
HOW TO BURN OUT IN INFOSEC

(AND WHAT TO DO NEXT)

Corey Ham et al

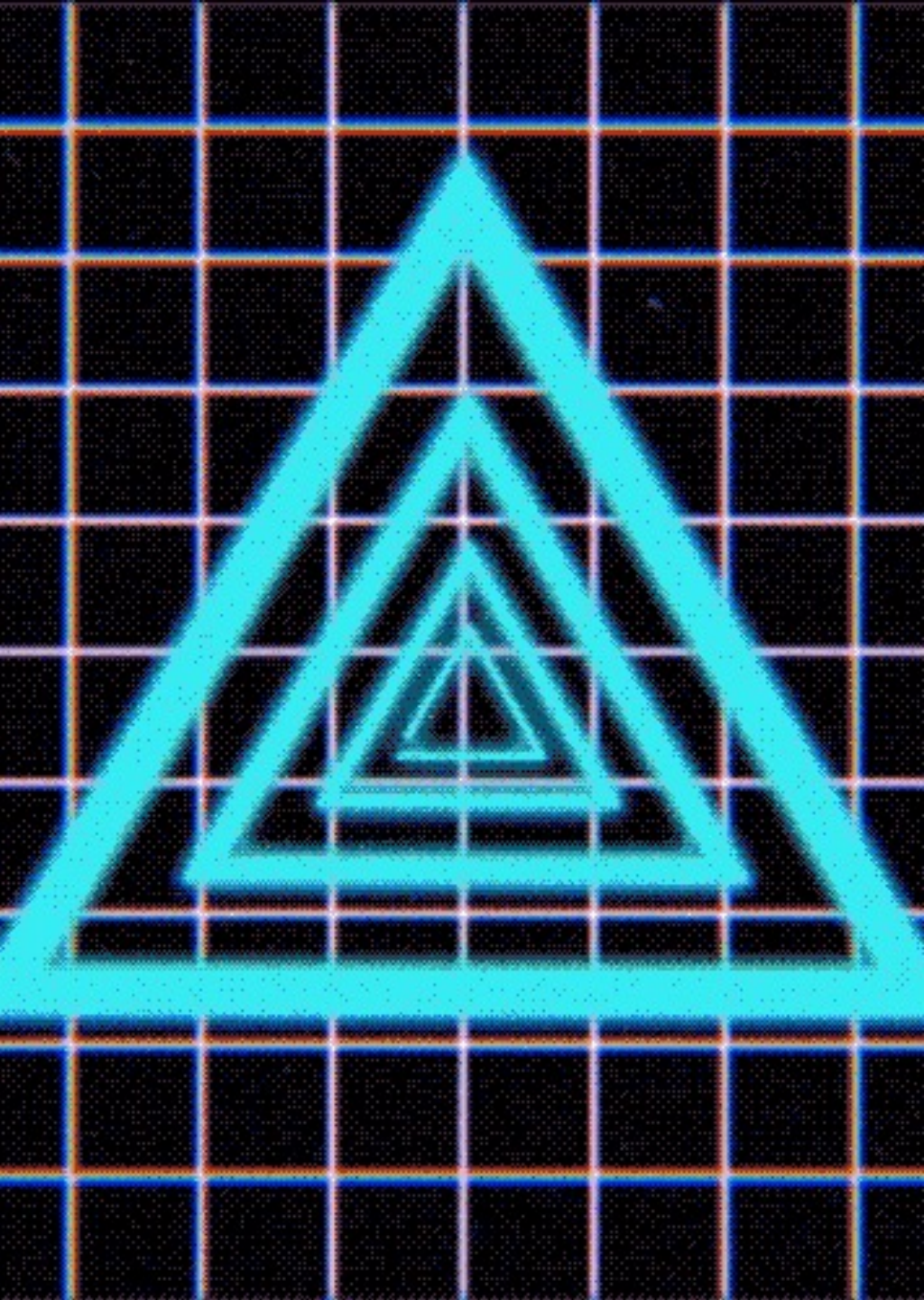


<https://t.me/learningnets>



AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. How to Burn Out
3. What is Burnout?
4. Early Warning Signs
5. Confronting the Problem
6. Avoiding Burnout
7. Other perspectives
8. Round Table Discussion with Audience



ID

Corey Ham

- Tester @ BHIS
- Client-facing tester since 2013
- 51% Extrovert, 49% Introvert
- @cham423 on most things

Dr. GOOR



Productions

DISCLAIMER

- I am a professional hacker, not a doctor
- Seek professional help if you are concerned for your own health, or the health of those close to you

HOW TO LIVE



HOW TO LIVE

- You can sleep when you're dead
- Don't ask for help
- Procrastinate
- Check Twitter A LOT
- Say Yes to Everything
- Don't go outside
- Eat whatever
- Always keep notifications on
- Use your work computer for everything
- Start new projects before finishing the old ones
- Set extremely high expectations for yourself
- Don't take vacation

NOT REALLY LOL

- ~~You can sleep when you're dead~~
- ~~Don't ask for help~~
- ~~Procrastinate~~
- ~~Check Twitter A LOT~~
- ~~Say Yes to Everything~~
- ~~Don't go outside~~
- ~~Eat whatever~~
- ~~Always keep notifications on~~
- ~~Use your work computer for everything~~
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- ~~Set extremely high expectations for yourself~~
- ~~Don't take vacation~~

WHAT IS BURNOUT?

“Physical or emotional exhaustion, especially as a result of long-term stress or dissipation.”

Not unique to infosec, but infosec has unique challenges

Everyone’s experience is unique



BASELINE YOURSELF

What is your normal level of motivation?

Did you always hate Mondays?

Are you struggling with reasonable deadlines?

Know when you have deviated from your norm, and respond as soon as possible



EARLY WARNINGS

- Significant drop in motivation
 - A few days of “I just can’t”
- Dreading work
 - When your whole Sunday is ruined by what comes next
- Feeling of malaise outside of work
 - Bleed-thru of stress
- Avoiding social interaction (depending on baseline)





SO YOU'RE BURNED OUT...

1. Assess Severity
 - Can you continue?
2. Ask for help
 - Tell them how severe it is
3. Change something
 - Take a break first
 - Avoid making huge unsustainable changes
 - Look for easy targets
4. Recover

AVOIDING BURNOUT

- Respect sleep, or it will bite you
- Ask for help, and help others
- Time management
- Avoid social media on busy days (or altogether)
- Choose your commitments carefully
- Spend time outside or recharging
- Intentionally choose a diet that works for you
- Do not disturb <3
- Compartmentalize work
- Allow yourself closure on existing projects
- Set realistic expectations



AVOIDING BURNOUT (CONTINUED)

- Take vacation BEFORE you need it
- Find activities that recharge you, if you don't have them
- Seek variety
- If overwhelmed, seek monotony
- If bored, seek new opportunities
- Don't compare yourself to others
- Any audience ideas?

OTHERS

- Noah
- CJ
- Jason
- Brad?
- Michael?

