

REVERSE PROCRASTINATION

UNDERSTANDING WHY WE
PROCRASTINATE AND SIMPLE
HACKS TO OVERCOME IT

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Is Procrastination Killing Your Progress?

The school district I began my educational journey with adopted a web-based instructional program. As one of the persons responsible for campus usage, I needed administrative access in order to monitor program usage. I emailed the department head to see if he could assist. Typically, these types of requests can take days. However, the individual responded to my request within 5 minutes. I was amazed and thanked him for his prompt response in replying to my email. He replied,

"No sweat. I am a reverse-procrastinator. If I don't reply immediately, I will totally forget and never reply. So, I've learned to just stop and reply for small things. Otherwise my to-do list gets out-of-control long.

This small nugget of wisdom offered that day shifted how I did things tremendously. It has proven to be instrumental to overcoming the silent assassin called procrastination.

Delaying the execution of an important task is not the best habit to have. Putting off tasks wastes time and creates unnecessary delays. Unfortunately, it is a common struggle for many people. Procrastination is the enemy to productivity, but please let me help you put this nemesis to rest. It starts with understanding why you procrastinate.

WHY PEOPLE PROCRASTINATE

1. Stress

When we feel overwhelmed by responsibilities and situations, we have a tendency to avoid completing a task.

2. Lack of...

Being without can often paralyze us from moving forward with tasks, projects, or reaching goals.

A. Motivation – The task is important but you are just not motivated to start or complete it. Your creativity is drained along with your interest.

B. Skill – You desire to complete the task but lack the necessary ability to do so.

C. Discipline– You know what to do and how to do it but you lack the self-control to do it.

D. Time Management– You don't know how to properly budget and/or manage your time.

E. Organization– You are disorganized and all over the place. Everything is everywhere.

F. Resources– You are ready to complete the task but lack the fundamental resources to complete it. Resources include but are not limited to supplies, manpower, or money.

3. Fear

Fear is being in a constant state of anxiety or concern. An individual may procrastinate because they are afraid of completing something. The fear that leads to procrastination manifests itself in different ways.

A. Perfectionism– You put off completing something because you fear it will not be perfect.

B. Performance Anxiety – You are wary of falling short of set expectations – whether self-imposed or from others.

C. Failure– Fear of failure ranked #4 in a Gallup poll of top ten fears. You may find yourself procrastinating to avoid disappointment.

D. Rejection– The fear of finding out that you're not wanted may lead to procrastination.

4. Laziness

Laziness says, "I can, but I won't." There are times that one must admit that they are simply lazy about completing tasks. The issue is not stress, fear, or lack. The individual simply does not want to work. This mindset is erroneous, and it feeds procrastination.

5. Adrenaline Junkies

In this context, adrenaline junkies are those who enjoy the rush of completing tasks last minute. Maybe your best work emerges under pressure. The bottom line is that you enjoy the rush and often will create these types of situations. In this context, adrenaline junkies are those who enjoy the rush of completing tasks last minute. Maybe your best work emerges under pressure. The bottom line is that you enjoy the rush and often will create these types of situations.

6. Fatigue

When you are tired, there is a tendency not to want to do anything. Some battle with chronic fatigue syndrome which makes matters worse. If you are amongst this group, a few changes to your diet, exercise, and lifestyle can assist.

WAYS TO OVERCOME PROCRASTINATION

1. Exercise the 2-minute rule.

If it takes less than two minutes to complete, do not add it to your to-do list. Just do it- plain and simple.

2. Set deadlines.

Setting deadlines gives an end to your task or goal. Working with a timeline will help keep you on target.

3. Create an action plan.

An action plan outlines the smaller, necessary tasks needed to complete a larger project, goal, or vision. Make a list of the tasks you have to complete. Prioritize your list by date and tackle the list one step at a time.

4. Get an accountability partner.

Just as there is safety in numbers, there is accountability in numbers. Working with a partner or group on anything from exercise to your career fosters more commitment than going solo. Being accountable to an outside party will help you avoid procrastination. Find a strong individual(s) that you can check in with for progress.

5. Learn the Power of 30 minutes.

Pastor Tommy Barnett has a life-changing concept called the Power of the Half Hour. Planning various thirty minutes spurts of devoted task tackling will make a huge difference. Setting aside 30 minutes to develop spiritually (e.g. prayer, reading, meditation) and physically (e.g. 30-minute walk, run, or workout) inevitably leads to desired results. Being accountable to an outside party will help you avoid procrastination. Find a strong individual(s) that you can check in with for progress.

6. Be Proactive and Plan

Planning is key to overcoming procrastination. Make a plan and stick with it. Make adjustments only as needed.

The Gist

Procrastination kills progress and focus. It is the enemy of vision, focus, and productivity. People procrastinate for many reasons. For every reason people procrastinate, there is a solution to overcome it.

Reflect and Act

1. If you struggle with procrastination, identify the reasons why you struggle. Don't overlook this step in your pursuit to end procrastination.
2. Find an accountability partner. Inform your partner about a task, project, or goal you desire to complete. Start your journey to completion by setting a deadline and creating an action plan.

Recommended Readings:

Barnett, Tommy. *The Power of the Half Hour*.

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