

Episode 2: Why Learning Feels Hard

Focus · Background · Cognitive load theory

By the end, you will understand why your brain feels overloaded when you learn, and you will have one way to make heavy material lighter.

THE MOVE • The Load Check

When your head fills up, run this check. Find which kind of load is doing it, then do the one thing that kind needs.

Kind of load	What it is	What to do
Intrinsic	How hard the material itself is	Break it into the smallest pieces and learn one at a time
Extraneous	Clutter the situation adds	Remove it: one screen, one task, quiet, no juggling
Germane	The good effort of understanding	Protect it: this is the effort worth keeping

USE AI AS A THINKING PARTNER • copy this prompt

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I'm learning [TOPIC] and my working memory feels overloaded around [THE POINT WHERE IT GETS HEAVY].
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Don't explain the whole thing at once. First, break it into the smallest pieces I would need to learn, in order. Then show me only piece one and ask me a question before we move to piece two. Keep the load small.
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YOUR CHECKLIST THIS WEEK

- Close every tab and app you are not using right now.
- Work on one piece at a time, not the whole topic at once.
- Notice exactly where the overload hits and split that step in two.
- Remove one source of clutter (noise, mess, notifications).
- When your desk is genuinely full, take a real break. A tired brain cannot learn.

ONE SMALL BEHAVIOUR

Before your next study session, remove one source of clutter. Just one. Then notice whether the work feels lighter than it did.