



I wish DevOps were this easy.

Depression Memes For DevOps Teens

self-care for server janitors and other humans

Ani (they/he) (views own) (@deletingthat)

Hello and welcome to Depression Memes For DevOps Teens!



Views own. Cold Vs Asthma. Trigger warning.



I might sound angry and frustrated often FOR V GOOD REASONS. I'm very young. You can find my employment history on this series of tubes they call the Internet. I don't hate any of them - recruiters, please no - and cherish my time at each workplace at least as learning opportunities.



This talk is about my toolbox. I'll tell you about the tools I found or assembled. But I can't give you one. You need to assemble your own toolbox. If you feel you don't need one, that's fine. You can help people around you. There are dozens of us!



SWIMMING POOL

SAFETY RULES

- Unattended solo bathing is prohibited.
- Children shall not use the pool without an adult in attendance.
- Children 3 years old and younger, as well as any child not potty trained, must wear snug fitting plastic pants or a water resistant swim diaper.
- No glass articles allowed in or around the pool.
- No food, drink, or wrappers shall be permitted within ten feet (10') of pool.
- No running or rough play allowed.
- No spitting, spouting of water, or blowing nose in the pool.
- No "cutoffs" allowed.
- No swimming allowed during heavy rain or when thunder and lightning can be seen or heard.

HOURS OF OPERATION: DAWN TO DUSK MAXIMUM CAPACITY: 175

DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCY

Dozens! I don't speak for all of us, though. This talk is rated D for Descriptive, not P for prescriptive.

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Ani, they/he. PE since summer 2015. It's like being an SRE but better, which is like devops but better.



Begin with a platinum-tier enterprise-grade roadmap:

Platinum-tier Enterprise-grade Roadmap

1. On being new: a rant about job interviews
2. On time: a rant about capitalism
3. On burnout: extension of rant about capitalism
4. On help: a rant about bubble baths
5. On toes: a rant about [REDACTED BY SCP FOUNDATION]

New, job interviews, so delightful. //// Time. Dr Who joke. Managing time, projects, managers, a career... MY ELDRITCH POWERS! Rant abt capitalism. //// Next, burnout. Oof. Rant abt capitalism again, never enough. After that, abt help: asking and looking within. Bubble baths I guess, fast running out. Finally, about toes. WAT. Yes. This one I'll keep secret. You could say I'm keeping you ON YOUR TOES! Lots of ranting, lots of cursing. If anyone keeps count, please let me know at the end. I NEED METRICS.

On being new: A rant about job interviews

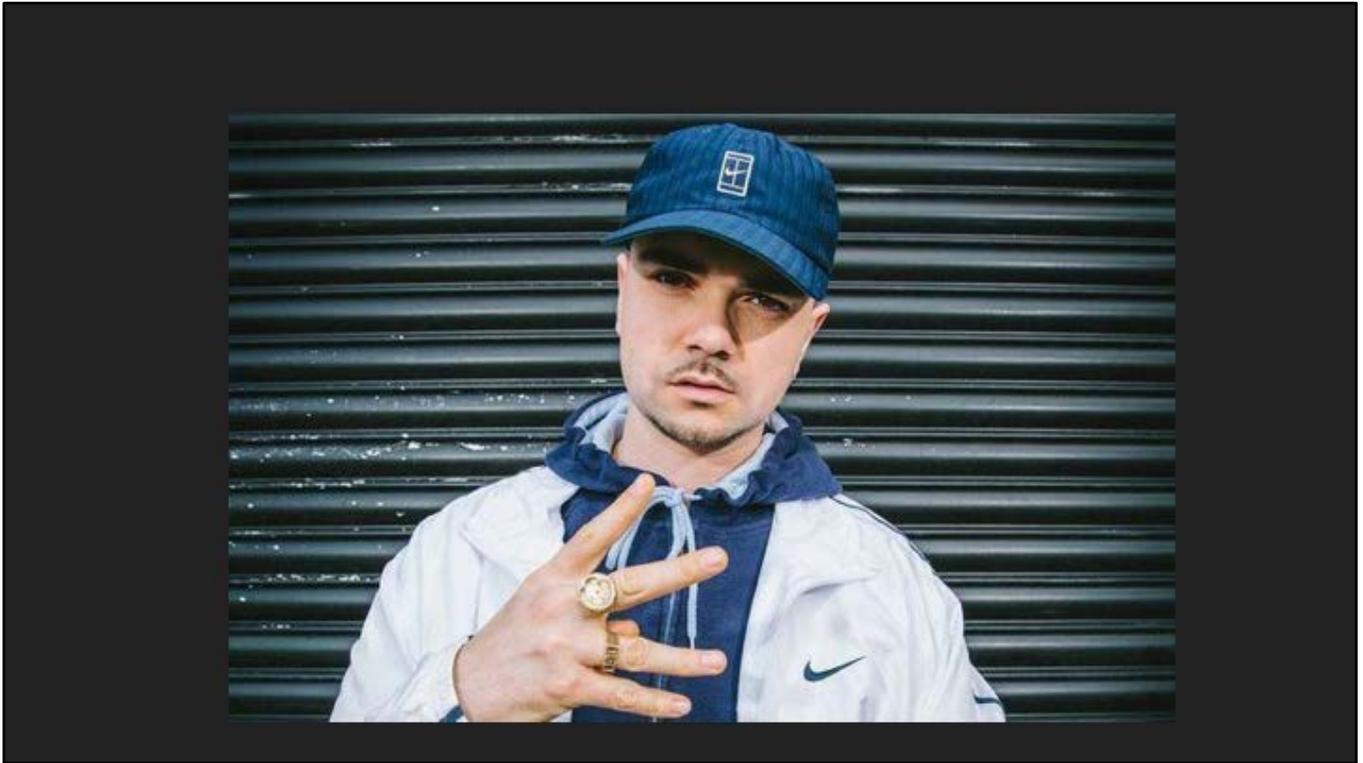
Being new. We have all been there. Passed the goddamn interviews. Caused our first ever outage! I dropped all production databases on a region master by pasting commands into the wrong terminal. During peak traffic hours. Took down all of our east coast operations. Shit, getting too specific. We all know what it's like to be new. With all that collective knowledge, why is it still so hard? Why is imposter syndrome still allowed to thrive?



Out of school / relocating -> bewildering. I moved NYC -> Bay.



Isolation. Not even lunch time: too busy, or tight cliques (lifelong fear).
Ate alone for MONTHS. At one point, managed to get a coworker to go to lunch with me but they DITCHED me midway.



More than just a new cog in the wheel.
Majority of waking hours: at work.
Managers / mentors: invest hard in improving noob lives!



Took me a lot of time and a job switch to feel like I belonged. Passed some of the hardest job interviews. Got an actual mentor who helped me settle in. Wasted a lot of time trying to be the best instead of relaxing in my noobness. Take the time to get LIFE right.

cowboy advice

1. be rootin
2. be tootin
3. and by god be shootin

but most of all

be kind

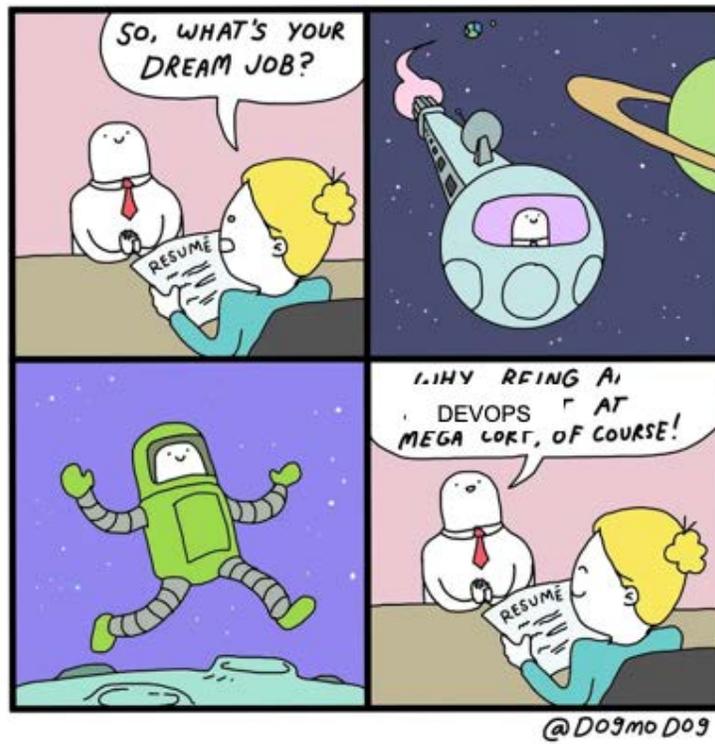


Each noob is a human being!!!

On time: A rant about capitalism

JIT all my life: hw, projects, studying.

Fine when tech support. But no vision. When architect, or even senior engg?



“Where do you see yourself n years from now?”
Nothing had ever prepared me.
Nobody asked beyond oh-so-Indian “engineer or a doctor?”
Struggling as noob in current job.



Lemon saw a pattern in my updates during the team standup.
“I’m still trying to figure this out”. “I’m blocked on this.” “This one thing is in my way.”
Lemon wasn’t just present at standup, they were paying attention and identifying problems.



I was afraid of management: hands-off \$1, micro-management \$2.
Found the sweet spot.
Plan to improve my perf.



They are a great manager, y'all! And I helped train them. Needed some tailoring so it could optimally work for me.

Regular 1:1s. Agendas for 1:1s. Regular feedback. Async comms. Follow-ups.

Topics: my perf, my mid- and long-term career growth.



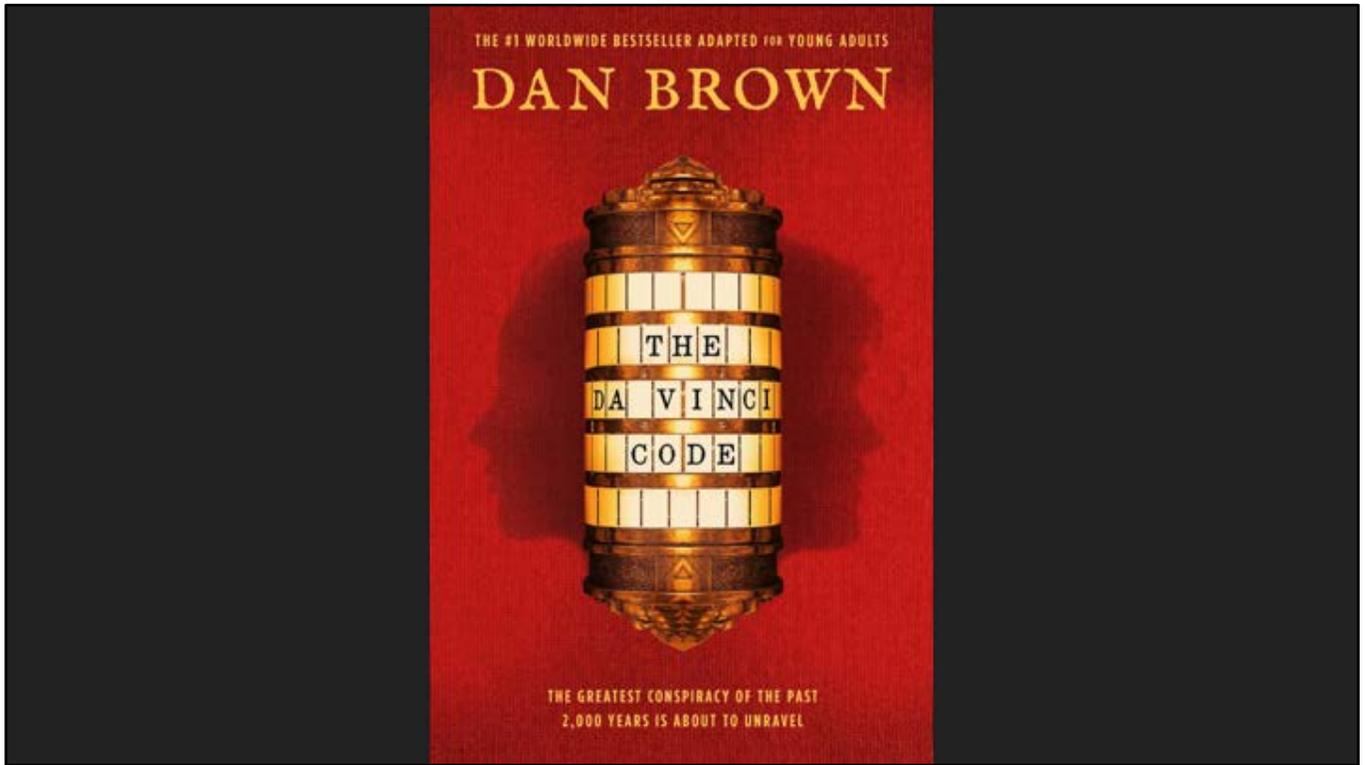
Moved project talk to 1:1s with my team lead Blossom.
Their gluten-free vegan baking experiments and my herb garden's progress.
Fun, but not that useful.

On burnout: more rant about capitalism

Great manager, great lead, great work. Still burned out.
Remember ADHD and ASD? Also, subjected to abuse.
Overachiever, imposter, digging for 1% rather than celebrating the 99%.



Capitalism esp in our industry seems to thrive on taking new college grads, grinding them down, and spitting them out to make way for fresh grist for the mill.



I'm not saying the Illuminati are to blame. It's OBVIOUSLY the Majestic 12! Seriously though, it's a culture problem and though new grads or new hires have a good share of the responsibility, it's not all on them.



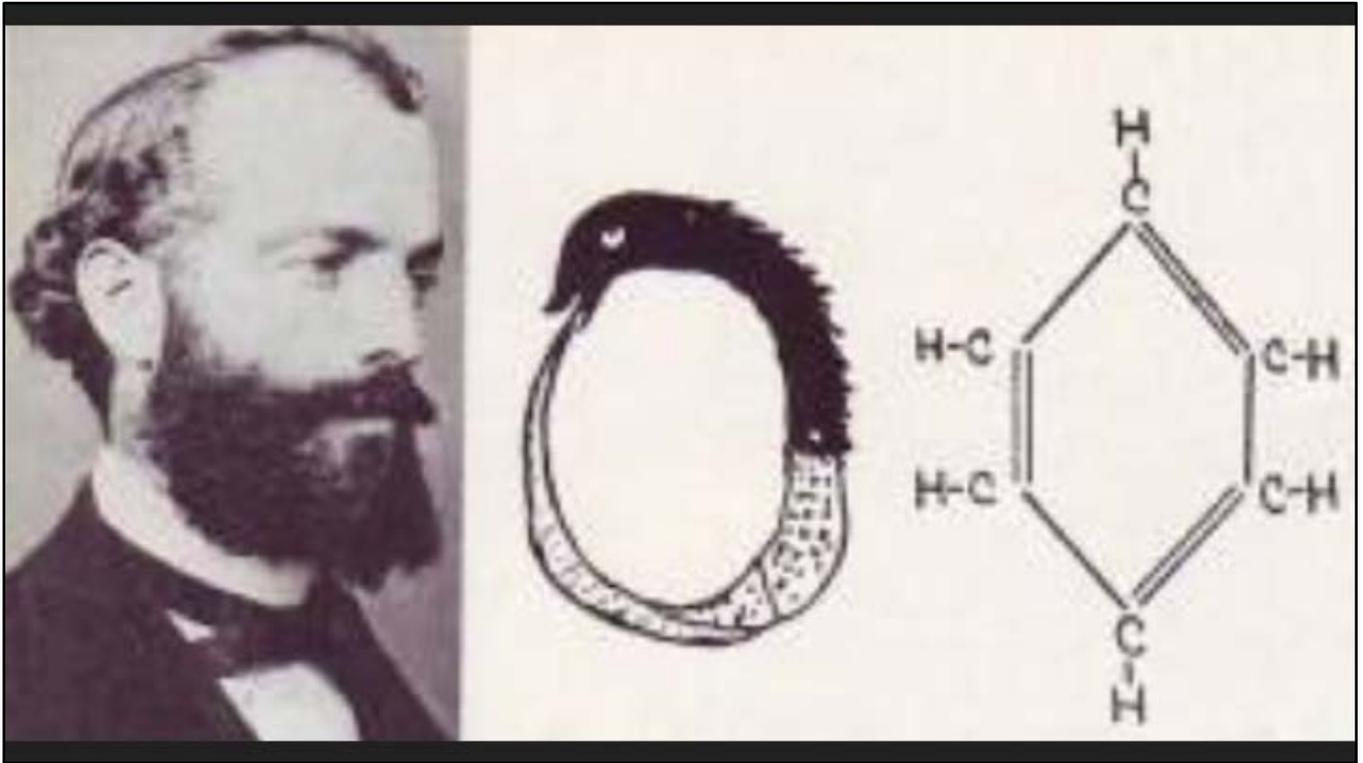
It's not as simple as having a "work-life balance", which most people take to mean "be physically present at work only 9-5 m-f".



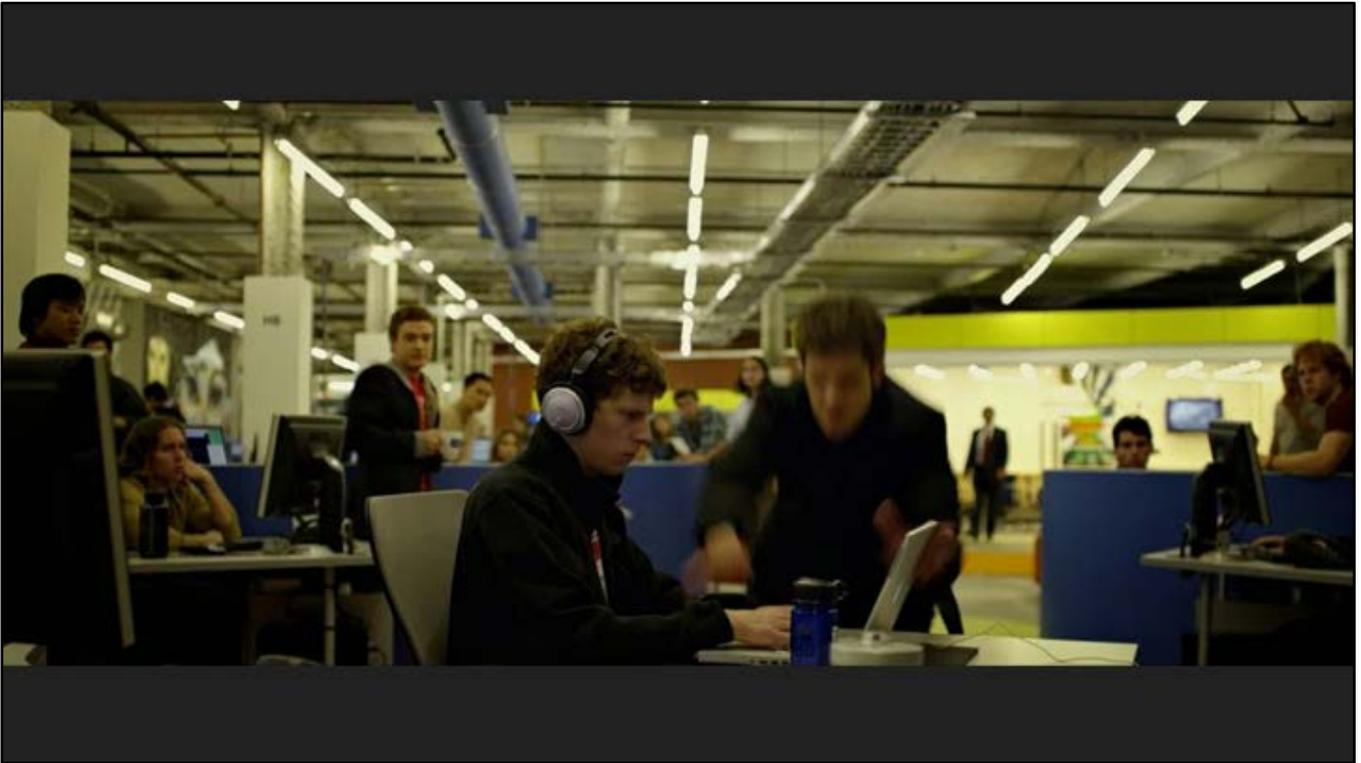
My work as a PE, your work as an SRE or sysadmin, is creative work. Sure, we aren't painting fancy fucking paintings or strumming bollocksy harps. But we are still creating: be it a runbook, a script, a piece of automation, whatever the fuck it is people do with Kubernetes... We are creating.



Creativity doesn't flow out of a tap, but I get ideas in the shower.



Even in my dreams sometimes.



There are days when I'm hardcore in the zone: great commute, great latte, whatever.
There are days when the flow only begins after lunch.
There are days when I get absolutely nowhere at all.
And I had to learn that it's all okay. My productivity is not consistent.



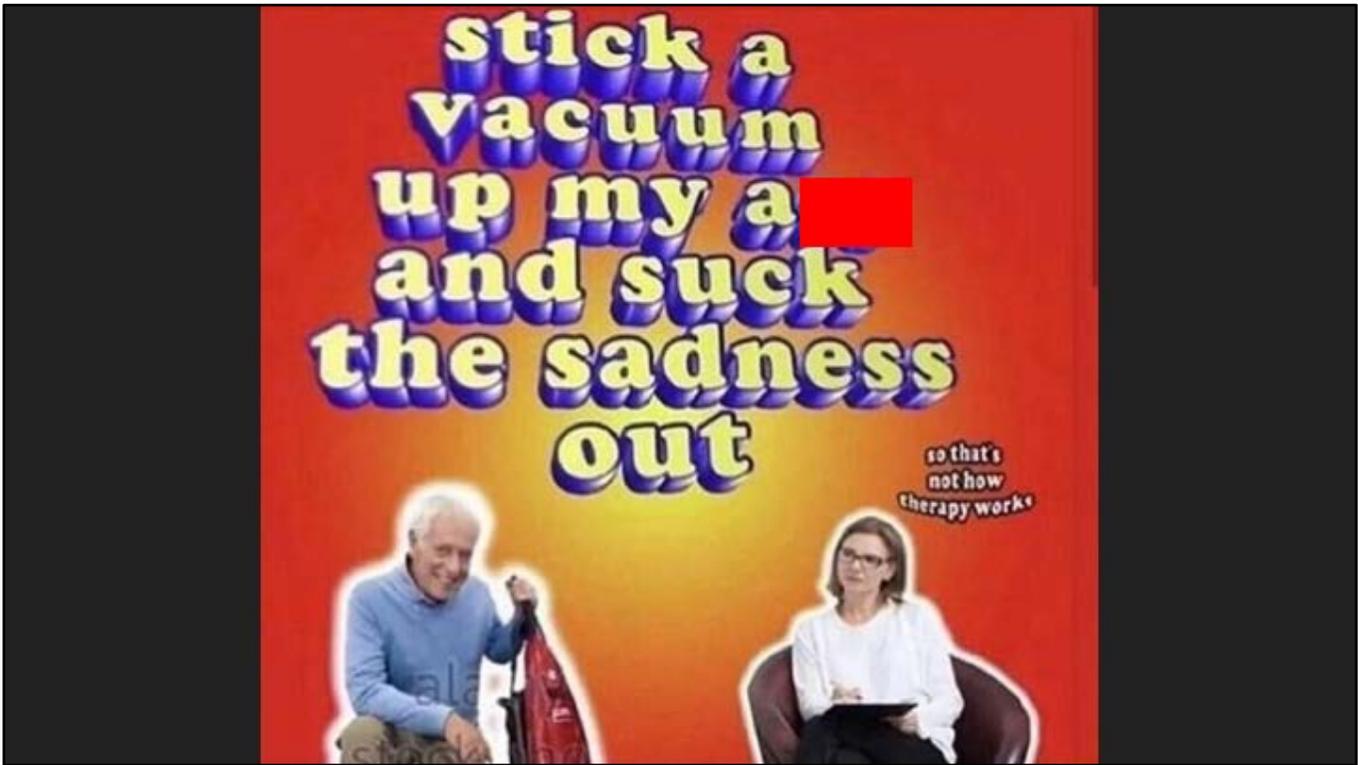
Steve Weis
@sweis

Is it weird to be jealous of the corporate dystopia workspaces from 1990s movies?

Neo would be sharing that space with 4 people in an open office plan today.



But that means taking care of myself is a lot harder.
Already at a disadvantage: open office.
Mental health awareness could still be better.



I go to therapy 2x/week now! Learning to spot the warning signs is still so hard, but brain mechanic helps so much.



fâtima í
@_r0sewater

how to know you've internalized
capitalism:

- you determine your worth based on your productivity
- you feel guilty for resting
- your primary concern is to make yourself profitable
- you neglect your health
- you think "hard work" is what brings happiness

My employer is great: unlimited sick time, fair amount of PTO, STD. I use PTO and sick time liberally. Still hard to do.
But self-worth is so much more than your job or your skill at doing whatever w/-Kubernetes.

- Trouble reliably paying bills?
- Procrastination struggle before deadlines?
- Hard to wrap up projects even after the tasty bits?

**Get screened
for adult
ADHD!!!**

- Trouble reliably paying non-auto bills?
- Procrastination struggle before deadlines?
- Hard to wrap up projects even after the tasty bits are done?

UNIONIZE! 🦊🦊🦊

On help: a rant about bubble baths

Great time to talk about help huh!
Let's go back to my previous job so I can rant.

Latest from TechLead



Why I'm so successful. (while you're still eating instant ramen alone)

TechLead 15K views · 3 hours ago

Ex-Google TechLead tells you what he thinks about the poor, losers, and haters, as a millionaire. Visit <http://brilliant.org> ...

New

+8 MORE



my wife left me. (she couldn't handle success) (monetized)

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One day, I came home to an empty apartment. Tips and tricks on how to improve an instant ramen dinner.

CC

First lead kept all the keys.
Mon and alert configs: frozen
Much tribal knowledge
Where tribe meant this one chap

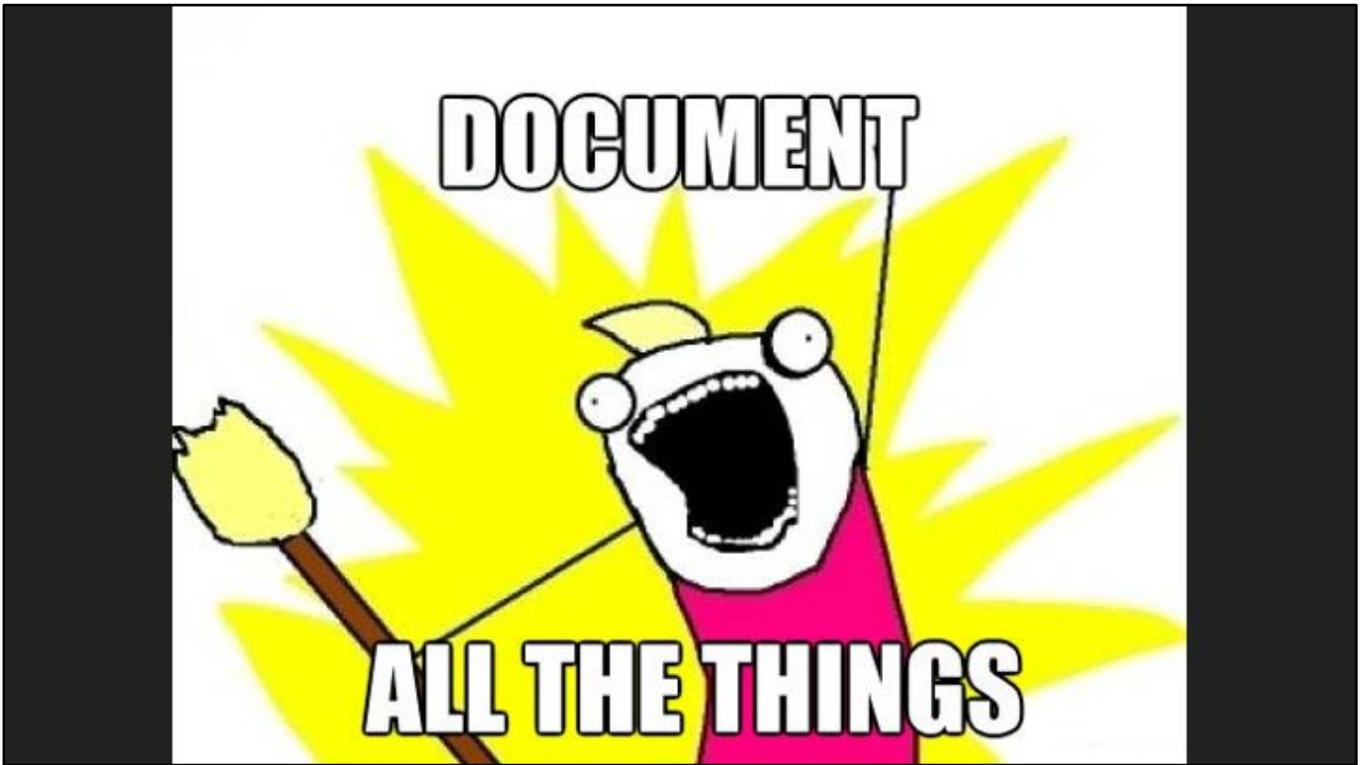


RUN from such places if you are new

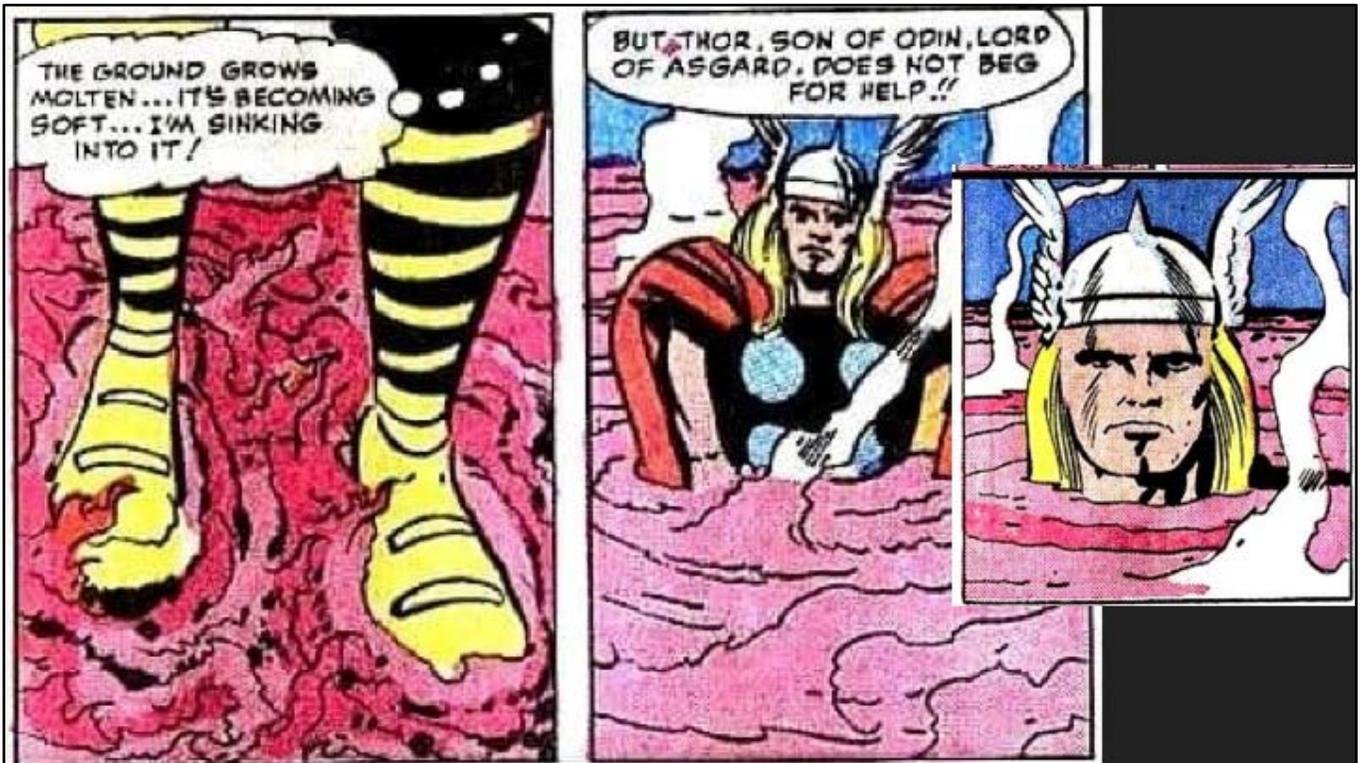
<http://www.catb.org/~esr/faqs/smart-questions.html>

But I didn't, of course. Not until Kara Swisher. Learned to ask questions the smart way. How to unblock myself:

- Struggle for an hour at most.
- Well-formed questions.
- Sometimes, everyone assumes the q is obvious and they are stupid to not know.
- Annoy people, sure. You'll get better.
- Get better at finding the right forum.
- NEVER ask 1:1 without documenting.
- DOCUMENT! ALL! THE! THINGS!



DO IT



Not just at work. I deal with being raised in toxic masculinity.
So hard to talk about some stuff. Took me years to admit I was depressed.
Still hard to say the word "abuse".
Still hard to ask for help and feel vulnerable.

What about them bubble baths?

Self-care takes different forms. Sometimes, all you need is a bubble bath and a good book.

Or beers with friends. But sometimes you need MORE.

You are more than your career.

Once again. You are not just PE/SRE/DevOps.

On toes

What to do when they get stepped on

Love and empathy for all humans aside. No matter what you do, this will happen. Corporate buzzwords like “assume good intent” will get thrown at you.

when you make a joke about your mental illness and a helpful stranger appears to inform you that your joke is insensitive to people with mental illness



Ring theory will get violated.



You may end up feeling gaslit, like everything is your fault and everyone else is doing their best.
That's called shifting the burden onto you.



what?

holy shit that sucks

HOLY SHIT THAT SUCKS



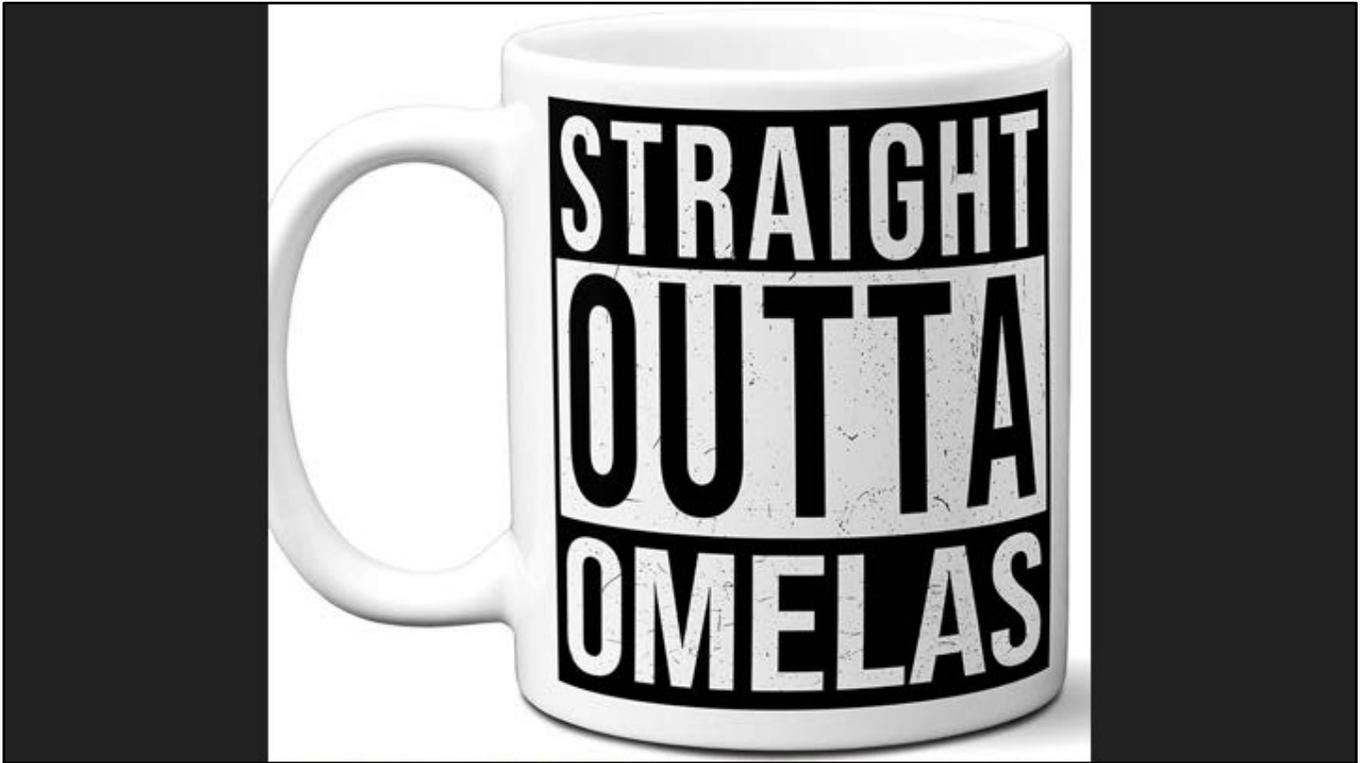
It took me so long to learn to trust my feelings and recognize them as valid. That led me to learning that I'm responsible to serve my own interests.



And that was a much better defense than putting up walls and pretending like my problems don't exist.



- Problems can be fixed. But sometimes, the fix for YOU can be just walking away.
- I know it's hard and not everyone can. I'm on an H1B visa.
- Back to square one: interviewing SUCKS.



- Sometimes you walk away, even if it isn't Omelas
- Brand names aren't everything.
- Loyalty goes both ways.

Key Takeaways, or What The Fuck Can I Do?

- If you have met one neurodivergent person, you have met ONE neurodivergent person.
- Being new is HARD. Be there for your new hires, make it a priority.
- If you are new, take the time to get your life right. Aim for sustainability.
- All of us are human beings!
- Agendas for 1:1s
- Career conversations with manager, regular feedback, project talk with lead
- Watch for signs of burnout! We do creative work, so WLB isn't that easy.
- Use PTO, sick time, short-term disability AKA medical leave...
- YOU ARE MORE THAN YOUR CAREER / SKILLSET / OUTPUT
- Learn how to ask for help, both externally and within yourself.
- TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF.
- Sometimes you need to walk away. Loyalty to your employer has limits.
- INTERVIEWING FUCKING SUCKS ARGHBLARGH DON'T TRY TO HIRE ME

“Hello babies. Welcome to Earth. It's hot in the summer and cold in the winter. It's round and wet and crowded. On the outside, babies, you've got a hundred years here. There's only one rule that I know of, babies - "God damn it, you've got to be KIND.”

God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, Kurt Vonnegut

With that, I will now walk away. Even though y'all aren't Omelas. Remember Bill and Ted's rule: be excellent to each other!