

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



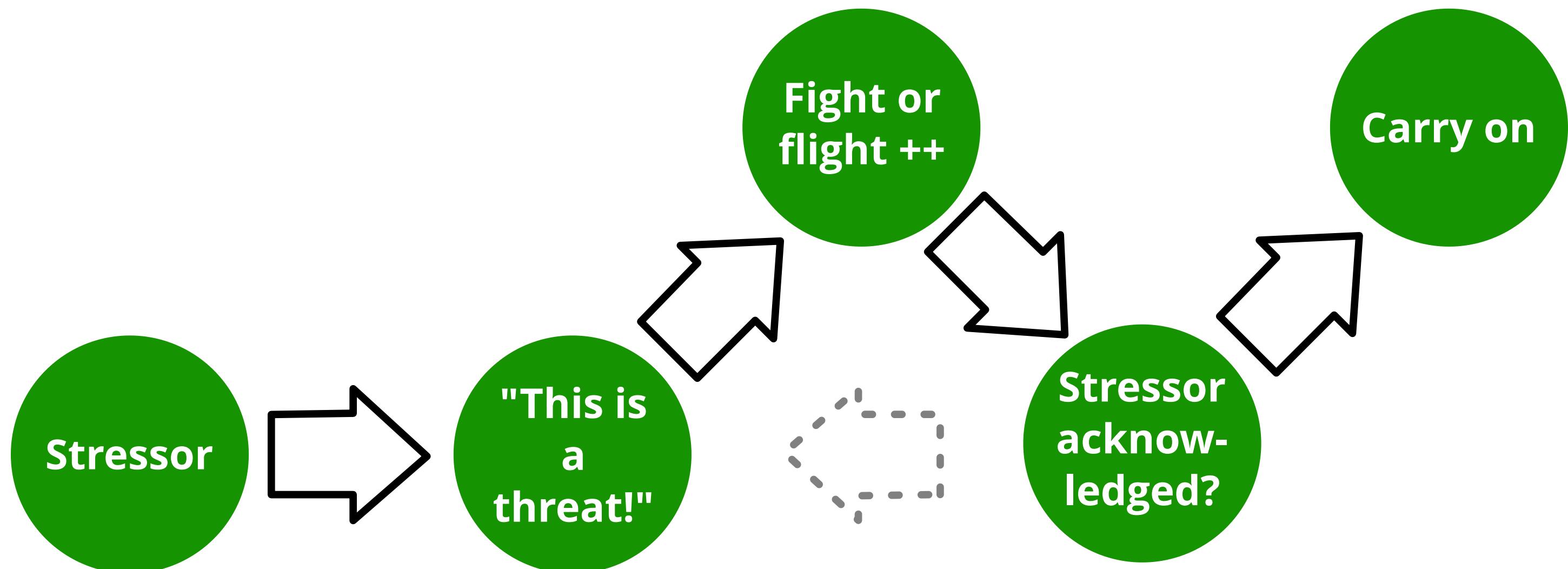


Disengage & cool down

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



Stress response cycle?



Remind of realities

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



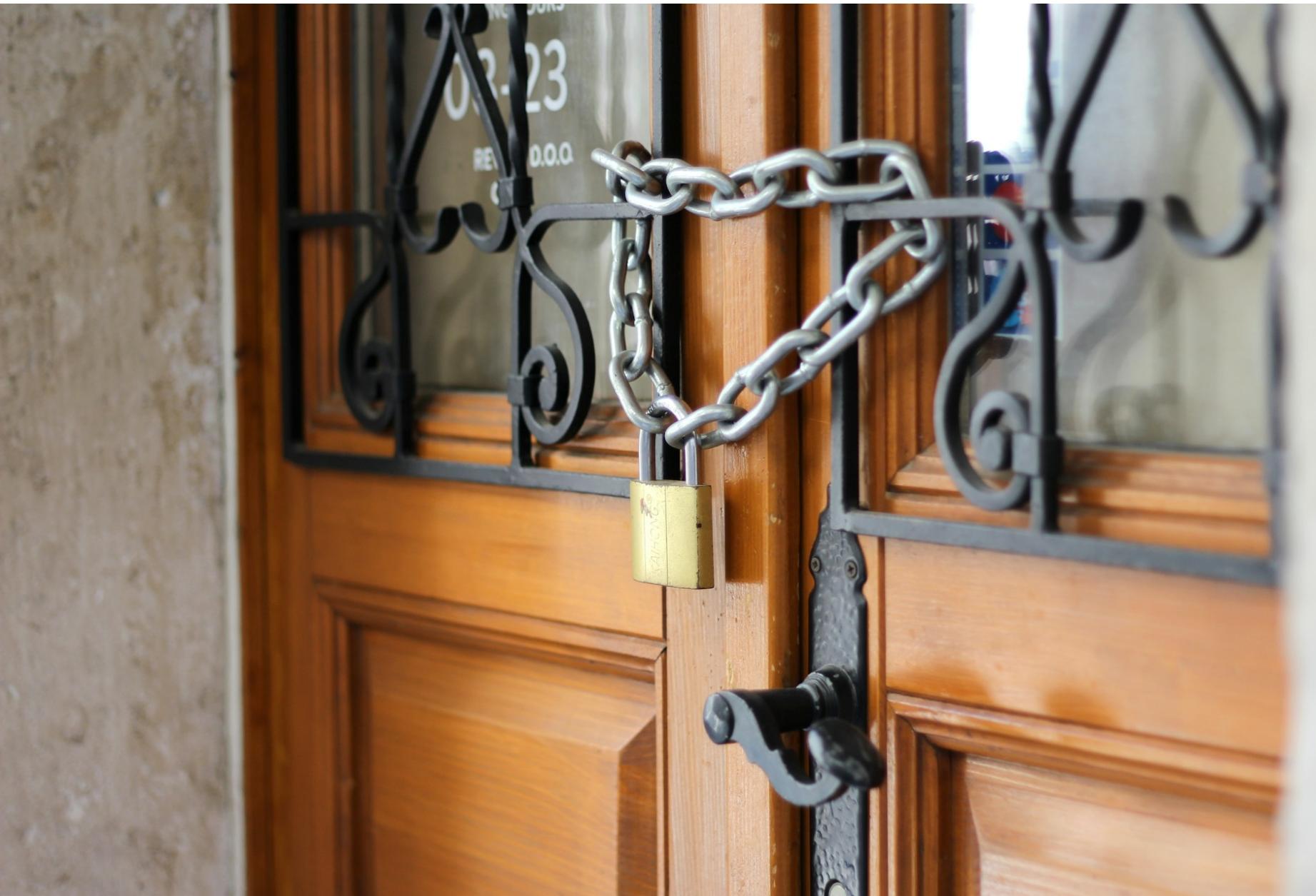
Remind of boundaries

- 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!**



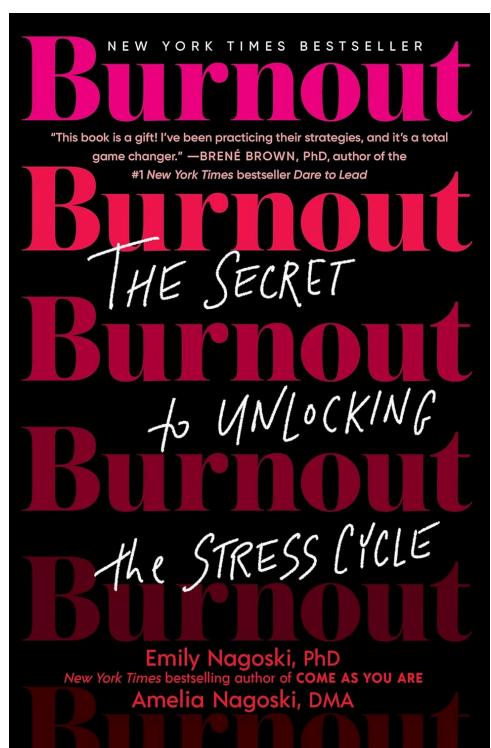
How the community can help

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

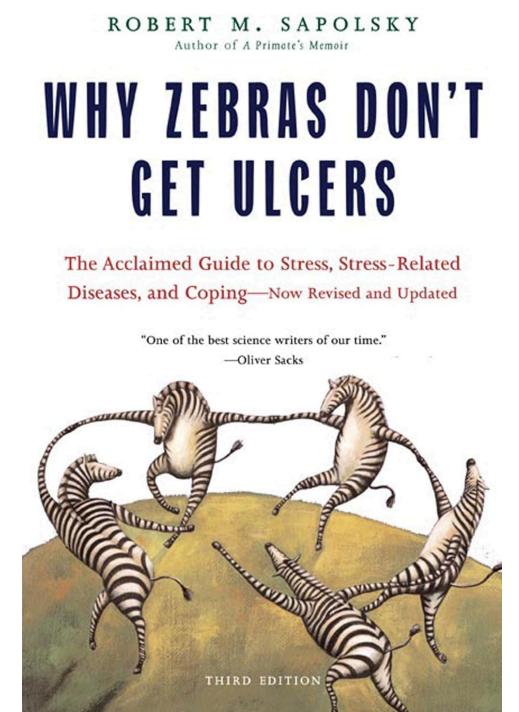


Further reading

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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