

*Teap.*

Everyone deserves a little couch-time.



Monthly Wellness Seminar

**Time Mastery for Busy Professionals**  
**Prioritizing, Planning & Managing Mental Load**

Presented by

Roxanne Collins, LPC

# ABOUT THE PRESENTER

## Roxanne Collins, LPC, MA

- Licensed Professional Counselor
- Educator for 15 years
- Neely Counseling Center
- Works w/Adults, Teens and Couples
- Loves to Travel



# Why This Topic Matters

Many professionals feel overwhelmed not because they lack time, but because their mental bandwidth is overloaded.

- Constant communication and notifications
- Competing priorities and deadlines
- Continuous decision-making
- Blurred work-life boundaries

**The result is mental overload, stress, and reduced focus.**



# Why We Are Here Today

## In Today's Session We Will:

- Understand how mental load impacts productivity and stress
- Learn practical strategies to prioritize and plan effectively
- Explore tools that reduce decision fatigue
- Strengthen key soft skills that improve focus and leadership
- Apply these concepts through discussion and case study

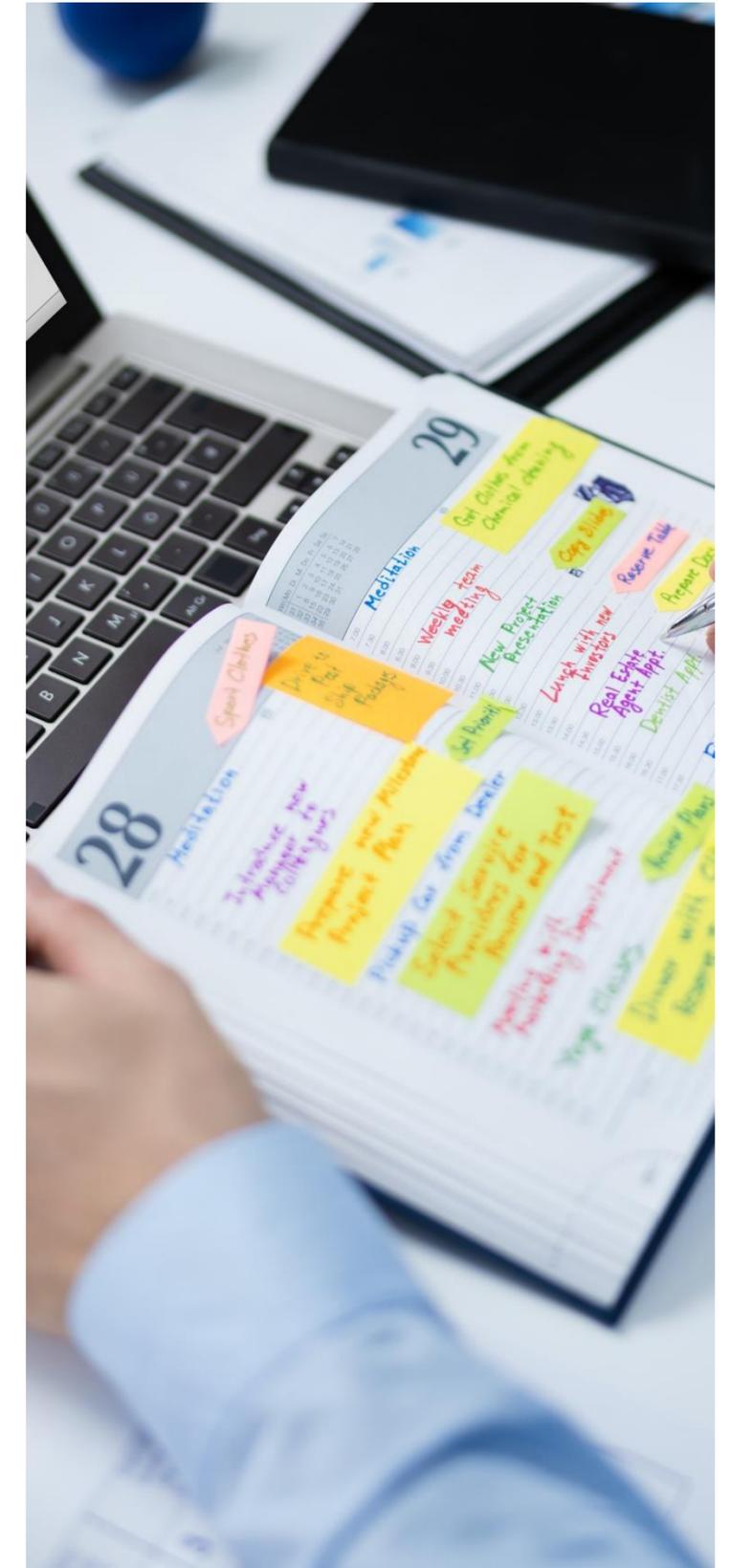


# What Is Mental Load?

Mental load refers to the invisible effort required to manage responsibilities.

- Remembering tasks
- Planning next steps
- Monitoring progress
- Anticipating needs
- Making frequent decisions

**When mental load is high professionals may experience difficulty concentrating, stress, fatigue, and feeling constantly behind.**



# How the Brain Manages Workload

Mental load refers to the invisible effort required to manage responsibilities.

## Brain Function

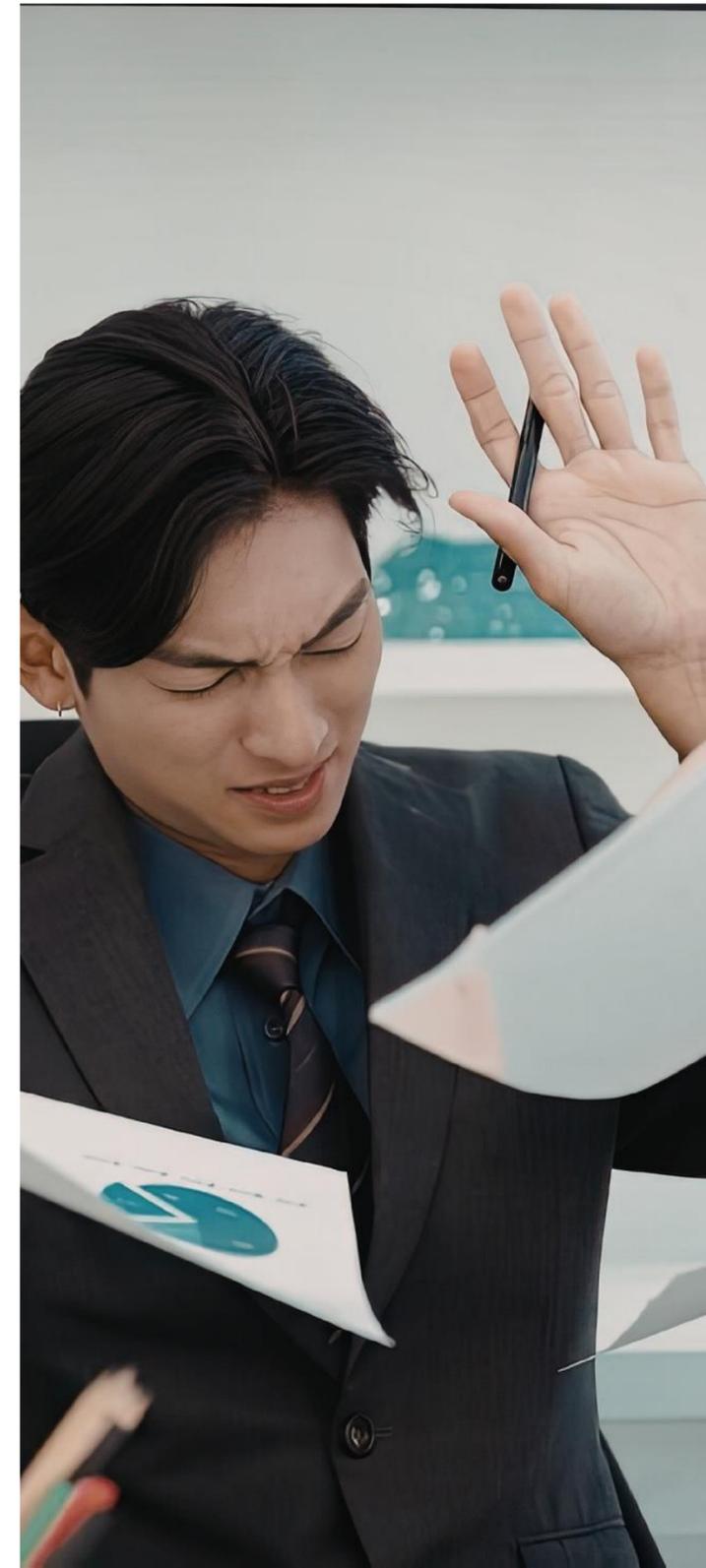
- Your brain has limited working memory capacity.
- Research shows most people can manage about 4-7 pieces of information at one time.

## Overload

When too many tasks compete for attention:

- Focus decreases
- Errors increase
- Stress levels rise

**External systems like lists, calendars, and planning tools protect mental energy.**



# Poll #1

**What consumes the most mental energy during your workday?**

- A. Emails and messages
- B. Switching between tasks
- C. Too many meetings
- D. Unclear priorities





# The Cost of Task Switching

- Frequent task switching can reduce productivity by up to 40%.
- Each switch requires the brain to:
  - Recall previous context
  - Reorient focus
  - Restart mental processing

This creates *cognitive fatigue* and slows progress.

# Prioritization Challenges

Many professionals struggle because everything feels urgent.

Without a clear system:

- Important work gets delayed
- Reactive tasks dominate the day
- Strategic thinking disappears

**Effective prioritization protects time for high-impact work.**



# The Three-Level Priority Framework

A simple structure helps professionals focus on what matters most.



## Critical

Tasks with immediate impact or deadlines



## Strategic

Work that supports long-term goals and growth



## Maintenance

Routine operational tasks that keep things running

**Strong prioritization is a core self-management skill.**

# Poll #2

How often do you feel like you are reacting to your work instead of planning it?

- A. Almost every day
- B. Several times per week
- C. Occasionally
- D. Rarely



# Decision Fatigue

Professionals make hundreds of decisions each day.

When mental energy declines people may:

- Delay decisions
- Avoid complex tasks
- Make rushed choices

**Reducing decision fatigue improves focus, clarity, and performance.**



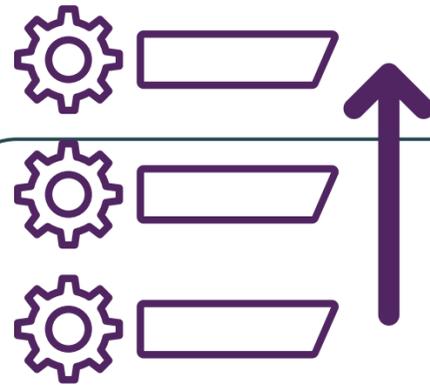
# Planning Systems That Reduce Mental Load

## Planning Systems That Reduce Mental Load

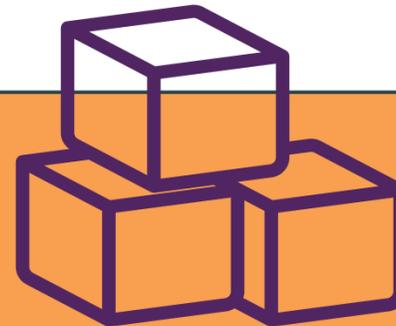
- Capture tasks outside their head
- Clarify priorities
- Protect focus time



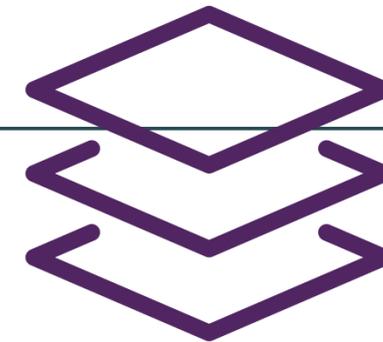
Weekly Planning Sessions



Daily Top Three Priorities



Time Blocking



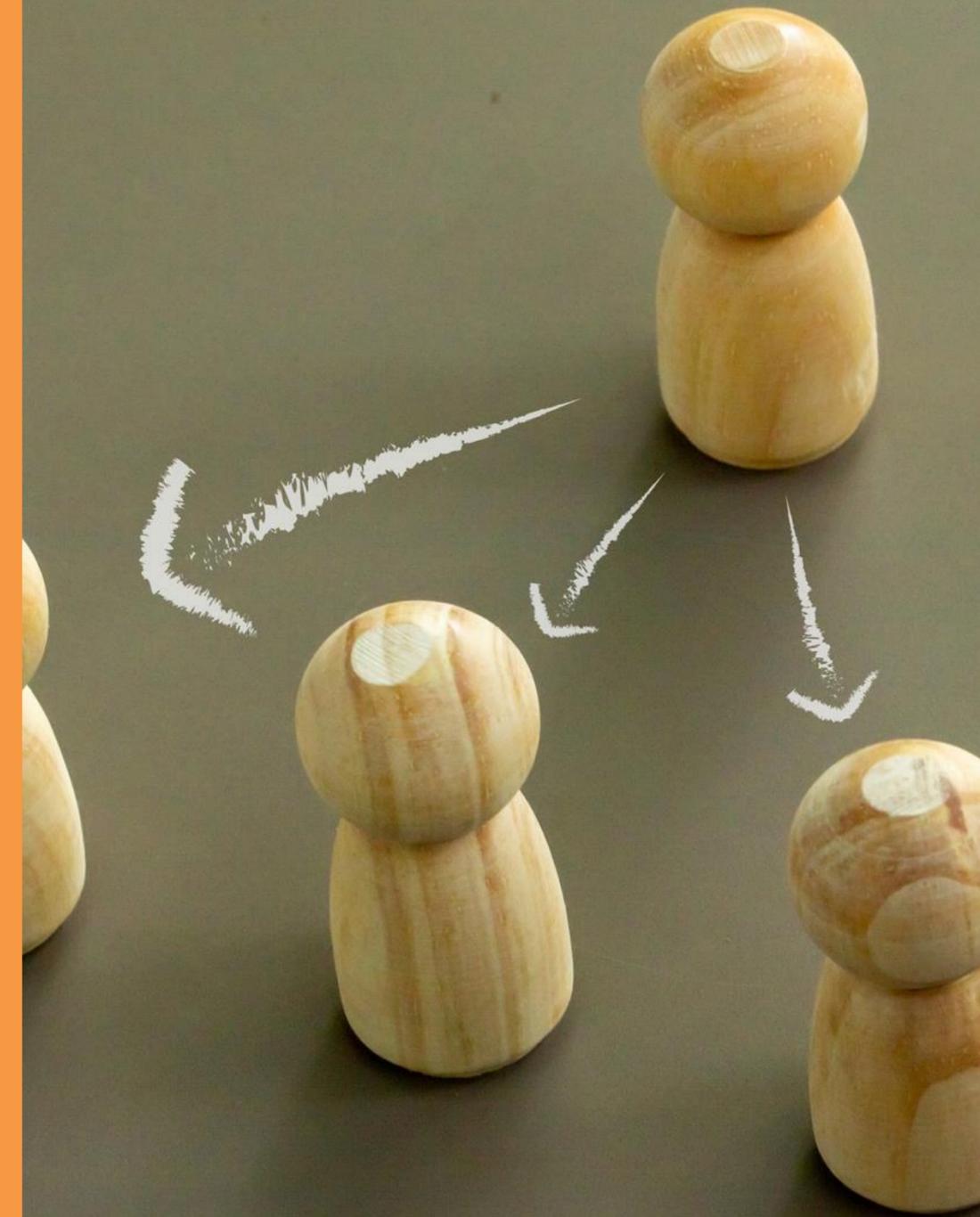
Task Batching

# Soft Skills Strengthened Through Time Mastery

Effective time management supports critical workplace skills:

- Boundary setting
- Delegation
- Emotional regulation
- Strategic thinking
- Leadership communication

**Time mastery improves productivity and professional relationships.**



# Poll #3

Which habit would most improve your productivity?

- A. Better prioritization
- B. Fewer interruptions
- C. Structured planning
- D. Stronger work boundaries





# Case Study

## Alex the Overextended Manager

Alex leads a team of ten employees.

Challenges include:

- Constant interruptions from staff
- Heavy meeting schedule
- Difficulty focusing on strategic work
- Frequently working late

**Despite staying busy all day Alex feels reactive rather than productive.**

# Case Study Discussion

1. What factors are increasing Alex's mental load?
2. What planning or prioritization changes could help?
3. What soft skills might Alex need to strengthen?
4. What would be your first intervention?

# Possible Strategies

- Schedule protected focus time
- Clarify team communication expectations
- Delegate operational tasks
- Implement weekly planning and prioritization

**These changes help reduce stress and increase strategic focus.**

# Key Takeaways

- Mental load — not time — is often the real productivity challenge
- Clear priorities reduce stress and improve decision-making
- Planning systems strengthen focus, leadership, and workplace effectiveness

**What is one change you can implement this week to reduce your mental load?**

# Thank You...

for joining us today, we look forward to seeing you next time!



ROXANNE@NEELYCOUNSELING.COM



ROXANNE COLLINS



ROXANNE\_COLLINS\_LPC

# Access Your NEAP Benefits

## ☐ Online:

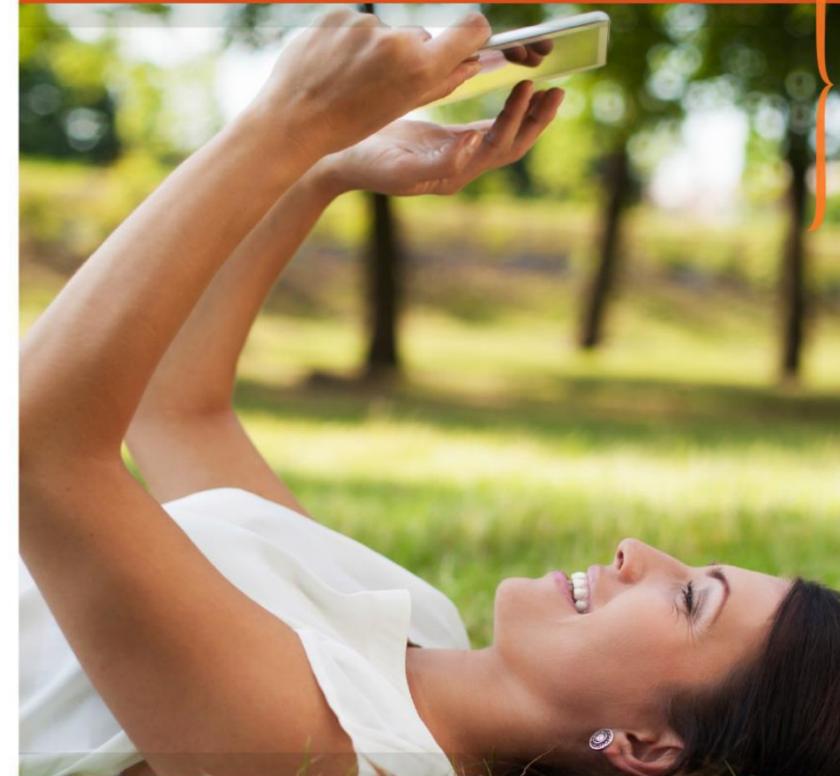
- ☐ [www.neelyeap.com](http://www.neelyeap.com) company page
- ☐ Live CONNECT
- ☐ Balancy App
- ☐ Use your company code from benefits flyer

☐ **24/7 Hotline: 866-212-6096**

# EAP Benefit Spotlight

Employee Support Program

## MEMBER WEBSITE



### FEATURES INCLUDE

- Comprehensive library of topics including relationships, communication, emotional resilience, wellness, career, consumer tips, and more.
- Direct access to experts through instant messaging.
- Seven Content Divisions: Parenting, Aging, **Balancing**, Thriving, Working, Living, International

### Connect to resources and experts online

Resources and support are right at your fingertips with your employee support program's website. The site offers options to instant message with or email our experts or browse a robust library of articles and resources to support your wellbeing at every stage of life.

TOLL-FREE: 866-212-6096  
WEBSITE: <https://neelyeap.helpwhereyouare.com>  
COMPANY CODE: Enter Company Code

