Decision Fatigue

"There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all." - Peter F. Drucker

This game was played between Jeffrey Baffo and Jason Loving at the Denver Chess Club Saturday G/30 tournament on November 8, 2014.

In the position on the right it is White to move.

Answer below.

Recently I was listening to Tim Ferriss's excellent podcast "The Tim Ferriss Show", and he was talking about an interesting idea that I think we can all relate to.

This idea is called "Decision Fatigue".

You can listen to the podcast here, http://www.stitcher.com/podcast/tim-ferriss-show/the-tim-ferriss-show/e/ep-44-how-to-avoid-decision-fatigue-35995239 and it is about 17 minutes long.

The basic idea is that we all get a certain amount of "bandwidth" when it comes to making decisions. Each little decision that we have to make wears us down, and gives us "fatigue".

In today's world we have more decisions than ever to make. Instead of just getting a "cup of coffee" when you walk into a coffee shop you are now overwhelmed with an almost infinite list of possible drink combinations. All of these little decisions we constantly have to make start to add up over time.

This is the reason that people like Steve Jobs would wear the exact same outfit every single day (Black Shirt and Blue Jeans). He wanted to avoid using his decision bandwidth on something like "what to wear", so it could save it for more important things like "how much memory should an iPhone have" or other things related to his visions.

When you look at a game of chess, it is basically a series of decisions. You are constantly needing to decide "What move should I make?".

Now say you play a game in the evening after you have had a day full of decisions? Naturally at this point you are going to be having some decision fatigue. This is going to impair your decision.
making ability. Basically you will not have the willpower to make "good" decisions (moves).

So how to avoid this? Well, entire books have been written on this subject, but the basic idea is that you want to limit the amount of little decisions that you are making on a daily basis.

Building healthy routines can help. Try to avoid agonizing over small decisions. Getting lots of rest and taking naps is a good way to help reset your decision fatigue as well.

Also, just being aware of this idea helps. You might realize that the decisions you make on Friday afternoon after a long week at work or school are not as good as the decisions that you might make on Sunday evening after your batteries have been recharged, so wait to make important decisions at that point.

Here is the complete game:

[Event "DCC Saturday #1"]
[Site "Denver, CO"]
[Date "2014.11.08"]
[Round "2"]
[White "Baffo, Jeffrey"]
[Black "Loving, Jason"]
[Result "1-0"]
[ECO "A00"]
[WhiteElo "1773"]
[BlackElo "2090"]
[PlyCount "57"]


You can play through this game here: [http://www.viewchess.com/cbreader/2014/11/15/Game223284901.html](http://www.viewchess.com/cbreader/2014/11/15/Game223284901.html)

**Answer:** This game is full of tactical brilliancies by Jeff in a nice 300 point upset. He started off with a great knight sacrifice on f7, then followed up with this nice tactic 19.Bf4! This move deflects the Black Queen from guarding both the rook on c8 and the bishop on e7.

In the game black played 19...Qxf4 and Jeff continued with the accurate play 20.Qxe7+ (not Qxc8+) Kg8 (only move) 21.Qe6+ forking the Black King and Rook. This continuation leaves White up a Rook and two Pawns for a Bishop.

This is a great game to play through, and I really enjoyed it. Joel Johnson is planning on putting it in one of his future books as well. Well done Jeff!

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