

# **How to deal with toxic people**

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# Gina Häußge

- 42 years old
- Software engineer
- Maker & boulderer
- PSF Fellow & GitHub Star
- 100% Nerd
- Creator & full-time maintainer of [OctoPrint](#)



# What kind of bad behaviour?

(Trigger warning)



# Entitlement

Why isn't this obscure feature implemented already that I need for my work?

How rude of you to refuse to implement something I require!

Wow, this bug is still open six months later? Get off your lazy  
 and fix it already!

# Frustration

This crap just cost me thousands of dollars, 😡 you for ever releasing this!

WELL THANKS FOR NOTHING!

I just updated and nothing works anymore, THIS IS THE LAST TIME I UPDATE!

# Attacks



YOU!!!

LOL, you clearly SUCK as a dev!  
off!

Whoever designed this  
steaming pile of  should be  
shot!

# Coping strategies





## Disengage & cool down

- Don't answer hot-headed
- Run through your **stress response cycle**
- Only then respond



# Stress response?



# Remind of realities

- Open Source = no demands
- **collaboration & cooperation**
- Not just code, everything helps!
- "Patches welcome" 🤙



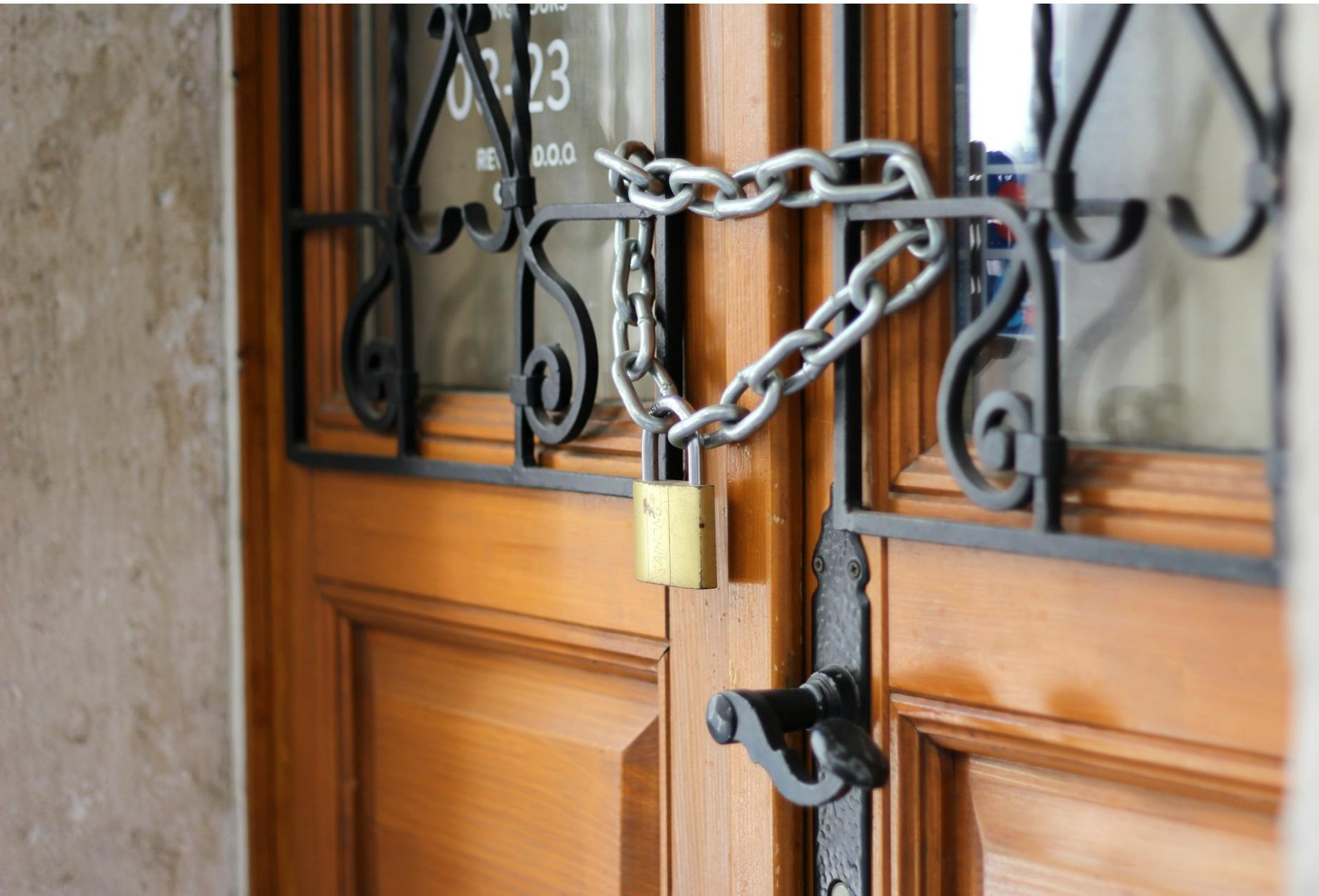
# Remind of boundaries

- You deserve **respect & decency**
- Make overstepping clear
- Enforce community rules (CoC)
- "The Social Contract of Open Source" (Brett Cannon)



# Additional measures

- De-prioritize issue
- Point the abuser to the door
- Ban hammer (last resort!)
- **Don't accept abuse!**



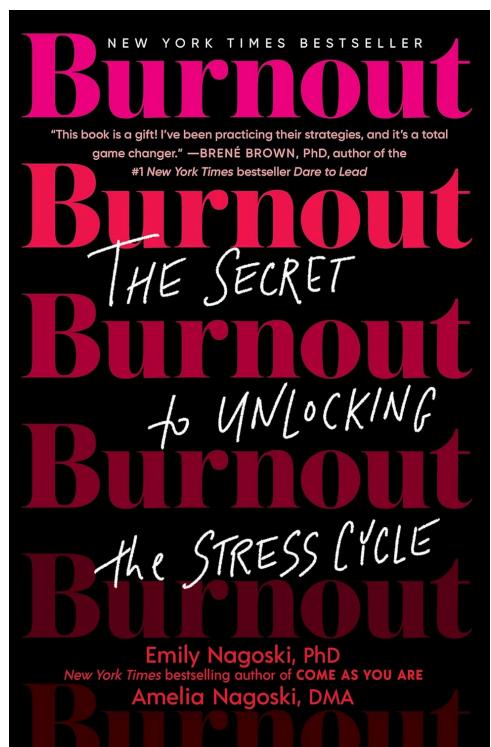
# How the community can help

- "This is just like it is in Open Source!" 🤢
- Call out bad behaviour!
- **Always remember the human**

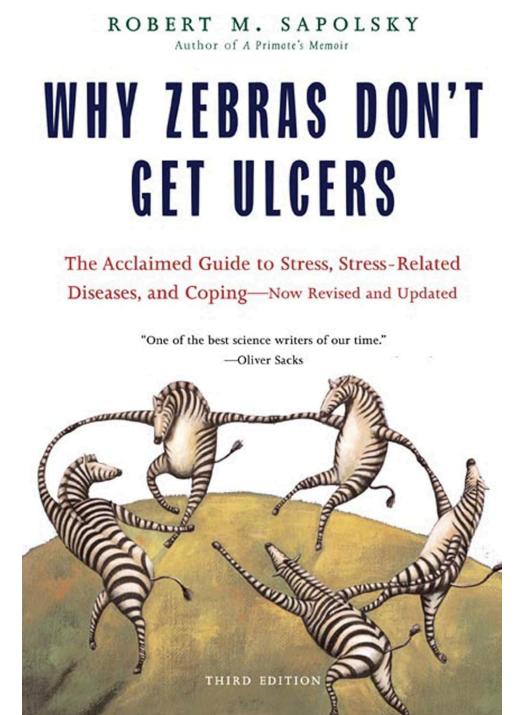


# Further reading

**Burnout**  
Emily & Amelia  
Nagoski



**Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers**  
Robert M. Sapolsky



**The Social Contract of Open Source**  
Brett Cannon



# Thank you for your attention!

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