

Decision Fatigue

On average, humans make 35,000 decisions per day. Most are done without much thought so we hardly notice them. However, throughout the day, these decisions can wear you out. As your brain tires, you default to what's easy.

In the evening, that might look like:

- Ordering a pizza (easier) instead of preparing your own meal from home (harder)
- Scrolling Instagram (easier) instead of taking an after dinner walk (harder)
- Staying up late to watch more episodes of your favorite show (easy) rather than going to bed at a reasonable hour (harder)

To overcome decision fatigue, consider how to automate some decisions. For example:

- Have the same breakfast most days
- Exercise at the same time each day
- Plan a week's worth of dinners on the weekend (when you're rested)—to avoid making those decisions during the week (when you're fatigued)

It seems simple, but this awareness and forethought is what many people miss. By making healthy actions as easy and automatic as possible, you'll be more likely to default to them, even when you're mentally drained.

You can't 100 percent eliminate decision fatigue. Because that's part of being human. But you can figure out ways to get out in front of it. This is where decision-making shortcuts like the **Eisenhower Decision Matrix** come in handy.

Eisenhower's matrix can help you quickly prioritize, especially on those evenings when "binge watch my favorite show" seems to be warring with "go for a walk" and "prep veggies for tomorrow."

To use it, separate your to-dos into the four quadrants shown below:

		URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	Do it now.	Schedule it for later.	
NOT IMPORTANT	Delegate it.	Don't do it until other stuff gets done.	

You still have to make a decision, but it shouldn't require as many cognitive resources.

Assuming you want to put time and energy into what you truly value, this framework will help you reserve the Not Urgent-Not Important stuff for AFTER you've checked other essentials off your to-do list.

Less decision fatigue leads to less overall stress.