

High Processing Mind Sessions - Model and Methodology

What a high-processing mind is, why it gets mislabelled as overthinking, and how mapping and training work with it instead of against it.

THE MODEL

What a high processing mind is

“Overthinker” meaning who, exactly? John, who is often anxious and runs worry spirals? Mary, who has ADHD and cannot sleep because of a dialogue in her head? Tim, who is autistic and analyzes and notes everything the entire time he is awake? High-achiever Jane, who runs simulations and decision trees on which sports socks to buy?

In this model, the term ‘overthinker’ is replaced with ‘high-processing mind’ — not to sound nicer, but because it’s the more accurate term once you look at what actually constitutes an ‘overthinking’ mind.

An “overthinking” mind is a mind that:

Processes a much **larger volume of information** consciously, and usually faster than most people.

Has a **dense, fast-moving internal dialogue** that rarely goes quiet.

Needs to understand both how external conclusions are reached and how internal processes—like emotions, reactions, and impressions—work.

Needs precise causes, mechanisms, connections, and logical structure, and therefore has **low tolerance** for incoherence, ambiguity, contradictions, and missing pieces.

Feels the pull, or the urge, to **optimize** and make the best possible decisions.

Notices and considers a **large number of details**, side issues, possible derailments, and indirect consequences, often keeping many variables and possible paths active at once.

Automatically generates counterarguments, objections, and alternative interpretations, **and reopens** conclusions when new information appears, which can lead to decision paralysis.

Treats **uncertainty** as something more thinking or preparation should solve, relying heavily on analysis, often instead of action.

Often gets overwhelmed by the intensity of their own processing or related emotions, particularly if those are not understood.

Often has trouble controlling, directing, stopping, or adapting the thinking process to different contexts.

Why people do not like their overthinking minds

Listed objectively like above, these traits do not sound like something impossible to manage. But when this type of mind goes unrecognized and untrained, and when it is treated as something that should change, the subjective experience of those same traits becomes exhausting and overwhelming. Needing to understand means not being able to let go until the processing is complete, which often means never. The pull to optimize means deploying tactical planning to choose between two types of toilet paper. Counterarguments that appear out of nowhere mean decision paralysis, indecisiveness, and being stuck over the smallest things. Trouble controlling thinking means feeling out of control of your own head.

So the high-processing mind creates real problems for the person who has it. But when people look for help, what they find is “overthinking” — which frames the whole thing as too much. Too much thinking, too much worrying, too much analyzing. Same base, wrong amplitude. But what if the base is not the same? What if the problem is not that something normal is happening in excess, but that something structurally different is happening that needs a different approach and a different perspective?

Dog analogy

Almost every human characteristic varies along a spectrum. People talk more or less, have faster or slower metabolisms, are more or less emotionally reactive, etc. We generally accept that people at different points on these spectrums can have genuinely different characteristics, and that different characteristics require different approaches.

A useful analogy is dog breeds. A Yorkie and a Husky are both dogs, but you would not expect the same approach to work equally well for both. Some breeds are easygoing, happy with a walk around the block and a spot on the couch. Others are high-energy, high-need breeds that need serious exercise, stimulation, and direction. Without that, they don't sit around being mildly bored. They destroy furniture, dig up yards, and become impossible to live with. That's what happens when a high-energy dog doesn't get what it needs.

Somehow, this logic is rarely applied to thinking. With a dog, barking might be house protection, bad behavior, fear, or a sign that it needs more activity. The barking itself does not tell you which one it is. The same goes for worry and rumination — they can come from very different places. But the response is almost always the same: think less. Let it go. Be mindful. Which is about as useful as telling a Husky to have less energy.

Why this “breed” leads to problems we call “overthinking”

Different breeds, different needs — that sounds reasonable. But if the high-processing mind is a different breed, then why does it seem to cause nothing but problems? People know how to handle difficult dog breeds, but no one seems to know how to make anything useful out of an overthinking mind. It just seems to produce misery.

The wrong handling is the reason. We do not know how to handle a very active mind. We try to suppress it, and then force it, and finally shut it up. And what happens? Exactly what would happen if you did the same to a Husky. It chews on shoes, pees in the corner, and terrorizes the neighborhood. The same thing happens with a high-processing mind that no one has recognized and no one has taught what to do with. This is what it looks like:

Larger volume, faster processing → picks up everything, can't filter, gets flooded.

Dense internal dialogue that won't quiet → can't rest, can't sleep, stuck in a head that won't shut up.

Needs to understand → can't drop anything unresolved, keeps re-opening threads everyone else forgot about five minutes ago, ruminates.

Low tolerance for incoherence → someone gives a vague answer or does something that doesn't add up, and now it's an open problem that won't close.

Pull to optimize → no decision is small enough to just make. Everything becomes a project.

Notices many details, keeps many variables active → can't simplify because everything feels relevant.

Auto-generates counterarguments, reopens conclusions → nothing stays decided. Goes in circles.

Treats uncertainty as solvable through more thinking → keeps researching, keeps preparing, never feels ready, worries.

Can't control, direct, or stop thinking → can't switch off, can't stop a spiral once it starts.

This list seems more like the “overthinking” we are used to, doesn't it?

What patterns and beliefs have to do with it

How does it connect to the Human as a System Model?

HPM is part of the hardware in the sense that how much and how fast a person processes is something they are born with, not something they learned or developed. But it does not stop at the hardware. The way of thinking becomes a pattern: a go-to solution to a repeated problem. It's no secret that a lot of overthinkers are “living in their head.” From the pattern perspective, an HPM person has spent a lifetime learning that thinking is how you solve problems. Processing that was just part of how the mind works becomes the main tool for everything. A difficult emotion? Think about it. Complicated relationship? Think about it. Something uncertain coming up? Think harder.

Thinking becomes the solution for things that no amount of thinking can solve. And in a person who already has a tendency to get stuck in their own processing, the loop becomes guaranteed — because no amount of thinking can solve what will happen tomorrow, or why a bad thing happened yesterday.

The belief system doesn't help either. Most overthinkers absorb early on that they should not think this way. That good thinking is fast, efficient, impressive. Quick to decide, quick to move on. Nobody should be spending this long thinking about which socks to choose or what their ex said six years ago. So an HPM person tries to follow what they believe is true, and think like all those normal people whose thinking they have never actually seen. And when they can't, the main goal becomes to hide it, so at least no one knows how disturbing the inside of their head really is.

The result is that what they rely on the most is also what they are most ashamed of.

THE METHODOLOGY

Whether this is called overthinking or HPM, the problems don't change. The person still can't sleep, can't decide, can't stop a spiral once it starts. A different label for the same experience means nothing. So what does calling it a different architecture actually do?

First of all, it removes the wrong approaches. When a person with the problems listed above goes looking for an answer, whether online or anywhere else, they use the only term available: overthinking. We already established that this is an umbrella term, which would be fine if the advice

actually addressed the full range. But almost everything available is aimed at one type: anxious overthinking. In that frame, overthinking is a sign of dysfunction and the right thing to do is to stop it. The tools that follow from that all assume that the right approach (naming thoughts, noting them down, concentrating on the body or breathing, moving) will eventually lead to the head producing fewer thoughts and the problem solving itself.

An HPM person tries to apply the advice, and it is not that everything fails; some of it might help here and there. But structurally, nothing moves. Exactly because the issue is structural. At best, the person gets some relief. At worst, there is no relief at all, and what appears is either shame or frustration. A method that helps others does not work the same for them.

The HPM model drops the idea that an overthinking person will ever get to an average level of thinking, particularly by trying to distract themselves from thinking. And once suppression is off the table, what follows from the architecture becomes usable: stop conditions, breaks from thinking, pre-decided closures, prioritization, uncertainty tolerance training, and so on.

This will be discussed in more detail in the Training section.

There is another thing this frame makes possible: diversity inside the category. When you look at two high-energy dogs, you know there are some structural traits they share, and whether it is a Border Collie or a Husky, they both need a lot of movement and structure. But you also know that they are not the same, and what is a problem for one might not be a problem for the other, and what works for one might not work for the other.

Mapping

Mapping is similar to what a dog trainer would do when meeting a dog for the first time, just more complex. The point of the mapping is to figure out what exactly this mind is and how it works: how much it processes, how it processes, what it automatically does with information, and where that processing becomes difficult to manage. In other words: What breed is this? What does it need? What engages it? What stresses it? What difficulties does it have?

Labels like worry or rumination don't help much. Let's say John comes in with a complaint: he ruminates. What does he ruminate about though? Is it only about what he did in public? Because then it would be trying to reverse time with thinking. Is it about what his friend or partner did? This might be the inability to let go of something he does not fully understand until it makes sense. Is it about what he said and wished he had said differently? This might be the urge to optimize, where he goes through better responses than the ones that came out. "Rumination" on its own says very little about the source of the problem.

Mapping looks at all the particular problems and difficulties, as well as the 'bright side'. This means not only strengths and advantages, but also what engages the mind, what it finds

particularly interesting, and all the areas where it can enjoy itself.

Once the mental habits are identified, they are then examined as patterns: what is this way of thinking buying? Is worrying buying relief from uncertainty? Is looping over the smallest decision buying a sense of a job well done? Is replaying every detail buying the identity of a person who never misreads? In all of these cases, the pattern will not disappear as long as it keeps paying out.

The whole mapping process has another, less obvious function: it builds curiosity that can gradually replace the shame. HPM minds are driven by curiosity, and a puzzle is often exactly how they get hooked. Here, that puzzle is the person's own mind. In many cases, this is a radical change, from having to pretend the mind does not do what it does, to finally stopping and seeing: "oh, this is what is actually going on!"

Training

From there, training becomes straightforward: given these natural tendencies, what weak points need strengthening, and what strengths can be put to use? The goal is not to turn the dog into a different breed, but to train the dog you actually have—so it can become a good companion rather than something that barks at every noise and pees in the corners.

Training works on two tracks at once.

The first is a set of basic, practical skills that almost every HPM person needs: how to shift attention, how to experience silence in a head that doesn't do quiet, how to relate to thoughts in the way one would deal with a persistent salesman, rather than a voice of truth. The goal is to make the daily experience of living with an HPM manageable.

The second track is personalized and targets the specific difficulties that were identified in the mapping. The method is experimental: the person is given challenges and tasks designed to bring up those difficulties on purpose. They then observe what the mind actually does: what assumptions come up, what happens when the usual pattern is interrupted or changed, and what changes when they try a different approach.

Examples could include:

- Making a "not ideal" choice on purpose to compare predicted worst-case scenarios against what actually happens.
- Replacing micro-managing (detailed task lists) with a broad-category list for a week to see what happens.
- Making a decision (booking a ticket, buying something) with zero research done beforehand.
- Asking someone directly about what they think instead of running simulations.

- Running trials: comparing a draft written in 3 minutes versus a 2-hour polished version to see the effect of extra effort and time.

Training also addresses all the ways thinking is used to solve problems it cannot actually solve. In practice this means that an HPM person needs to see how they use thinking to solve uncertainty, turn back time, prevent mistakes, or at least look like someone who never makes them. Once those wrong assumptions are visible, the training can concentrate on what is actually missing: better tolerance for uncertainty, learning to accept mistakes, getting used to non-perfect decisions being a part of normal life.

The final point of the training is to take the processing power that just got freed and put it to work in a fun, productive, engaging, and exciting way. It's like making sure the dog gets its run so in the evening it gets tired and goes to sleep rather than chew on sandals.

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