

# Stages of an all nighter

FAHRISA ISLAM

We go about our lives the same way Donald Trump tweets about sensitive things - like an unrestricted raven without a care for the world. It's all fun and games until the bomb of all bombs is dropped. The realisation that you have an assignment due the next day that you haven't even started yet or perhaps an important exam you have not prepared for, probably feels worse than what Americans feel when they compare the POTUS with Justin Trudeau. Allow me to break down everything that happens at this point.

**1. The panic attack:** You are terrified of what the future holds for us. You imagine flunking the exam or getting blacklisted in the eye of a teacher forever. The most extreme of consequences seem very likely now. You plunge into an existential crisis so deep, that returning from it seems impossible.

**2. The sea of calm:** But suddenly, it dawns on you that one doesn't have to work just during the day. You have the entire night to get stuff done. "Sleep is for the weak" - you think to yourself. If you sacrifice sleep for just one night, you can avert the looming disaster. You find comfort in thinking that this won't happen again since you promise



to stay on top of things from now on. But this gives you a sense of ease and relief after the dreadful episode of fright.

**3. The trip to the departmental store:** If you are to stay up the entire night, you must have interminable amounts of caffeine and junk food at the ready. You load up on Ding-Dong Chips and energy biscuits and fill up your flask with freshly brewed coffee. These are your weapons to shoo exhaustion away, nicely displayed on your work desk and complete with filling water in your mom's nice Tupperware bottle (only the best when you are about to work so hard). You even announce in the house that you are very busy today and would not like to be disturbed.

**4. Tidying up:** From all those times you watched "How to study effectively" videos on YouTube instead of actually studying, you know that our mind works best when the surrounding is neat and organised. You de-clutter your work space, find your nice notebooks, colourful highlighters and sticky notes and stack all the books and documents to stay motivated throughout this battle.



**5. Procastination I:** It's 5.46 PM now and it feels wrong to start work right away. You decide to start at exactly 6.00 PM to make things even. You check up on your friends in the meantime and get caught up doing random things. The distressing loop begins when you realise it's 6.07 PM now and yet again, it feels wrong to start work at this time. Your life choices now mimic the Bangla phrase "*Bhanga cassette*" with the only difference being your inability to listen to yourself.

**6. Getting started:** So you finally gather some self-direction to begin your work. Upon realising that you don't have a plan, you make one detailing everything you need to do and how long you have, to do each job. At this stage, we all know that you have spent more time planning and systematising than actually getting work done. After functioning well for about twenty minutes, you start to feel hungry and tired. Hence, you take a snack break.

**7. Procrastination II:** Hunger is a trap. The knowledge of having infinite time because you are staying up all night is an unfortunate illusion. You think that a small

trip to Facebook while you eat is harmless. You see, that's where the trouble lies. That damn feeling of security. Once you go on social media, you will find yourself looking at relatable memes and even sharing some. It is almost impossible to not share "Why does the day not consist of 48 hours?" when you are wasting hours on endless scrolling. Chances and hopes are, you will stumble upon a meme that will knock some sense into you via another minor panic attack and you will press the log out button.

**8. Getting actual work done:** So you get a grasp on reality and understand that if you don't start getting things done RIGHT NOW, you are going to be in a royal mess. This is probably the most productive you will be all night. You manage to stay away from distractions out of sheer determination and keep sleep at bay by drinking unhealthy amounts of coffee. Things are getting done and that's all that matters.

**9. A quick nap:** The biggest trap when pulling off an all-nighter is feeling too satisfied with the work you have done so far. This almost always ends up with you thinking that a quick nap will not be risking too much and subsequently oversleeping. After all, you will more energetic after resting. Right? Oh how wrong.

**10. Reorganising:** So you overslept. Surprise, surprise. You clearly don't have enough time to do anything properly now. Maybe food will help. But it doesn't. The plan you made earlier won't work now. You have to rethink your strategy from scratch. You still try to motivate yourself to stay focused but you fail to. You find yourself plummeting into episodes of crisis now and then. You have probably read one passage in two hours and things clearly won't work out this way.

**11. Acceptance:** No time for perfection now. If you are studying for a test, reading just the headers and conceptualising what they mean by yourself will have to do for now. If you are working on an assignment, copy pasting and thesaurus are your best friends. When it's finally morning, you have oddly accepted whatever fate holds for you that day. You again convince yourself that this won't happen again.

Don't worry, it will.

