

Understanding Procrastination

What is procrastination?

Procrastination is a form of avoidance behavior.

Why do we procrastinate?

- avoid a confrontation
- avoid the unpleasant
- fear of failure
- fear of success
- pressure to do well and/or be perfect
- rebellion
- poor time management
- poor concentration
- lack of interest in task

Why is procrastination harmful?

- increases stress, anxiety, guilt and embarrassment
- decreases feelings of self worth and competency
- can lead to missed opportunities
- can negatively impact grades
- task becomes more unpleasant as time goes on

Overcoming Procrastination

How do we overcome procrastination?

1) Recognize whether task being avoided is unpleasant or difficult.

If the task is unpleasant, try to schedule it early in your day or week. If the task is difficult, try to break it down into smaller, more manageable parts.

2) Set realistic goals.

Create an action plan that addresses task requirements and considers your attention span, interest level, and time constraints.

3) Increase your motivation.

Motivation is key to overcoming procrastination. Look to your friends for support. Check in with them periodically to measure your progress. This can help you feel more accountable for your actions.

4) Change your mindset.

A positive attitude will go a long way. Stop blaming others for your behavior. Stay positive and focus on your successes. Expect minor setbacks and be patient with yourself as you begin to develop more productive time management skills.

5) Schedule an appointment at the Learning Success Center.

A learning specialist can help you recognize your reasons for procrastinating and develop a plan to begin to use your time more effectively.

Resources: Dryden, W. *Overcoming Procrastination*. London: Sheldon Press, 2000.

Knaus, W.J. *The Procrastination Workbook*. New Harbinger Publications, 2001.

www.reshall.berkeley.edu/academics/resources/procrastinate



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