

Parenting in Academia – Managing the Mental Load

Trainer



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Desiree Dickerson PhD is a clinical psychologist who specializes in the mental health and well-being of researchers and the academic community. A former neuroscience researcher, Desiree works globally with universities, lab groups, and academics in the pursuit of a healthier, sustainable approach to research.

Objective

Learn to manage the mental load of being an academic AND a parent

Description

How do we juggle work-life balance when “life” comes with such a huge mental load? When the family to-do list is three times as long as the work to-do list and you feel like you are always the one who has to remember everything. The thinking of having children is permanent and it’s exhausting. It’s invisible, unmeasurable and often inescapable.

How do we thrive at work whilst navigating the worry and guilt of managing a family at home? How do we learn to share the planning and management of our homes and not just the delegation of a never-ending task list in our minds? It is possible!

We will

- explore what mental load is, how it manifests in our daily lives, and why it’s harmful,
- learn to check in with our expectations,
- learn to “decontaminate” our time so that we can be more effective in our work and more present at home,
- identify cycles of worry and self-doubt and how to stop them,
- learn to zoom out to fit everything in, and
- explore mindfulness and self-compassion as tools to help you be present with your kids when at home and present with your work when at work.

Methodology

- **Day 1:** Online workshop in the group session will be based on evidence-based psychological tools including:
 - Cognitive behavioral theory
 - Acceptance and commitment therapy
 - Mindfulness
 - Self-compassion
- **Day 2:** Group-coaching session applying these same principles

Organizational Information

Language / Format	English / Online
Target group	Doctoral Candidates at all stages and Postdocs (R2/R3) from all faculties
Date	Online Workshop: Monday, 23 November 2026, 9:00 – 10:30 Online Group-coaching: Wednesday, 25 November 2026, 9:00 – 11:00
Registration	For registration click here

