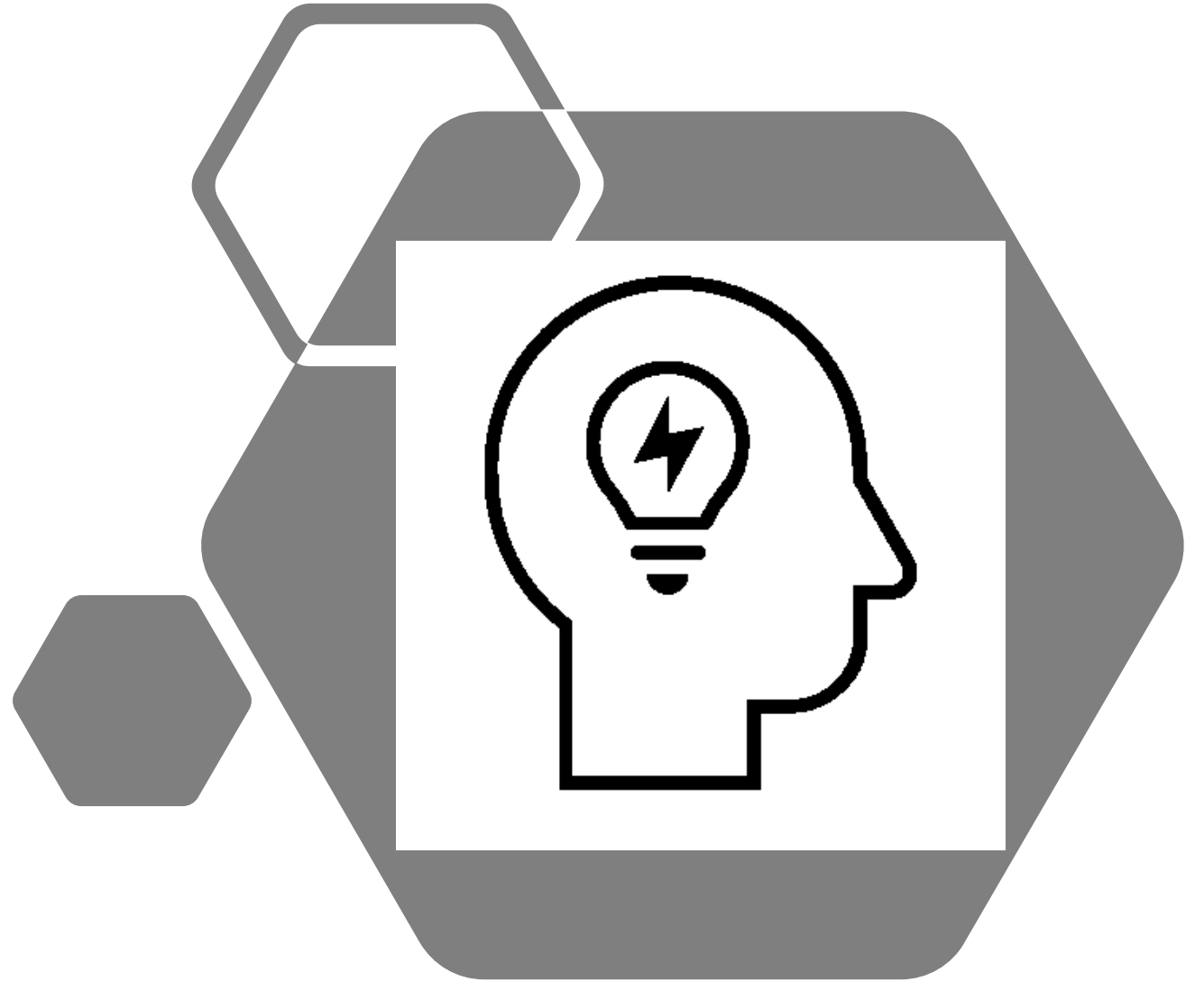# Effective planning, Not forgetting stuff, Avoid overthinking

PV236 Time management & Effectiveness

Josef Spurný
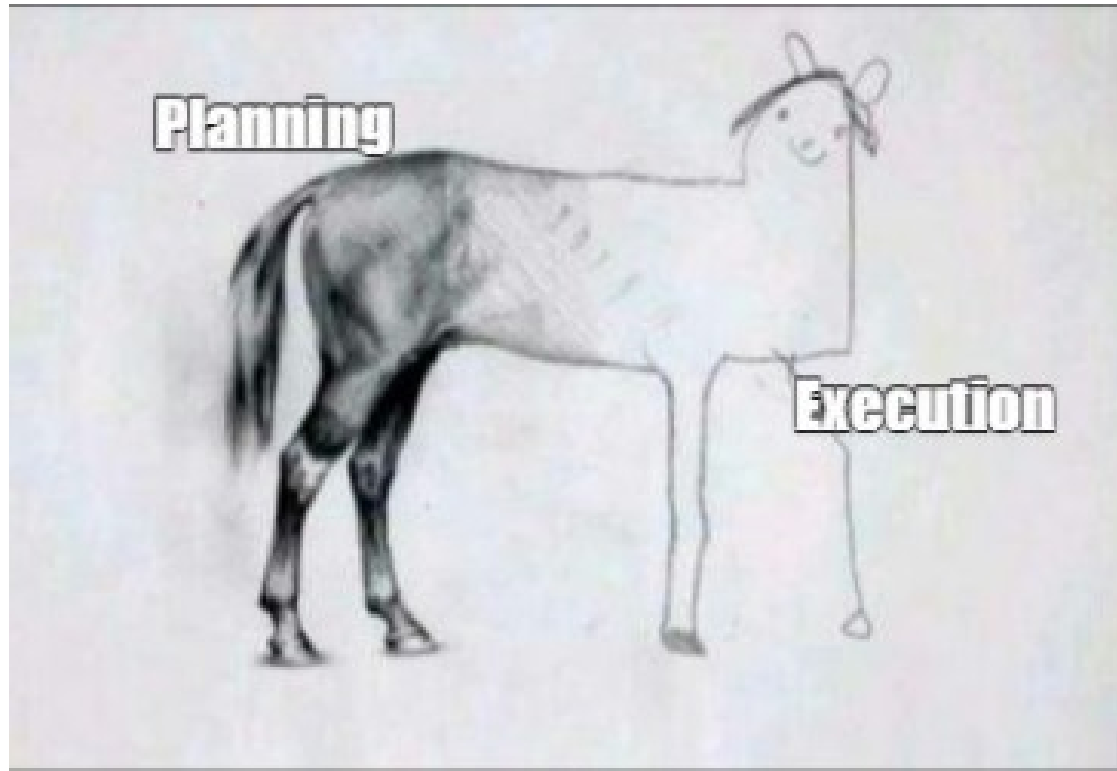
Why is it better to make plans?

Why is it better to make plans?

- Better control
- More efficient prioritization
- Saving time
- Avoiding "constant firefighting"
- Lower risk of making mistakes
- Less anxiety & procrastination

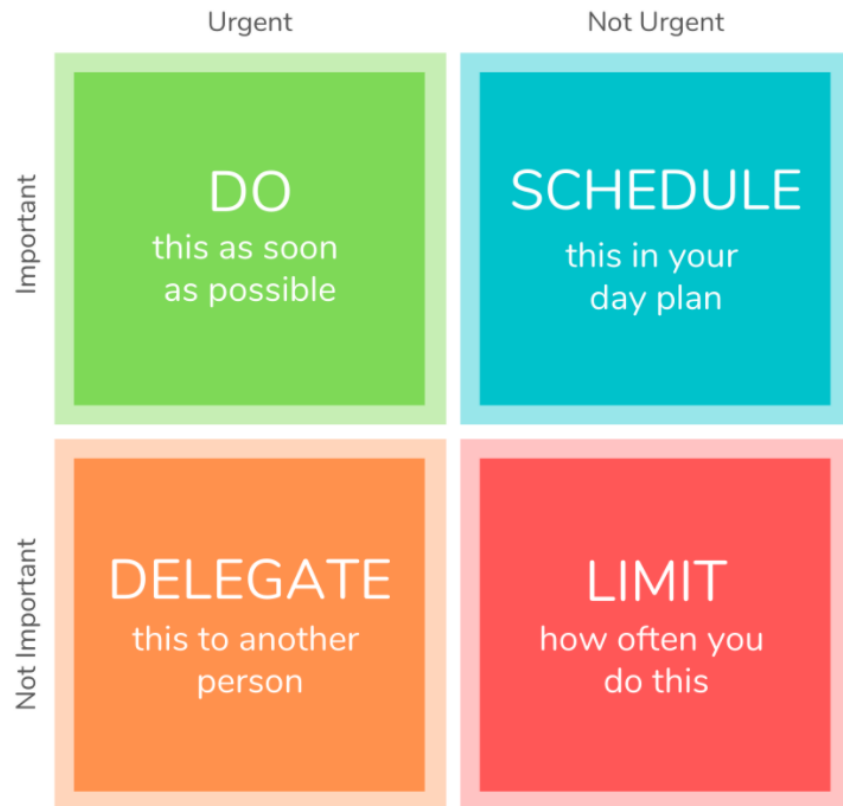# More complex project need more time planning

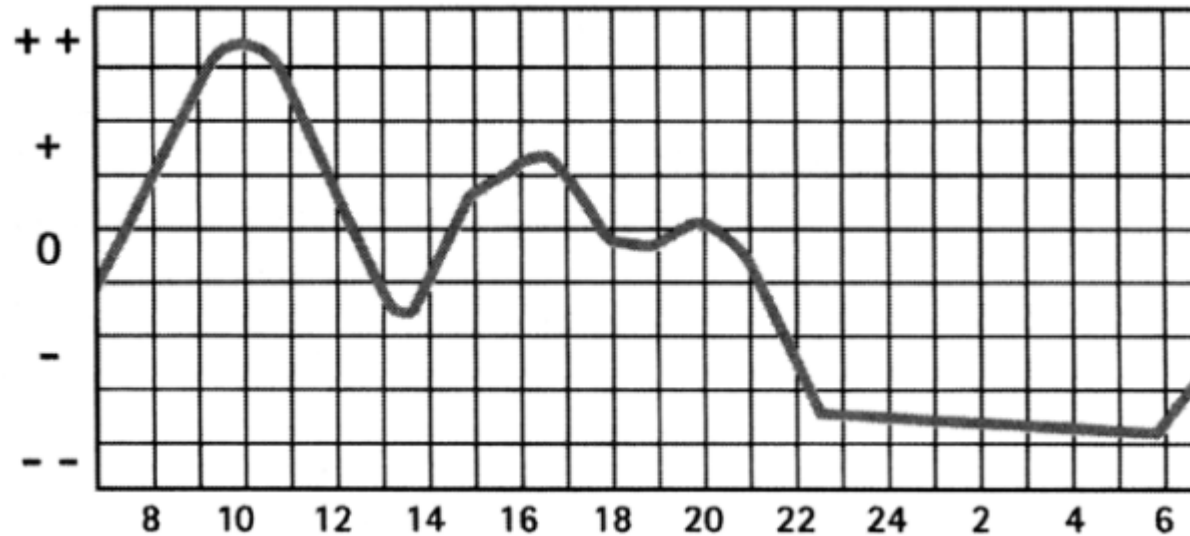# Golden rules of planning

- Plan with deadlines

- Record things down in writing

- Know your strengths & weaknesses

- Merge similar activities into blocks

- Plan only for 60 % of time, the rest goes for
  - Time buffer
  - Unexpected tasks
  - Time eaters/disturbances/etc.

Making a daily plan

- Remember the Eisenhower's matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	DO this as soon as possible	SCHEDULE this in your day plan
Not Important	DELEGATE this to another person	LIMIT how often you do this

Are you a morning bird or a night owl?

- Take your performance curve into consideration when planning our day
- Live in accordance with your curve
- Power naps – have you tried it?

Making a weekly plan

- Plan for the most demanding tasks first
  - Split it into multiple packages
  - Plan executing them such that you will not be interrupted when you work on them

- Fill the rest time (up to 60 %) with other, non-critical tasks

- Plan your free time as well

- Get inspired from project/process management
  - Plan consecutive tasks to save time
  - Can some things be done simultaneously?
  - Critical path method

Eat a frog!

*"If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning.*

And If it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first."

HOW TO EAT THE FROG

1. IDENTIFY YOUR FROG 🐸

a.k.a. your hardest, most important task for the day. Just one!

2. EAT IT 🍴

Do your most important task first thing in the morning. Don't give yourself the chance to put it off for later.

3. REPEAT EVERY DAY 🔁

You'll be amazed how quickly small steps taken consistently add up to big accomplishments.

Does it work for you?

What are your time eaters / distractors?
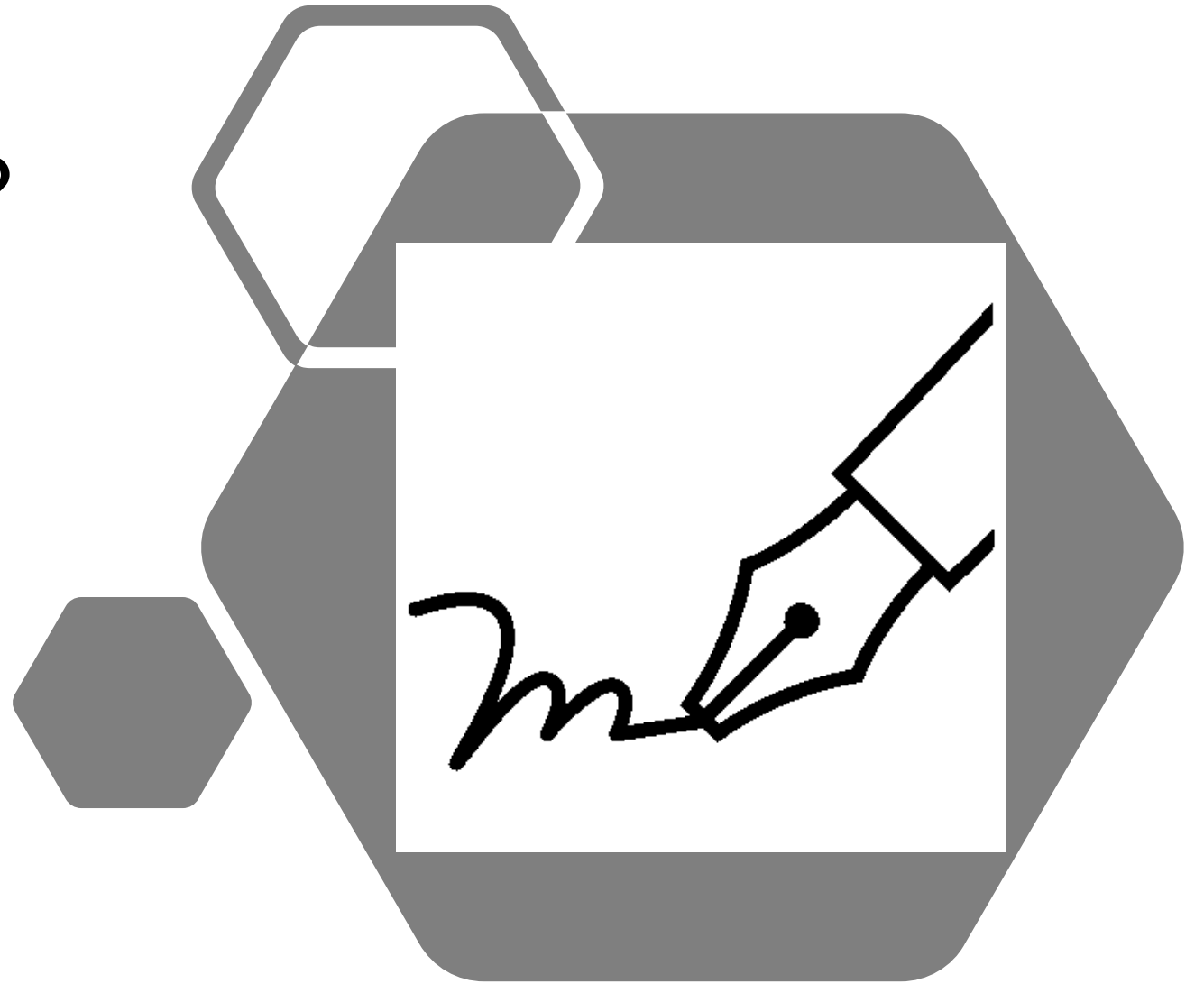
What are your time eaters / distractors?

No goals and priorities

No daily/weekly/monthly plans

Doing too many things at once

Lack of motivation

Perfectionism

Small talks / IM / Social networks

Poor time estimation

No delegation

Can't say "no"

Bad listener – can't focus on what others say

Bad organization – dunno where things are

Meetingitis – too many meetings

Too many "downtimes" – idle times between tasks

Fight your time eaters / distractors!

No goals and priorities

No daily/weekly/monthly plans

Doing too many things at once

Lack of motivation

Perfectionism

Small talks / IM / Social networks

Poor time estimation

No delegation

Can't say "no"

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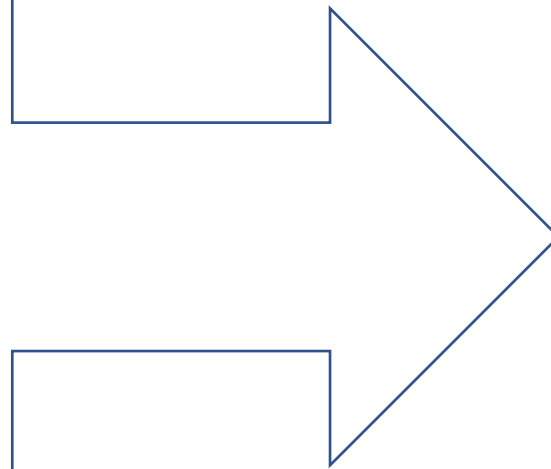
1. **Identify yours**

2. **Find a coping strategy how to deal with it**

Coping with external distractions

DISTRACTION	CAN IT BE PREVENTED?	PREVENTIVE MEASURE
Room-mates want to play PS5	Yes	Plan game sessions
FB Notifications	Yes	Disable notifications
Boss wants you to do something	Hardly	"I'll do it once I finish this task I'm working on right now, supreme leader"
...		

Coping strategy for internal distractions

Remember:
1. You gotta know yourself
2. Things one do that are emerging suddenly or that are hard to rationally explain are caused by some **emotion**

Effective meetings

- A presentation by Šárka Zbožínková

Not forgetting stuff

Forget-me-not …?

- Stuff that
  - you are looking forward to
  - somebody told you to do when you were playing PS5
  - you planned yourself to do
  - someone else assigned to you
  - is related to your daily agenda
  - is a part of bazillion other things you need to do due tomorrow
  - scare you to death

Why do we forget stuff?

- Our brain has certain capacity to keep stuff in active memory

- Forgetting is a way how to protect against overflooding

- The "stuff" is not well-integrated into your neuronal network
  - Information with emotional value remain active longer
  - Repeated information remain active longer
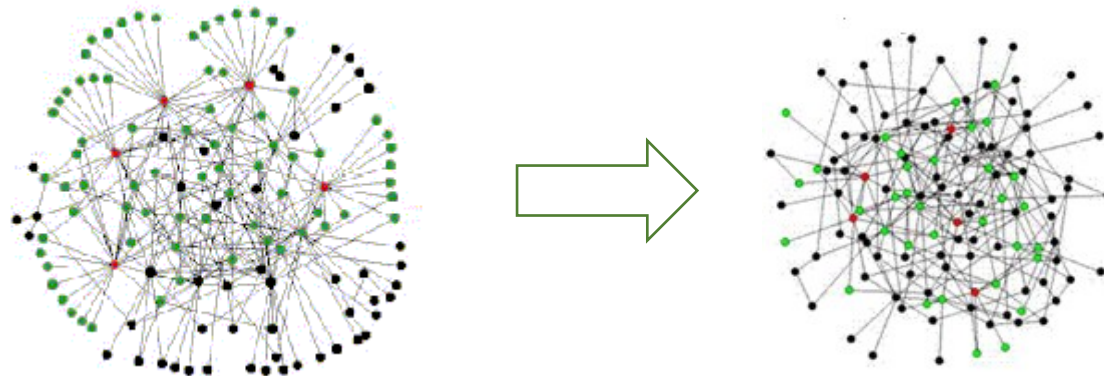
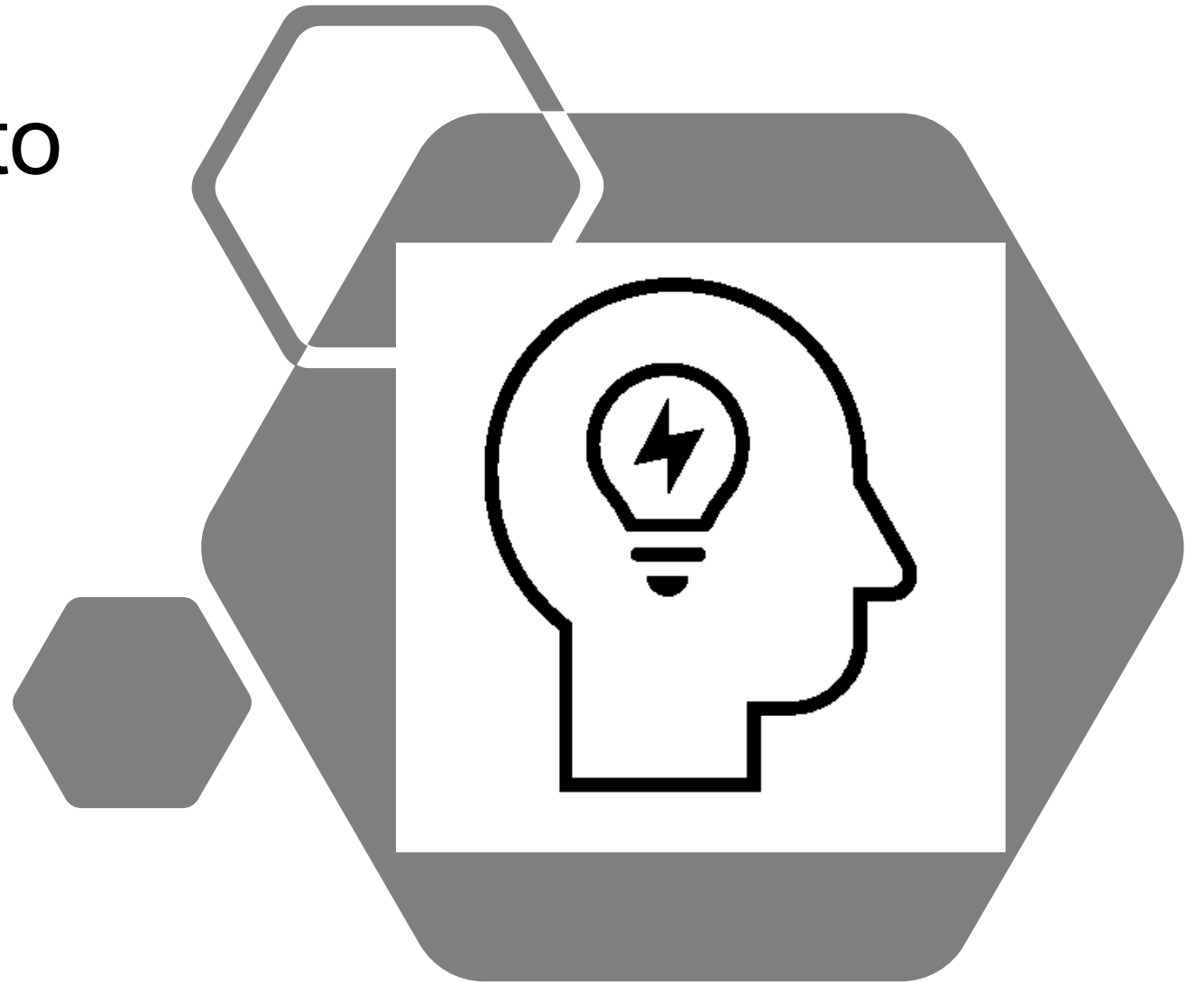# What to do about it?

- Write it down IMMEDIATELY

- Use some app
  - GTD
  - MS To Do
  - Any.do
  - Google Tasks

  - ...whatever works for you!

  - Or Pen & Paper for old fashioned feel

Avoid overthinking

Martin Pilgrim ✔
@MartinPilgrim1

My top 3 assumptions when doorbell rings:

1. Murderer
2. Police telling me everyone is dead
3. That book I ordered about positive thinking

2:41 PM · Jan 7, 2016

♡ 9.1K   💬 63   ↱ Share this Tweet

Tweet your reply

What does overthinking mean to you?

Psychological perspective

- Overthinking is usually a consequence of uncertainty or anxiety

- OCD – ritualistic behavior discharges anxiety

- Brain does not distinguish between external and internal inputs
  - "Black scenarios" → anxiety
  - Meditation / Autosuggestion/ "Safe place" visualizations → reduce anxiety

A computer scientist approach

- Problems may have many effective solutions → choice paralysis

- Choose one approach:
  - Define the problem
  - Propose solution
  - Back it up with explanation

Six thinking hats technique

Hat	Role	Focus
	Logic	The facts
	Optimism	The value and the benefits
	Devil's advocate	The difficulties and dangers
	Emotion	Feelings and intuitions
	Creativity	Possibilities and new ideas
	Management	Ensuring the rules of the hats are observed