

Editorial

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Have you ever noticed that you are often drawn to engaging in difficult, complicated tasks? You may remember at least one situation where you started doing something that required significant effort and yet persisted without giving up. You could have easily said, “This is too hard,” but you persevered until you succeeded. What makes us choose difficult tasks over easy ones? Behavioral economists often discuss mental effort in economic terms. There's even a theory known as the “law of least effort.” This theory encompasses two important concepts. First, people engage in mental effort as a means to get something for themselves. Remember the times when you stayed up late at night to study for an exam, even if it was an unpleasant experience, you still did it because you needed a good result. Second, both behavioral economists and cognitive psychologists agree that mental effort comes at a cost.

We usually can not claim that we enjoy expending mental effort since, when given a choice between two methods of achieving the same outcome, we tend to choose the easier path. Research consistently demonstrates that both humans and some animals do their best to avoid physical or mental effort wherever possible.

It is human nature to reduce cognitive effort if we can. At first glance, it seems that the only reason that can convince us that effort is worthwhile is a reward to match. However, some researchers argue that this law of minimum effort does not apply in all situations. It is challenging to explain why entrepreneurs, who generate passive income far in excess of their needs,

continue to work hard. Work occupies an important place in many people's lives, something that goes beyond material rewards. Often, work or effort provides us with a sense of meaning, and we often find joy in the process of expending effort to complete a particular task. Frequently, the most fulfilling events in life are those where we have overcome difficult circumstances, which guide us toward discovering meaning in difficult endeavors.

In essence, it suggests that when we are at a crossroads, the path we think will be the most difficult will likely bring us the most fulfillment. Therefore, do not shy away from exerting effort, as it is in those moments that your mind will struggle to find meaning.