How to deal with toxic people
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- 38 years old
- Software engineer
- Maker
- Hobby baker
- 100% Nerd
- Creator & Maintainer of OctoPrint
Bad Behaviour
Entitlement

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

Why isn’t this obscure feature implemented already that I need for my personal workflow?

How rude of you to refuse to implement something I want!
This crap has cost me a 12h print job, shame on you for ever releasing this!

WELL THANKS FOR NOTHING!

I just updated and nothing works anymore,

THIS IS THE LAST TIME I UPDATE!
Attacks

Whoever designed this steaming pile of 😡 should be shot!

LOL, you clearly SUCK as a dev!

Stop writing software, you 😡

🤬 YOU!!!
Coping strategies
First: Disengage & cool down

- Don’t answer hot-headed
- Let off steam **offline**
  - Heavy bag, jumping jacks, brisk walk, count to 100 and back down
- Initial **stress response cycle** needs to run through
- Only then respond
Stress response cycle?

Stressor → "This is a threat!" → Stressor still there? → Fight or flight → Idle
Realities

- Open Source = no demands but **collaboration & cooperation**
- Not just code, everything helps!
- “Patches welcome” 👎
Boundaries

• Open Source Maintainers are people and deserve respect & decency

• Make overstepping clear

• Enforce community rules (CoC)

• Refer to snarky.ca/the-social-contract-of-open-source/
Additional Measures

• Don’t work on the issue (if it only affects the abuser)
• Point the abuser to the door
• Ban hammer (last resort!)
• You don’t have to accept abuse – and for the sake of the project you actually shouldn’t
How the community can help

• “This is just like it is in Open Source!” 👎
• Call out bad behaviour
• Always remember *yourself* that there is a human on the other end
Thank you for your attention!

Slides: foosel.net/slides/nova2021.pdf