Chapter 11: Pressure

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Pressure

- The professional developer is calm and decisive under pressure
  - As the pressure grows he or she adheres to his/her training and disciplines, knowing that they are the best way to meet the deadlines and commitments that are pressing on him or her

Avoiding Pressure

The best way to stay calm under pressure is to avoid the situations that cause pressure

Avoidance may not eliminate the pressure completely, but it can go a long way towards minimizing and shortening the high-pressure periods

Avoiding Pressure: Commitments

Avoid committing to deadlines that we aren't sure we can meet

Business will always want commitments because they want to estimate risk

The risk is quantified and presented to the business so that they can manage properly

**Business makes commitment without consulting development**

Honor bound to help the business find a way to meet the commitment, but we are not honor bound to accept the commitments

But when your business is failing, and your paycheck is delayed because of missed commitments, it's hard not to feel the pressure

Commitment: Staying Clean

- Professionals do not succumb to the temptation to create a mess in order to move quickly
  - Avoid pressure by keeping our systems, our code, and our design as clean as possible
  - Avoid messes
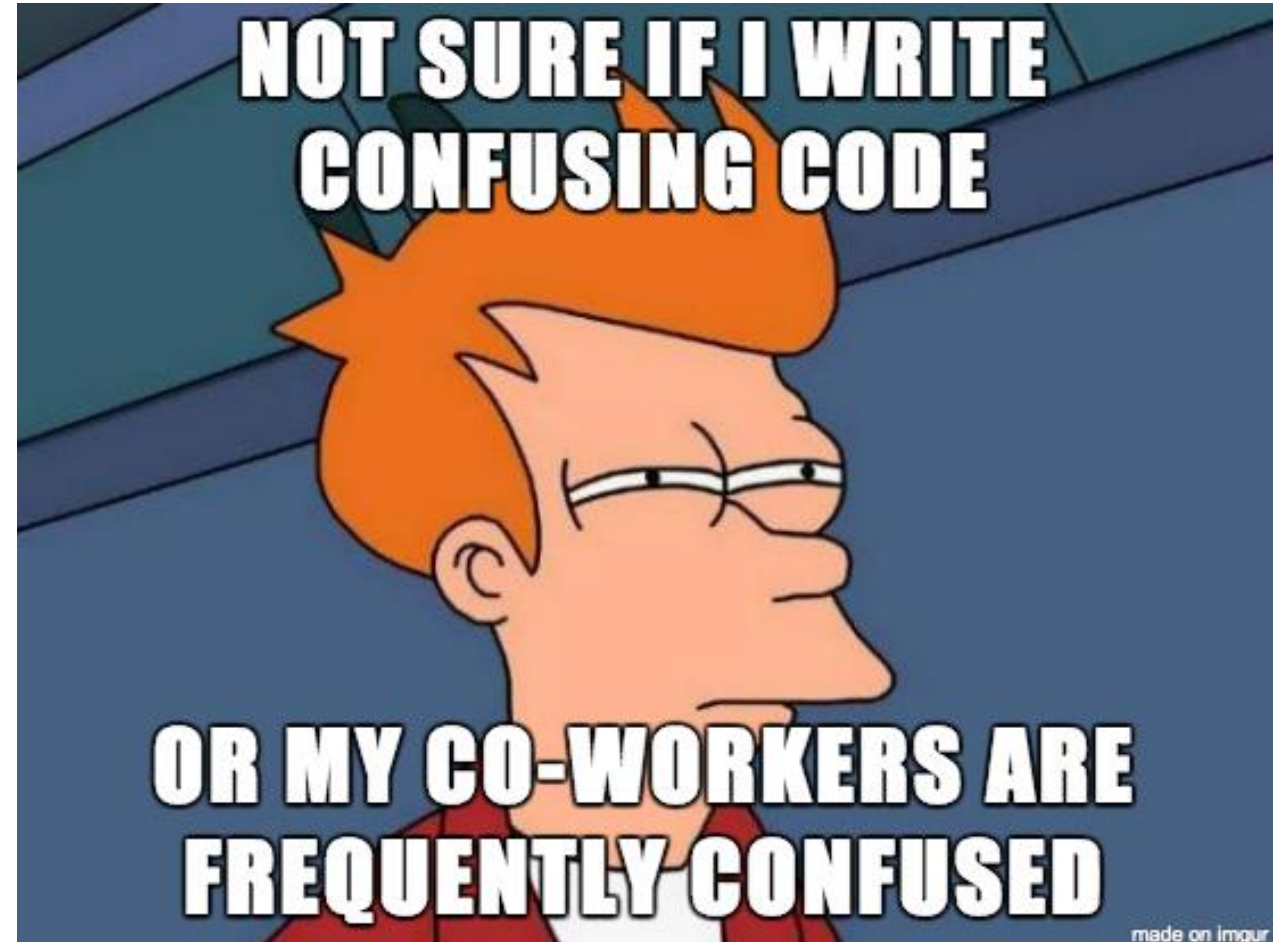
Commitment: Crisis Discipline

If in a crisis you follow your disciplines, then you truly believe in those disciplines

If you change your behavior in a crisis, then you don't truly believe in your normal behavior

Choose disciplines that you feel comfortable following in a crisis

Follow them all the time

Following these disciplines is the best way to avoid getting into a crisis

Handling Pressure

- Don't Panic
  - Manage your stress
  - Avoid rushing it will drive you deeper into the hole
    - Slow down, think the problem through, plot a course to the best possible outcome
- Communicate
  - Let your team and your superiors know you are in trouble – avoid surprises
- Rely on your disciplines
  - The reason you have disciplines is to give you guidance through times of high pressure
- Get help
  - Pair program – you will get it done faster with fewer defects

Chapter 11: Key Points

- The trick to handling pressure is to avoid it when you can, and weather it when you can't

- You avoid it by managing commitments, following your disciplines, and keeping clean

- You weather it by staying calm, communicating, following your disciplines, and getting help