Redefining productivity during burnout

April Sides

Storytime

Waking up
Heart/mind racing
Do NOT want to get up

Morning run

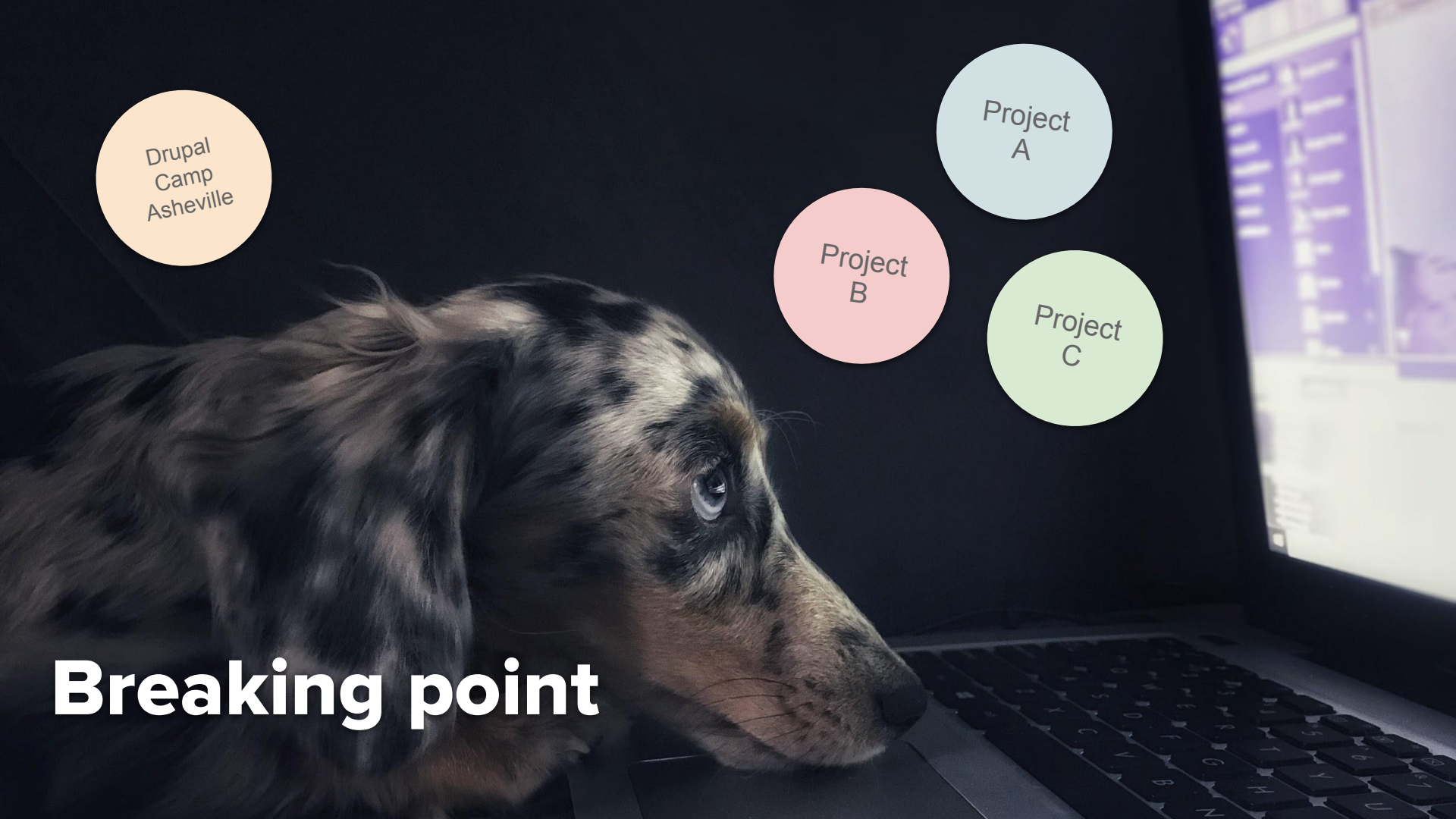
Couldn’t breathe
before she started

With friends
Couldn’t focus
or be present

At work

Couldn’t think and solve problems

Maybe a brain boosting supplement will “fix” my brain.



Breaking point

You can’t let your failures define you.

You have to let your failures teach you.

BARACK OBAMA

Learning from failure

Wasn’t set up for success

Said “yes” to too many things

Wasn’t managing stress

Photo by Karolina Grabowska from Pexels

April Sides

Senior Developer at Lullabot
Director of Drupal Camp Asheville
Drupal CWG Community Support Team

weekbeforenext

weekbeforenext

aprilsides

Lullabot

DRUPAL CAMP ASHEVILLE

What is burnout?

HelpGuide is an independently funded nonprofit organization. DONATE NOW

HelpGuide

Burnout Prevention and Treatment

If constant stress has you feeling helpless, disillusioned, and completely exhausted, you may be on the road to burnout. Learn what you can do to regain your balance and feel positive and hopeful again.

Help us help others

Your support helps us remain free and independent and provide trustworthy mental health information.

Give Now

Caregiver Stress and Burnout

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress.

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands.

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

What does it feel like?

Physical signs and symptoms

- Feeling tired and drained most of the time
- Lowered immunity, frequent illness
- Frequent headaches or muscle pain
- Change in appetite or sleep habits
- *Shaky hands or eye twitches*
- *Feeling like you can't breathe*

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

Emotional signs and symptoms

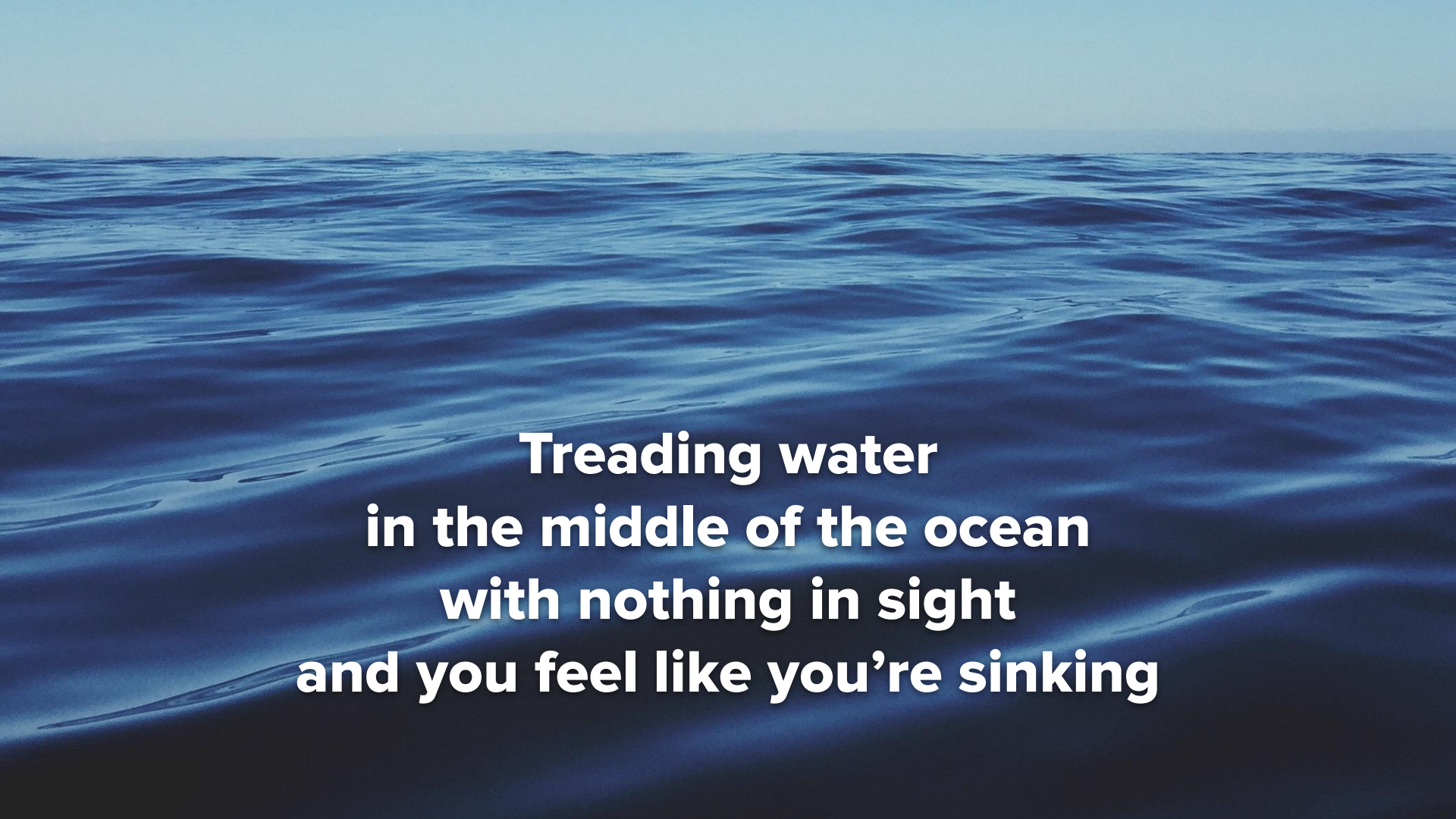
- Sense of failure and self-doubt
- Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated
- Detachment, feeling alone in the world
- Loss of motivation
- Increasingly cynical and negative outlook
- Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment
- *Lack of emotion or emotional regulation*

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

Behavioral signs and symptoms

- Withdrawing from responsibilities
- Isolating yourself from others
- Procrastinating, taking longer to get things done
- Using food, drugs, or alcohol to cope
- Taking out your frustrations on others
- Skipping work or coming in late and leaving early

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment


Treading water
in the middle of the ocean
with nothing in sight
and you feel like you’re sinking

Who is at risk?

Personality traits

- Perfectionistic
- Pessimistic
- Controlling
- High-achiever
- *People-pleaser*
- *Selfless and caring*

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

Predisposed,
not predetermined.

What are the causes?

Work-related causes

- Feeling like you have little or no control over your work
- Lack of recognition or reward for good work
- Unclear or overly demanding job expectations
- Working in a chaotic or high-pressure environment

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

Lifestyle causes

- Working too much, without enough time for socializing or relaxing
- Lack of close, supportive relationships
- Taking on too many responsibilities, without enough help from others
- Not getting enough sleep

Help Guide: Burnout Prevention and Treatment

Counter-productive productivity

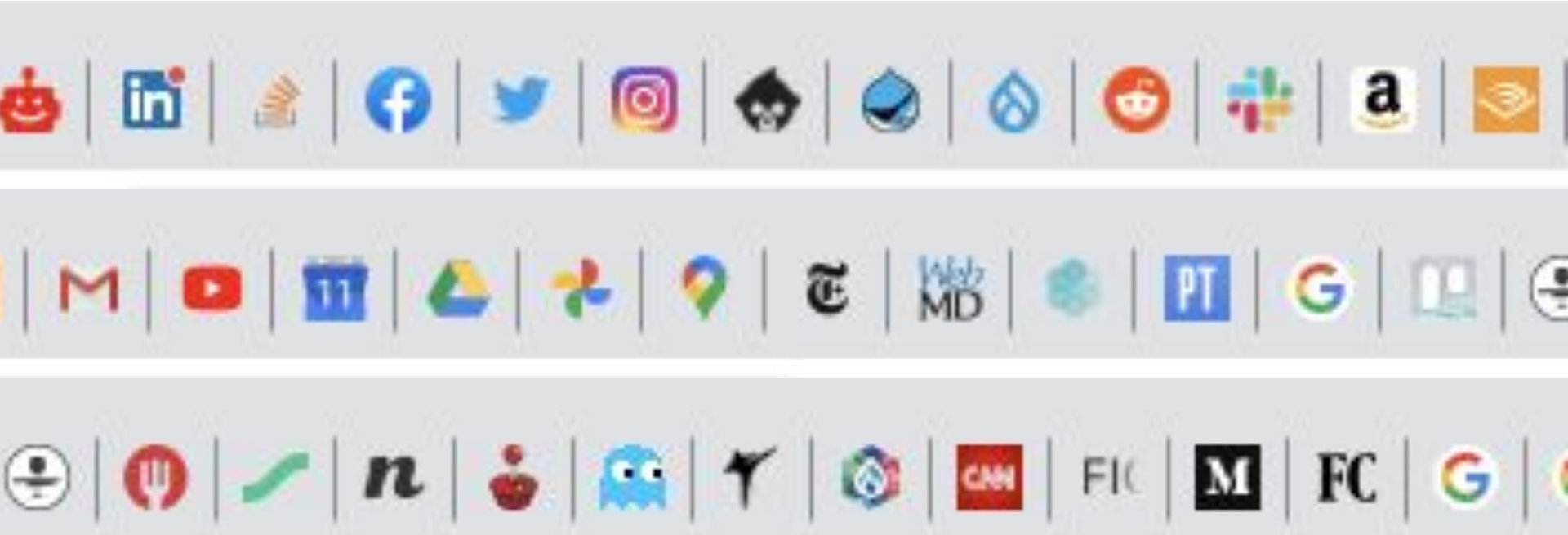
Notifications

Managing notifications

- Remove frequent notifications
- Use Do Not Disturb mode
- Try website and app blockers
- Set app time limits

Task switching

(aka multitasking)



Replacement cycle

2.5 years

3 - 5 years

Irreplaceable

Effects of task switching

- Damage to the brain in the region of empathy and emotional control
- Loss of productivity from interrupted flow
- Reduces concentration and focus
- Lowers your IQ and emotional intelligence
- Causes stress, anxiety, overwhelm and burnout
- Affects impulse control and decision making
- Affects creativity

Thrive Global: 9 Ways Multitasking is Killing Your Brain and Productivity, According to Neuroscientists

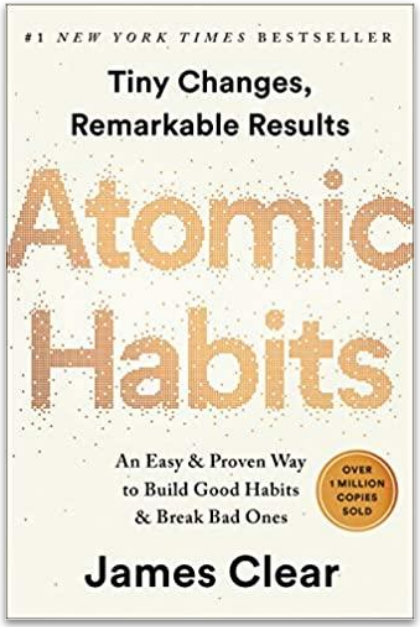
Multiple monitors

How do I avoid burnout?

Self-care

Manage self-care habits

- Take inventory of your habits
- Focus on one small,
  systems level change at a time
- Read/listen to **Atomic Habits**
  - Good Habits: make it obvious,
    attractive, easy, and satisfying.
  - Bad Habits: make it invisible,
    unattractive, difficult, and unsatisfying.
  - Habit stacking (like IFTTT)

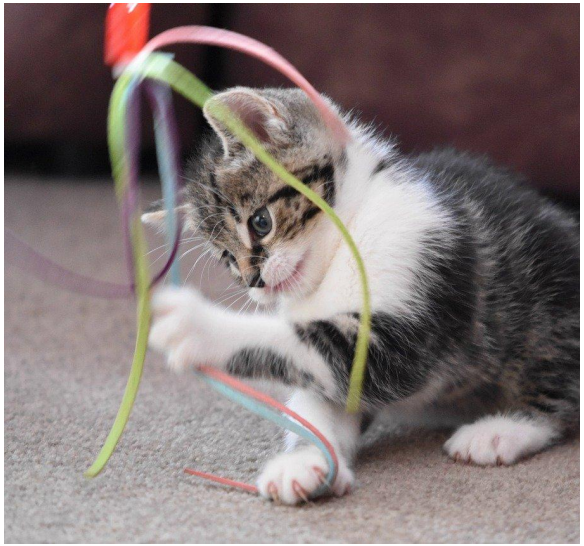


Body care

Sleep

Nutrition

Exercise

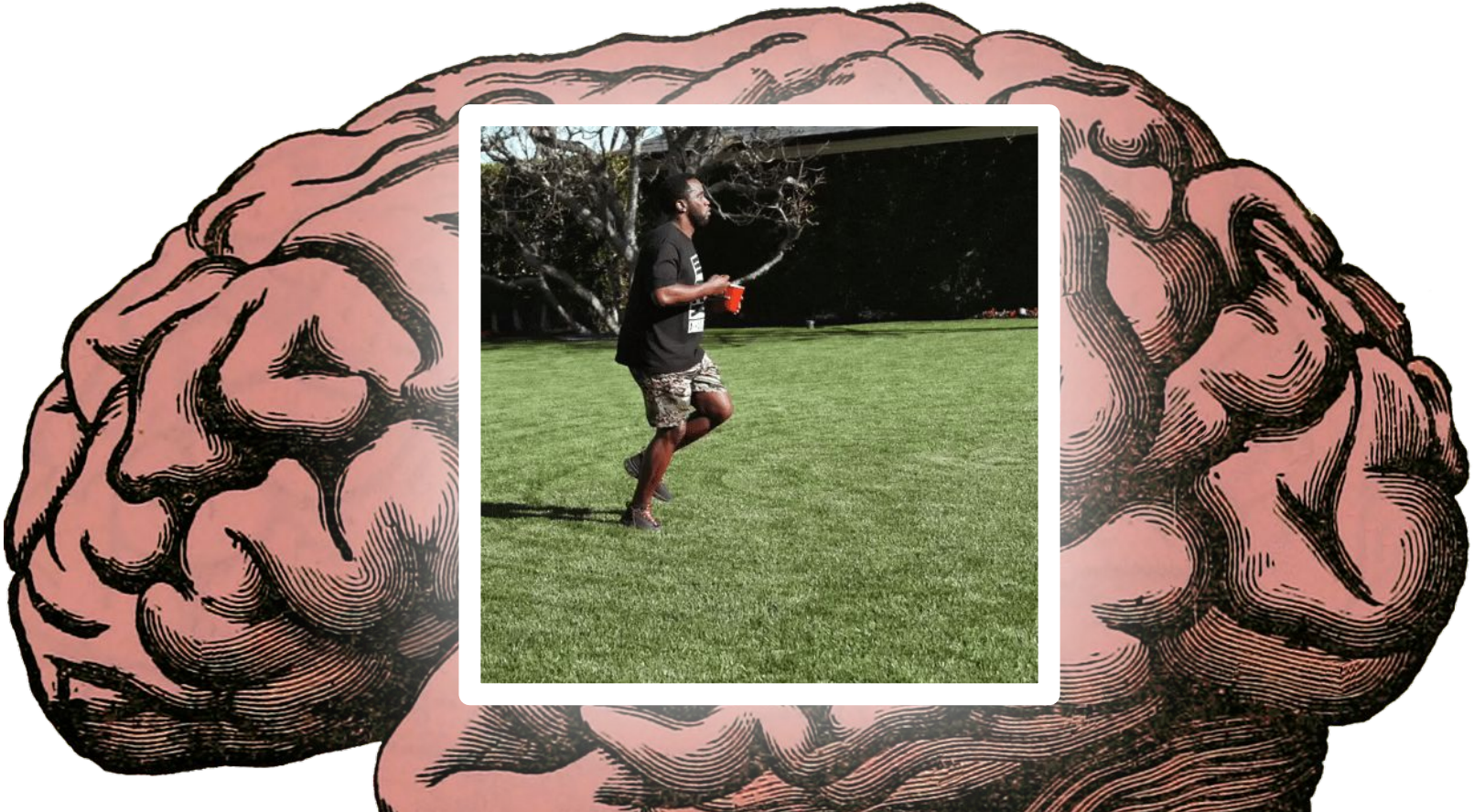


Mind care

Relaxation

Meditation

Meditation



Mind care

Relaxation

Play

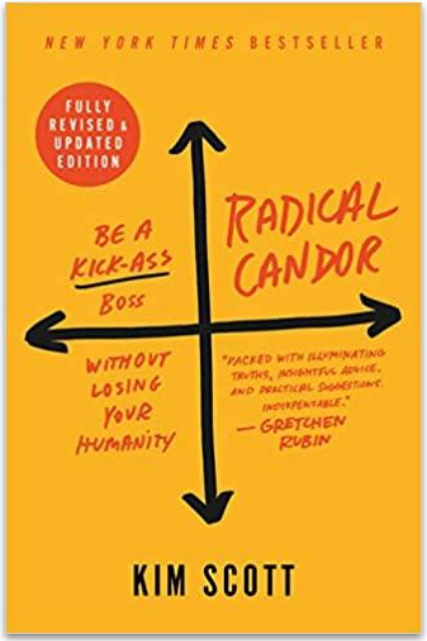
Connection

Work smarter

Build relationships at work

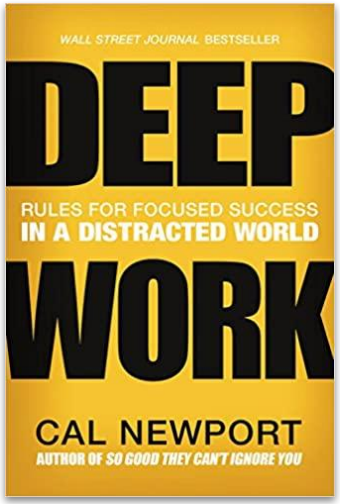
- Build a personal relationship with your manager, client, employee, and team
  - Makes it easier to raise flags when you are struggling
  - Makes it easier for them to recognize when something is wrong

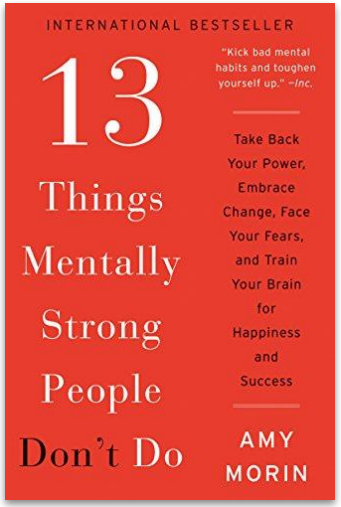
“Radical Candor” is what happens when you put “Care Personally” and “Challenge Directly” together.



Manage time and energy

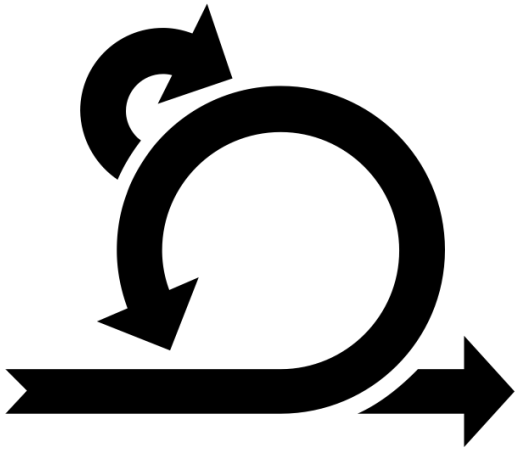
- Schedule time blocks for work and self-care
- Don’t respond immediately to emails and messages
- Leave work, at work
  Deep Work
- Set boundaries and say “No”
  13 Things Mentally Strong People Don’t Do





Manage projects

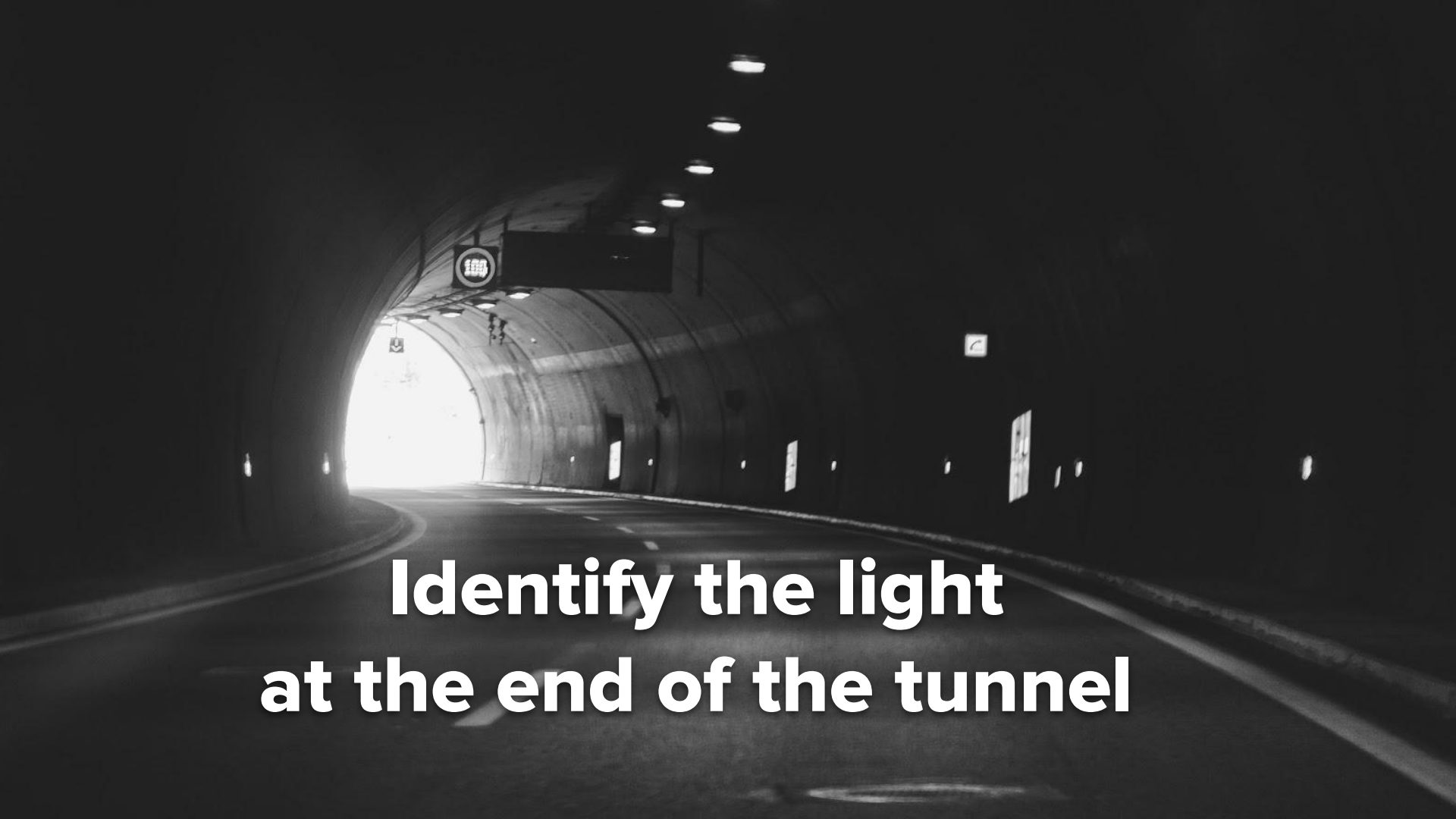
- Clearly define scope of work, deadlines, milestones, etc.
- Manage pace of work
- Agile software development
  - Iteration
  - Sprints
  - Retrospectives



Icon Credit: Scrum by Rflor from the Noun Project

How do I get out of it?

STOP
ALL WAY


Identify the light
at the end of the tunnel

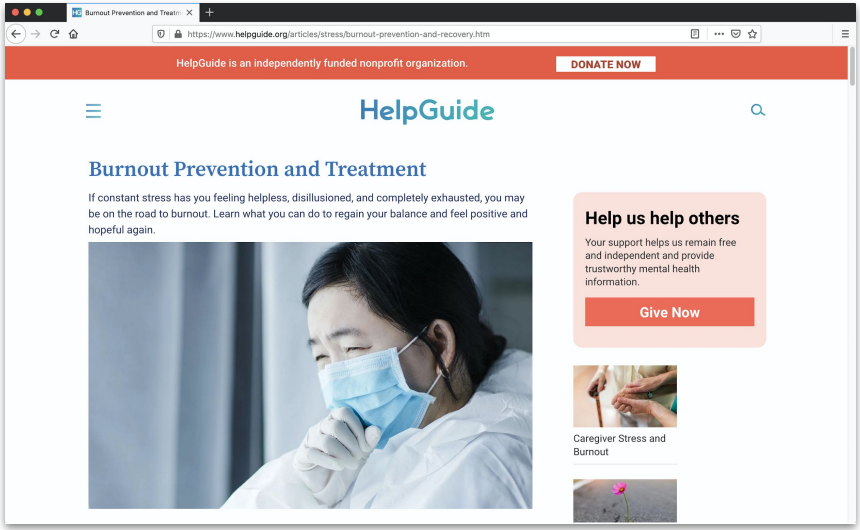
Getting through the tunnel

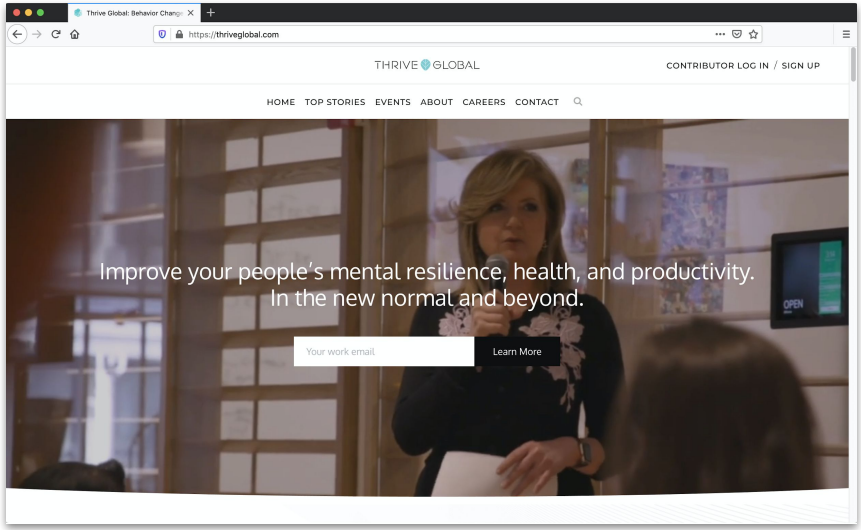
- Communicate with team
- Ask for help
- Embrace flexibility in schedule and environment
- Practice self-care as able and take breaks
- Use positive self-talk

You are on a journey of imperfection

Resources

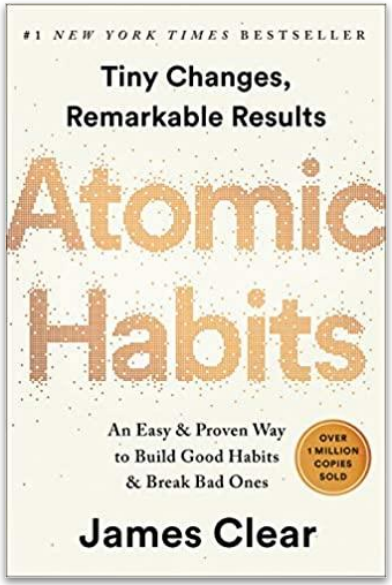
websites

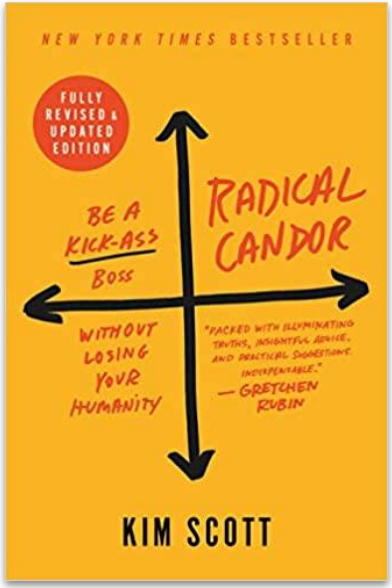


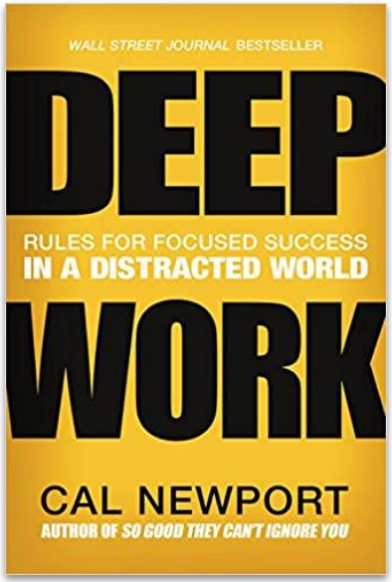


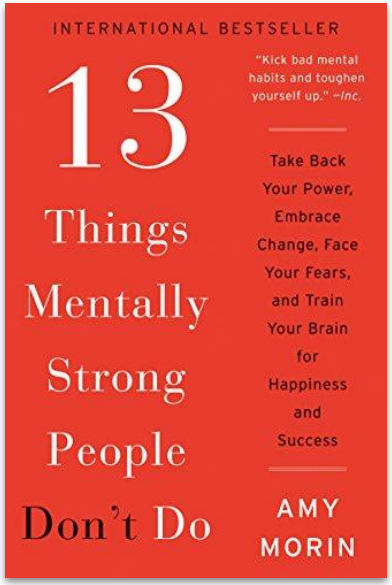
Resources

books



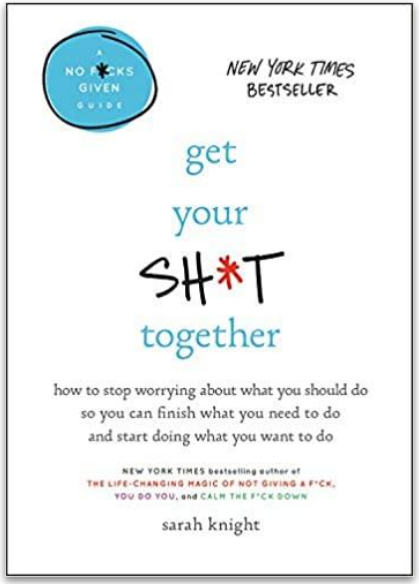


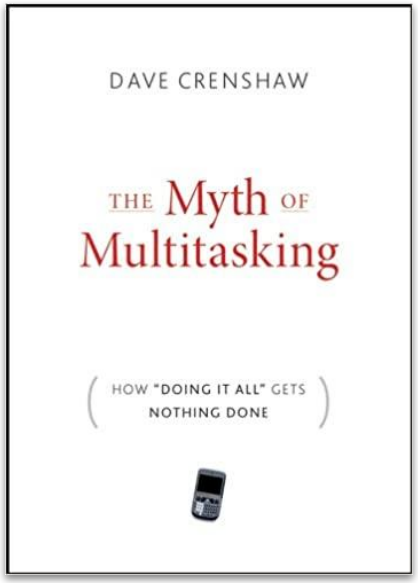




Resources

books





Thank you.
Any questions?

weekbeforenext

weekbeforenext

aprilsides