Daniel "phrawzty" Maher
Datadog

What MMA taught me about working in tech

Mixed Martial Arts

Mixing techniques from multiple disciplines

Ancient history

Pankration, Lei Tai

Recent history

Merikan, Sambo, Shoot, Pancrase, Jeet Kun Do, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (*BJJ*)

Contemporary history

Ultimate Fighting Championship

A one-day tournament held in 1993.

About me

Hospitalised by both tech and MMA, so I know what I'm talking about

About Datadog

Modern monitoring & analytics



We're hiring!

Elephant in the room

MMA: Just two people beating each other up?

Further terrible definitions

Programming: pressing plastic squares in more or less the right order

Not a vacuum

Work with people, train with people

Learning #1: The right people

Coaches and training partners

Like managers and co-workers.

Identifying toxicity

"Submitted—by a *girl*."

This shouldn't be an insult.

Learning #2: The right environment

Safe space to make mistakes and learn new things

Datadog post-mortem

Eliminate stigma, learn, grow, and improve

Learning #3: The value of project management

Organising your time and effort is key

Training camp

Variable intensity, technical work, and recovery time

Organised in two-week blocks…

Sprints, as in Agile

Variable intensity, technical work, and recovery time

Hopefully injury-free!

Learning #4: Getting enough rest

You need to sleep and you need to rest

Burnout is a real thing

Added bonus: *you* don't know that it's happening

Burnout is like over-training

Burnout is incredibly dangerous

Problem: it doesn't feel that way.

Learning #5: Diet is everything

What and how you eat matters

Thinking about food

Quality, Quantity, and Timing

Generally good advice

"Eat food.
Not too much.
Mostly plants."
– Michael Pollan

Don't forget to enjoy yourself sometimes!

Learning #6: Learn the basics

Fundamentals win fights

Basics are critical, but...

Don't be dogmatic about fundamentals

Learning #7: Embrace diversity

Diversity makes you better *by default*

A diverse fundamental

There's more than one way to throw a jab

But people will try to tell you otherwise.

Tech needs diversity to succeed

Fresh eyes and fresh ideas

Not to mention testing and QA…

Learning #8: Penetration testing (seriously)

An interesting parallel between the fight and security games

How to fight / pen test

Observe, adapt, act; sometimes really quickly

Flying tiger, hidden dragon

Don't make it obvious

Predictability will get you hurt.

Learning #9: Plan to change plans

Work percentages, but be open to new insight

Validation is a trap

Data that challenges your model is a *gift*

Where the really interesting things happen.

Learning #10: Deal with it

"Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth."
– Mike Tyson

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Thanks! I hope you enjoyed it. :)