

TECHNIQUES FOR PUTTING AN END TO PROCRASTINATION





Do you often procrastinate? You have work to do but for a myriad of so-called reasons you put it off until it's a quarter to the deadline. And then, you attempt to rush through a six-hour project in two. As you rush to get the tasks done, you feel guilty about not having done the work sooner. Also, because work that's done hurriedly doesn't usually turn out best, you feel worse for performing below par.

You tell yourself that you will never let it happen again but it does, again and again. That's because procrastination is not something you wish away, it requires the application of certain principles and techniques.

How bad is procrastination?

If you are suffering from procrastination, you are not alone. According to Piers Steel, [95 percent](#) of college students procrastinate to a certain degree. People choose to procrastinate for various reasons including anxiety, an aversion to the task at hand or simply a lack of self-regulation. Sometimes, it may be that your work environment is stifling, or you have low energy levels or you are stressed.

No matter the reason, procrastination is intentional and has real consequences. Students who procrastinate will likely have poor study habits which result in poor grades. The guilt and stress from procrastination may even make a person more prone to falling sick.



How To Get Rid Of Procrastination

Although procrastination often casts a stronghold on people, breaking free is quite possible. Below are some key steps that can lead you to freedom from procrastination.

1. Admit that you procrastinate

The first step is to accept that you are guilty of procrastination. This is important because procrastination is often able to have such a stronghold on people because they don't want to believe they are actually procrastinating. They make excuses for why they are putting off work until later.

2. Deal with underlying causes

Procrastination may be acute or chronic. Acute procrastination may be set off by unpleasant occurrences that ruin our mood. It is not a regular occurrence in a person's attitude towards work. Chronic procrastination usually has a deep psychological cause like depression. A chronic procrastinator may battle with procrastination every day.

If a mental illness, relationship problems, or other pressing issues are the cause of procrastinating. It makes sense to actively find solutions to them before going back to deal with procrastination.

3. Set small goals towards the big goal

The enormity of a task can make a person too anxious to begin. Especially if the task is a high-risk project. What you should do when you find yourself unable to jump right into the big project is to break it into smaller projects. Focusing only on the endgame will make it easy for you to postpone tasks you can do now for later.

For example, if your goal is to set up a new business in 3 months. Break the process down into smaller projects like finding suppliers, creating visual designs, setting up a store or website. You can still further break down a goal like setting up a store into scouting, inspection, renting and so on. Mark every small goal achieved and reward yourself with a mental high-five.

4. Change how you think of deadlines

We tend to categorize time into three broad categories; past, present and future. Tasks slated for the present usually get us working immediately but future tasks have the tendency to fall into our "get it done soon" box. And since soon, later or someday are not definite deadlines we find ourselves never getting stuff done.

If your task doesn't have a deadline, create one, and if it does have a deadline, see that deadline as non-negotiable. Put a definite time and date on your deliverables. Rather than saying you will get the job done next week, plan to get it done on Tuesday, 7. Moving your deadline forward mentally also helps, rather than say you have six hours to clean your house, tell yourself it's just 3 hours.



5. Reward or punish yourself

Procrastination is a bad habit and punishment can help with breaking bad habits. If you make the punishment attached to inaction very uncomfortable, you'll have no option but to take care of your tasks now. The punishments can be to give away a favorite logo collection or write someone a check they can mail if you don't stick to the plan.

Rewards are also a great way to help you rise above procrastination. Every time you complete a task on time, treat yourself to something nice or shower yourself with compliments. Savoring the awesome feeling can inspire you to resist procrastination when it comes knocking next time.

6. Get to work

If you do not feel like working or do not like your present task a lot, the best way to solve the problem is to begin the work already. Ignore your excuses and get to work because the sooner the work is done, the sooner you can go do all the other fun stuff without guilt.

7. Get support

You may have fallen into procrastination all by yourself but you may need some help getting out. Get a friend to be your accountability partner. Someone who can call you out if they find you procrastinating.

There are simple tools that can help you in your fight against procrastination.



Sticky notes, to-do lists, scheduling Apps and reminder alarms are some great tools you could use.

Conclusion

Procrastination is not an easy habit to overcome so if you find yourself relapsing sometimes, forgive yourself. A pity party or guilt-tripping will make you feel bad and the worse you feel, the less excited you are to take on the next task.

References

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6598646_The_nature_of_procrastination_a_meta-analytic_and_theoretical_review_of_quintessential_self-regulatory_failure_Psychol_Bull_133_65-94