

We're threat-modeling our stress together as Application Security workers!

(The following shows the raw, unfiltered view after ~30 minutes of collaborative threat modeling of our wellbeing, as it came together through participant contributions.)

Join us:

- <https://tmcdach.de/#join-in!>
- #tmc-dach
- at the top, click "Shared notes"

Asset	Threats	Controls	Validation
What are we working on? What do I want to protect?	What can go wrong? Which stressors threaten my system?	What will we do about it? Which protective measures help me?	Have we done good work? How do I know my system stays stable?

What do we want to protect?

- Us / our mental health
- Sleep
- Privacy
- Family life + having it "work"
- Social life (friends/acquaintances)
- Own motivation; enjoyment of work
- Hobbies + free time
- Energy
- Own capacity to work
- Having enough time for important things; balance
- One's own values

What can go wrong? → What are we doing about it?

[Danger]

- [Measure]

I'm not sleeping anymore

- Autogenic training
- Guided imagery / visualization journeys
- Progressive muscle relaxation

I'm neglecting my friends

- First, recognize that this is even the case (the challenge)
- Prioritize time for friends (put it firmly in the calendar if needed)
- At least manage short meetups

I'm solely responsible for <all of application security> / <whatever>

- Am I really? Get the hypothesis confirmed from "outside"!
- Make myself replaceable! (knowledge transfer if needed)
- Ask for a raise

- "I'm allowed to ask for help" — frame it positively
- Reality check
- Imposter syndrome (those affected doubt their own abilities and achievements)
- Just hand it off / let it drop (story about how it didn't actually blow up afterward)
- Judith Holofernes – "Charlotte Atlas"
- Eminem + Beyoncé – "Walk on Water"
- Put your own delusions of grandeur into perspective and relativize them
- Be away for weeks and notice the world didn't end

If I hand something off and it turns out differently than I'd like, I get stressed

- Accept the other outcome as good too
- Question the consequences (maybe I think it's worse than it actually is)
- Focus on the advantages of the other approach
- Don't deny others the chance to learn and make mistakes

Someone is dampening my motivation

- Reconnect with where the motivation originally came from within me
- Surround yourself with people who are good for you

I have too many parallel tasks

- Just let things sit and do what you feel like doing
- Hand off tasks

Lack of recognition

- Externally – highlight achievements
- Externally – actively seek feedback
- Internally – value yourself more

I have too many to-dos

- Structured to-do list
- Plan retrospectives + sprints for yourself privately

I'm constantly reachable and always-on

Negative, non-solution-oriented arguments

- Surround yourself with people who are good for you

Too much emotionality

- Let emotions release physically (sport)
- Think it, express it, say it (simply breathe deeply and let the emotion go)

Perfectionism

- MVP (Minimum Viable Product)
- What is "good enough"? Clarify expectations – your own and others'

Lack of self-determination

- Remove yourself from the circle, e.g., quit
- Say no
- Demand / insist
- Get support
- Seek conversation

I take on every problem as if it were mine ("I put on every shoe")

- Just don't do that

- Clarify responsibilities
- Stay realistic
- Say no
- Check whether I'm a "yes-person"
- STOP pattern
- Is it only yes or no, or is there something in between?
- "Yes, but not now"
- "Not our problem right now"

How do I know my system stays stable?

- ✓ I can laugh about it (in hindsight)
- ✓ I feel more resilient (but careful: maybe you just don't notice it)
- ✓ I can view situations with more distance
- ✓ I'm finding my intuition again
- ✓ I sleep like a rock
- ✓ I can actually clock out at the end of the day
- ✓ I enjoy my hobbies again
- ✓ Feedback from others – "you look relaxed"
- ✓ I react less irritably
- ✓ In my free time, I don't think about work
- ✓ I enjoy my work
- ✓ I smoke less
- ✓ My belly gets less fat
- ✓ I have regular social contacts
- ✓ Things just matter less to me
- ✓ I spend more time with family/kids
- ✓ I'm calmer