

# Brain Study Reveals Why 'Sleep on It' is Great Advice

When your brain is fatigued, parts of it fall asleep, messing with your emotions and decision-making ability

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By Robert Roy Britt

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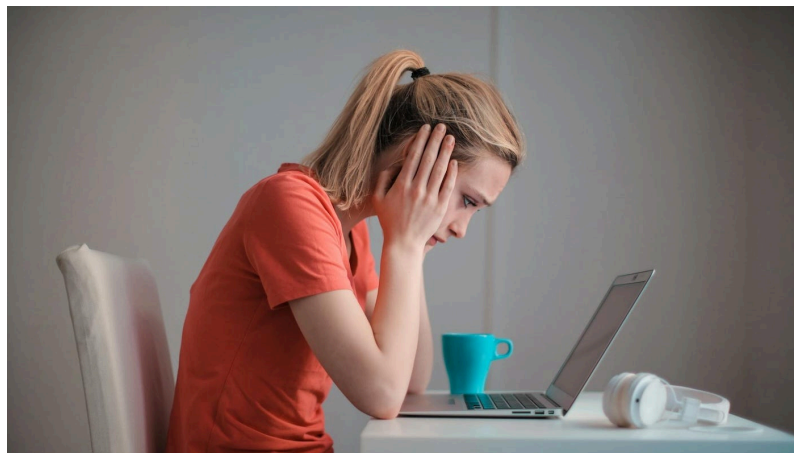


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Good sleep is like brain fertilizer. The ability to think straight, manage emotions and make smart decisions all depends on a nightly dose of high-quality sleep. During the day, we suck on that fertilizer with each cognitive task, and if the effort is intense, the brain becomes fatigued. That may not sound at all surprising. But what happens next involves a startling revelation captured in a new experiment measuring brain waves.

When your brain is exhausted, key parts appear to fall asleep, even while you are otherwise wide awake and trying to focus on something important.

This “local sleep,” as the scientists call it, happens in areas of the frontal cortex involved in emotions and decision-making. The result: You lose self-control, making you more impulsive, more aggressive, less able to make wise decisions and more apt to lash out rashly to a romantic partner, a colleague, or anyone else who, while in your right mind, you might not wish to piss off.

“These results provide a scientific bases to popular wisdom that suggests to

'sleep on it' before making a decision, by  
showing that metabolic...