

Thinking too hard may not help

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Complicated decisions might be best left to the unconscious mind because thinking too hard may lead to bad choices, a Dutch study found.

Ap Dijksterhuis, a psychologist at the University of Amsterdam, said conscious thinkers were better able to make the best choice among simple products, whereas unconscious thinkers were better able to make the best choice among complex products, the Guardian reported Friday.

The problem with thinking about things consciously is that you can only focus on a few things at once, so when in the face of a complex decision this can lead to giving certain factors undue importance and thinking about something several times is also likely to produce slightly different evaluations, highlighting inconsistencies, according to the study published in Science.

Dijksterhuis said that when he has to make an important decision he gathers together the relevant facts and gives it all of his attention at first.

Then "I sit on things and rely on my gut," he told Science.

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