

# 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





A photograph of two dogs in a field of dandelions. On the left, a black and white dog with tan markings on its face and ears is looking towards the right. On the right, a grey and tan speckled dog is looking directly at the camera with its tongue hanging out. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a bright sky. The text "With friends" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**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.**



A dachshund dog with long, wavy, brown and black fur is looking intently at a laptop screen. The dog's head is in the foreground, and its body extends towards the left. The laptop is open, and its screen displays a purple-themed interface with various elements. The background is dark. Four colored circles are overlaid on the image: an orange circle in the top left, a light blue circle in the top right, a pink circle in the middle right, and a light green circle in the bottom right. The text 'Breaking point' is written in large white letters in the bottom left corner.

Drupal  
Camp  
Asheville

Project  
A

Project  
B

Project  
C

**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 Kamalina Grabowska from Pexels*



# April Sides

Senior Developer at Lullabot  
Director of Drupal Camp Asheville



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**Lullabot**



# **What is burnout?**

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Burnout Prevention and Treatment X

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← → ↺ 🏠

🔒 https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/burnout-prevention-and-recovery.htm

📄 ... 🍷 ☆

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## 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.**

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



**What does it feel like?**



# Physical signs and symptoms

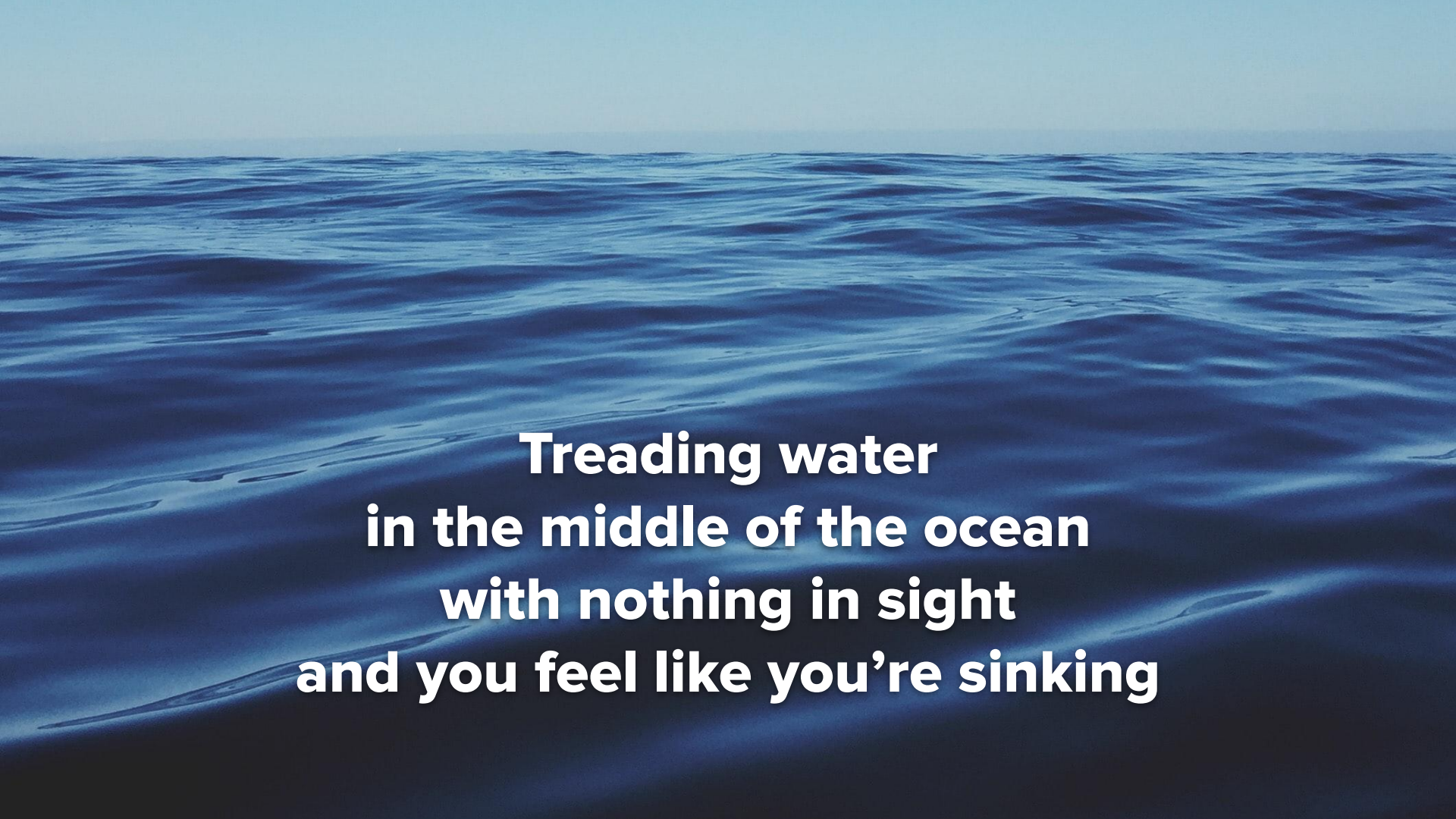
- Feeling tired and drained most of the time
- Lowered immunity, frequent illness
- Frequent headaches or muscle pain
- Change in appetite or sleep habits
- *Shaky hands or eye twitches*
- *Feeling like you can't breathe*

# **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*

# **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

The image shows a wide expanse of the ocean with small, rhythmic waves. The water is a deep, vibrant blue, and the horizon is visible in the distance under a pale, clear sky. The text is centered in the lower half of the image, written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

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



**Who is at risk?**

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# Personality traits

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



**Predisposed,  
not predetermined.**

**What are the causes?**

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# **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



# **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

# **Counter-productive productivity**

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# Notifications



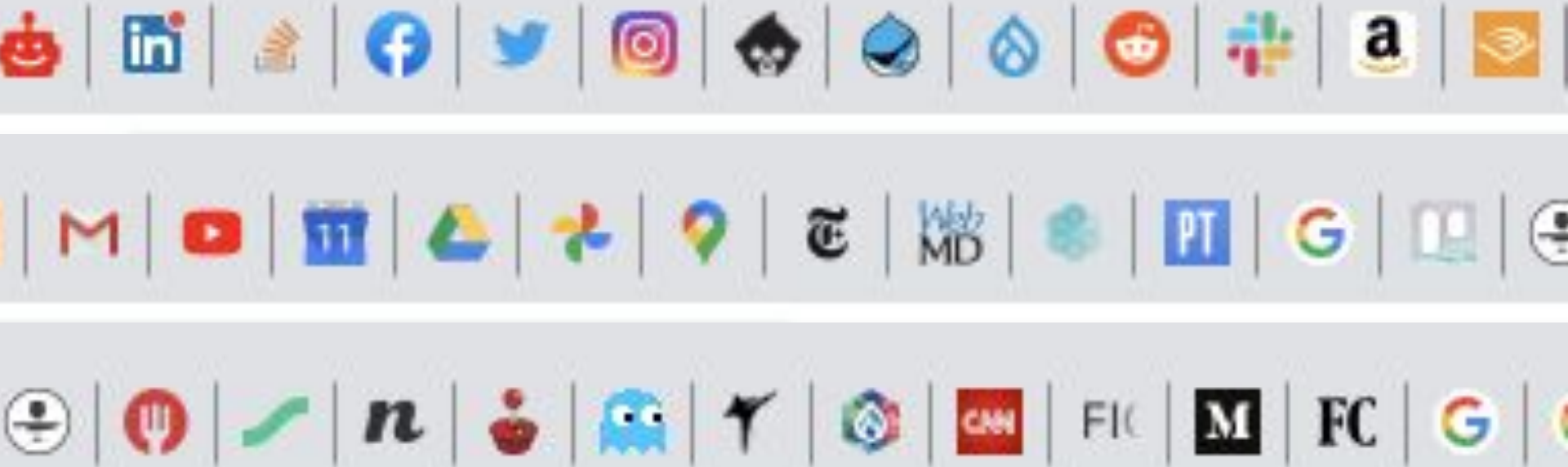
# Managing notifications

- 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

# Multiple monitors



**How do I avoid burnout?**

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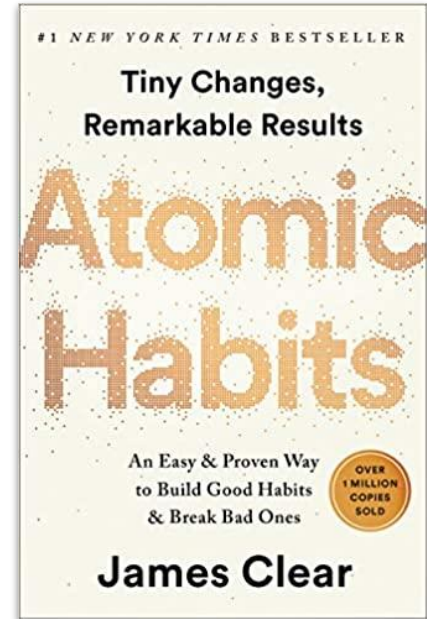


**Self-care**



# 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

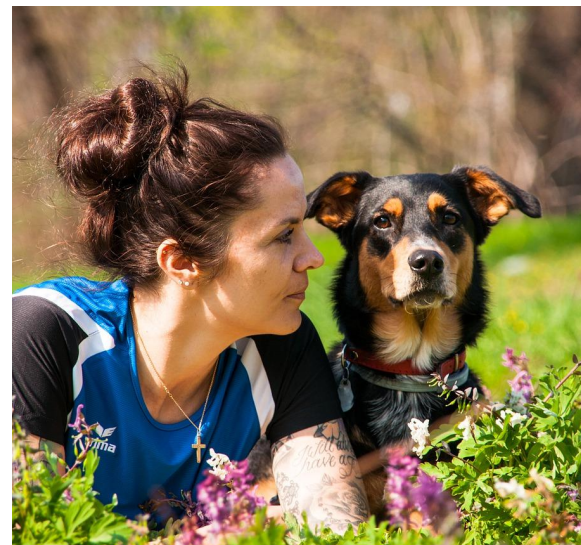
## Relaxation



## Play



## Connection



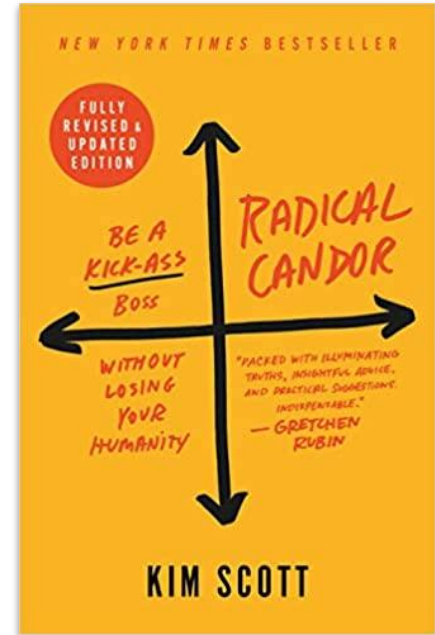
# **Work smarter**



# Build relationships at work

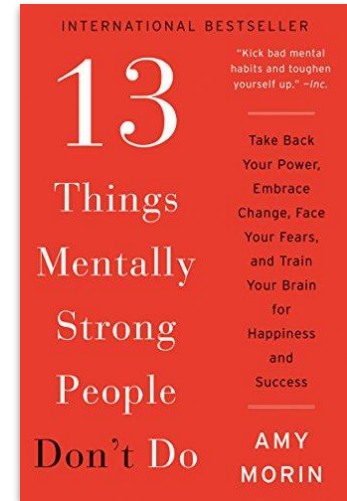
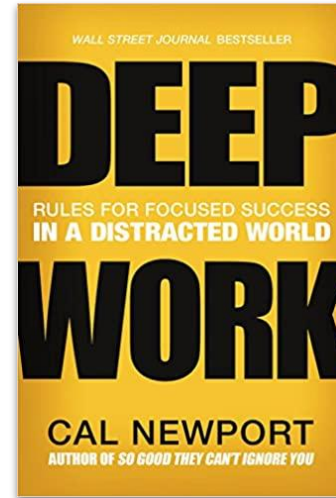
- Build a personal relationship with your manager, client, employee, and team
  - Makes it easier to raise flags when you are struggling
  - Makes it easier for them to recognize when something is wrong

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



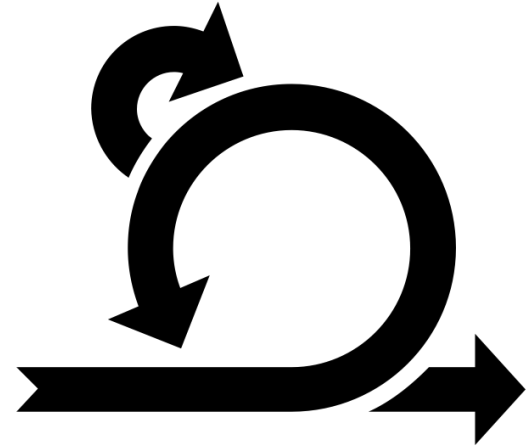
# Manage time and energy

- 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





**How do I get out of it?**

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**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

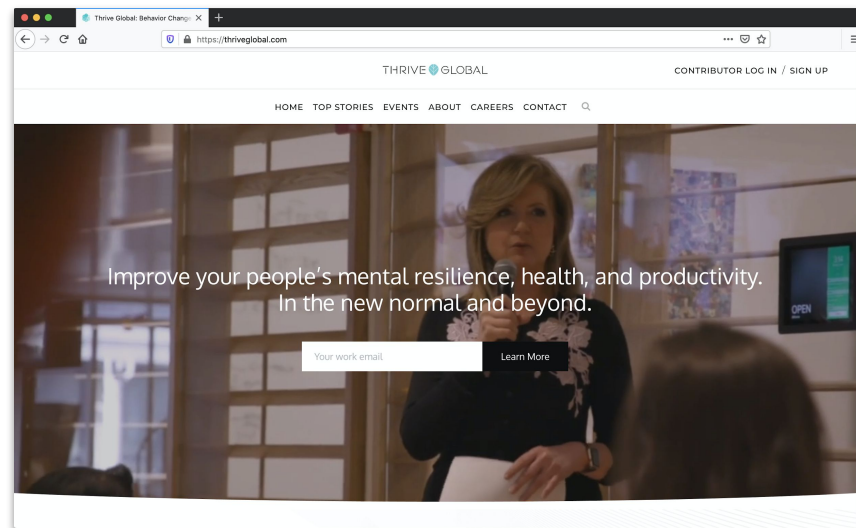
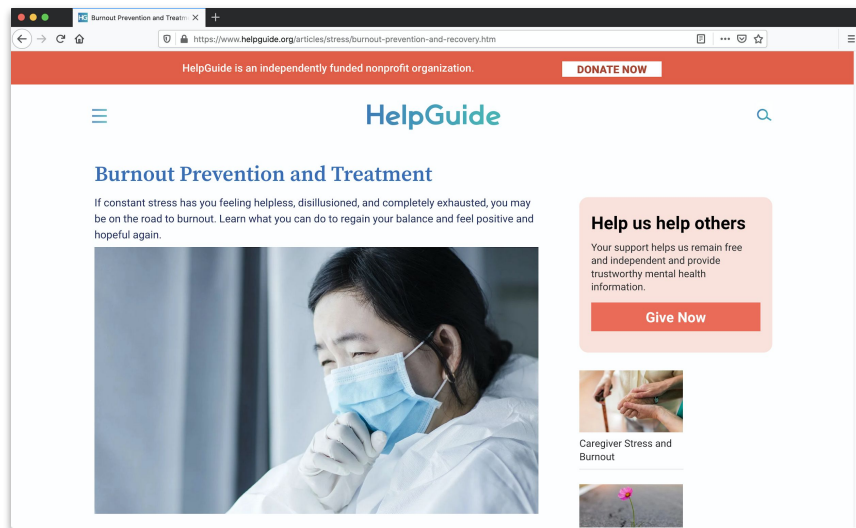
**You are on a  
journey of imperfection**





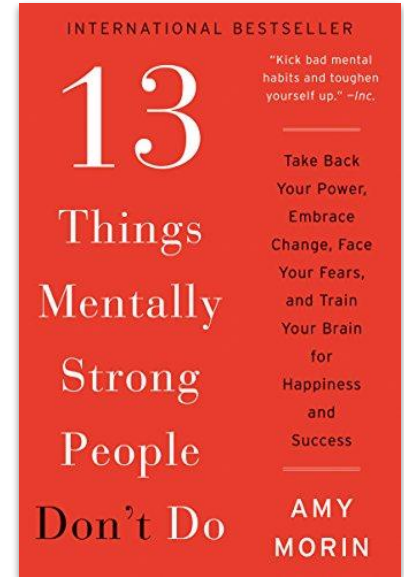
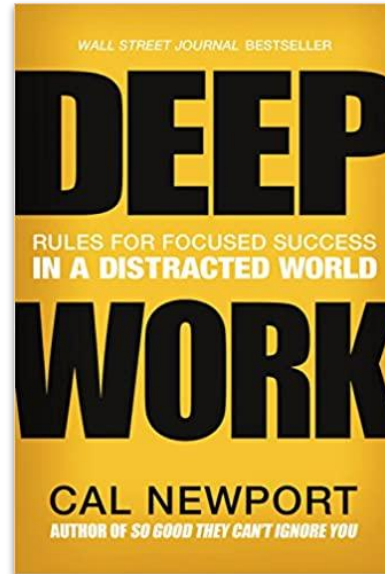
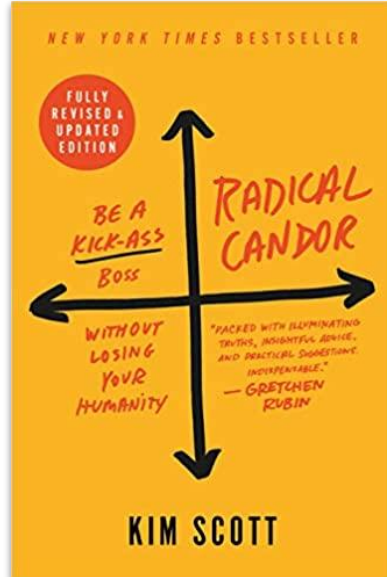
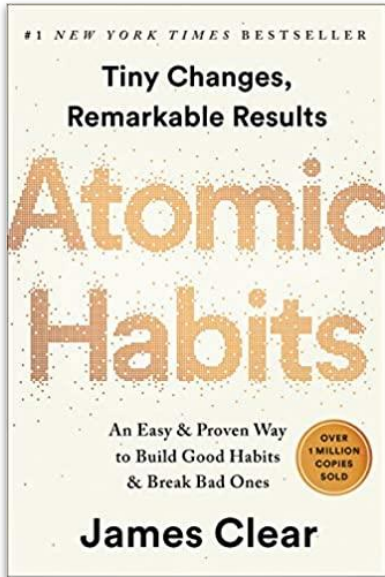
# Resources

## websites



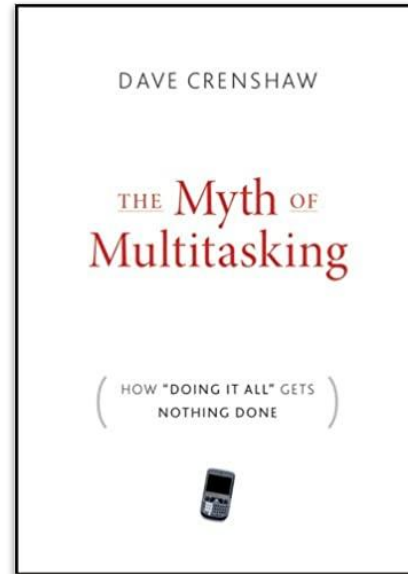
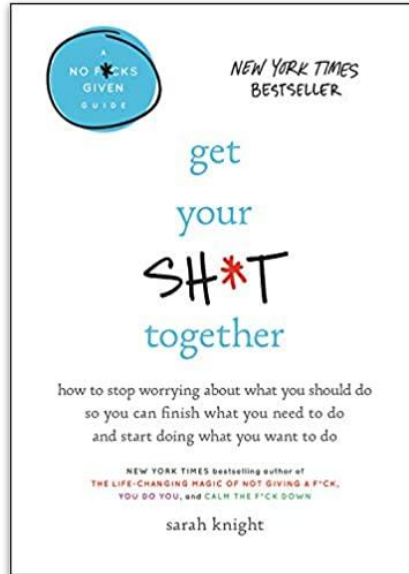
# Resources

books



# Resources

## books



**Thank you.  
Any questions?**



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