have it”

As foretold, **Now I am going to talk to the bosses in the audience. Before I do, This goes under gift-giving rules — if you are not a boss, or a supervisor, or if people aren’t below you in the org chart, like me, this is the part where we workers all lean against the door and wait to hear what we’re getting for our birthday. Where it will be wrapped. How it will be hidden. Mostly it will be more work and some broccoli, which is a shame because even birthday broccoli needs refrigeration.**

So, bosses: This serves as your official reminder that people should tell you no. More often. Frequently, in fact. You should be keeping count of how often this happens — not as a form of vengeance but as a thermometer. If you only hear “Yes, I’ll get right on that” and “things are going great!” SOMETHING IS TERRIBLY WRONG. You as a boss have to explicitly encourage this behavior. Learning organizations do this. High-functioning teams do this. Recognize when your colleagues say no and uplift them.

2. Customer says “please can I have it”

3. A co-worker says “please can I have it”

4. Heathcliff comes by with a message from the fans of your app: Can I have it?

IV. Case Study 1 - **should be happening at the 8 to 10 minute mark** Suez Canal + I know what (split these if you need)

V. What does it _mean_ to have an authentic No?

A. Authenticity

B. Independent verification (if someone were to look in retrospect at your answer, was it accurate? Did you really not deliver the thing?)

C. We hope that’s true when we have ‘no’s’

D. What, then, is an authentic _yes_?

1. Case Study : The Inauthentic “All Work Is Acceptable” yes

VI. What about vacations? Doesn’t time off magically solve this problem?

A. Vacations kill the symptom, not the cause

B. If you’re on call during a vacation it doesn’t kill the symptom, either

C. Often a symptom of burnout is being unwilling or unable to take time away from work

VII. Wow, this is pretty depressing

A. Fear not, slide deck. Let’s talk _strategies_

VIII. Over-commitment punch card — credit the author

A. Saying no can hurt. What about all those internal dependencies?

IX. Control and influence circles

A. Don’t touch grass, touch this

B. Also, be wary of what grass you touch

C. Grass contains many forms of life, some of which are icky

X. Kinetic work

- A. What's kinetic, anyway? Really flail here
- B. Why does the setting of our work matter?
 - 1. Well, hold on now. It doesn't
 - 2. You shouldn't need to come into an office to work
 - 3. You should avoid places that require you to come into the office unless they are paying your pants fee
 - 4. Working from home? I've done it for a long time
 - 5. Here are some things about working from home
 - 6. Here are some ways you can partition work into appropriate segments via kinesiology
 - a) Throw computer out window; work from where it lands
 - b) Where are your happy places? Your sleep zones? Your book nooks? Your Nerd Corner? Keep work away from those as much as possible
 - c) Co-work locations and why they are better than an office in terms of dealing with burnout (you get socialization, they get to watch you suffer, it's win-win)

XI. Vocalizing limitations to yourself and others

- A. Don't excuse yourself of a limitation
- B. Don't stay in a place where your limitations are used as cudgels
- C. Don't use the limitations of others as a cudgel
- D. Living a life true to yourself
- E. Therapy

XII. Microactions

- A. Watch out! Some micro actions are bad
- B. Hustle and grind mindset: Oh no
- C. My friends are all cryptocurrencies: Oh no
- D. The micro actions that help:
 - 1. Sleep
 - 2. Sustenance
 - 3. Exercise
 - 4. Space (cleanly or at least cleanly in your perspective)
- E. It can be hard to get all four of these! For many, it's impossible. See the ones you can collect and treat it like pokemon
- F. When we do this, we are getting into the units of work of our own health and well-being. An internal kanban, if you will.
- G. OK. One more kanban hit and I'm off the stuff for good

XIII. Meditation and Journaling

- A. Yeah, we've all heard these, haven't we
- B. Meditation specifically about saying 'no' —
 - 1. Before the answer or before you make a decision
 - 2. After the tough answers
- C. Journalism around the same
 - 1. Keep a note in your journal specifically for your rejections; think about how it was the right decision to say no; think about how it feels to know that the work needed to be done but it wasn't the right time for you to do it (or that someone else could do it)

XIV. Conclusion

- A. You're worth it

- B. Knowing yourself, like managing your own flow of work, is critical to knowing and managing others**
- C. Burnout has negative consequences; we all deal with it and it can't be avoided completely. I hope that this has given you some fresh ideas on how to mitigate it in your life.**
- D. Let's keep the conversation going — You can find me on GitHub and Twitter; you can enter issues against this talk at [repository URL] or you can give me direct feedback as well as finding me around the conference. I am not promising to have all the answers, or even the right answers, and every time I can get some new perspectives on this sort of thing I LOVE IT.**