

Self help matters.

Helping you to find your solutions

Overcoming Procrastination

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Procrastination refers to the avoidance of a specific task or work which needs to be accomplished. But this doesn't capture the emotions triggered by the word. For most of us, the word "procrastination" reminds us of past experiences when we have felt guilty, lazy, inadequate, anxious, or stupid – or some combination of these. It also implies a value judgement: if you procrastinate, you are bad, and as such, you lack worth as a person. But it doesn't need to feel like this.

In order to understand and solve your procrastination problems, analyse those situations where your work is not being completed.

Understanding the 'cause' often reveals the potential solution.

Top Tips

Time-management. Apply a more structured and considered management of your time? Write it down, plan it, do it.

Meaning. If something is not meaningful to you personally, it may be difficult to get motivated. What inspires you?

Acceptance of another's goals. If a project has been imposed or assigned to you and it is not consistent with your own interests, you may be reluctant to spend the necessary time to see it to conclusion. Do it for you.

Perfectionism. Perfection is unattainable, impossible and unrealistic. Stay real. Ensure your goals are achievable.

Evaluation anxiety. Since other's responses to your work are not under your direct control, overvaluing these responses can create anxiety that will interfere with work getting accomplished. Stick with what you can control.

Ambiguity. If you are uncertain of what is expected of you, it may be difficult to get started. Who can give you appropriate guidance, advice or clarity?

Fear of the unknown. If you are venturing into a new realm or field, you don't have any way of knowing how well you'll do which may inhibit your desire to begin. But every great invention began with the unknown!

Skills deficiency. What additional skills do you need to give yourself the confidence to proceed with a task? Who can you ask about this? Where do you acquire them and how?

Ignorance. Simply ignoring a task doesn't make it go away. It'll be still be there, and by not doing something you need to, could have consequences which will generate even more stress and anxiety that you get from procrastinating.

Reality check. It's often our anxiety which triggers procrastination. Put these emotions aside and conduct a sensible assessment of what you need to do, the time you have, how best to plan, and how to structure the way to proceed.

Substitution. It can be easy to create a false set of priorities, such as believing it's more important to clean your flat than start your assignment. Monitor yourself.

Treats. Some people find they avoid inactivity with a 'delayed gratification', such as saying, after an hour of essay writing, I can have a coffee or listen to a track of music. Doing this may help give you the encouragement to start.

Structure. Sometimes, a task or assignment can seem too large to begin. Break this down simply by sketching out a short 'beginning', 'middle' and 'end'.

Urgent & Important. What is important is rarely urgent and what is urgent is rarely important. Prioritise.

SMART. Tasks are best accomplished if they are Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and achievable within a reasonable Time.

Segment the task. The entire job may seem impossible, but small segments may seem more manageable.

Resources

MOODZONE

Boost your mood, cope with stress, anxiety or depression or simply improve your overall emotional wellbeing.



Opening Hours: Online

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx

LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



Opening Hours: Online

<https://littf.com/>

THE MIX

Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.



Opening Hours: Online

www.themix.org.uk

MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



Opening Hours: Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support

BIG WHITE WALL

Online community of people who are anxious, feeling low or not coping who support and help by sharing what's troubling them. This is a free, online, moderated service and confidential.



Opening Hours: Online

www.bigwhitewall.com

If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling