I. Identify your particular Symptoms of Procrastination

1. How do you know you are procrastinating?
2. What do you do to procrastinate?
3. Identify situations or areas in which you procrastinate, (e.g., social relationships, school, finance, household, etc.).
4. When do you procrastinate?

II. Identify Underlying Issues or Causes of Procrastination

1. Lack of relevance
2. Lack of interest
3. Perfectionism: having extremely high standards which are almost unreachable
4. Evaluation anxiety: concern over other’s responses to your work
5. Ambiguity: uncertainty of what is expected to complete a task
6. Fear of failure and self-doubt
7. Fear of success: (e.g., if you succeed, concern over having to maintain same level of performance; concern over jealousy from others)
8. Inability to handle the task: lack of training or skill necessary to complete task
9. Lack of information needed to complete task
10. Environmental conditions:
   - Orderliness of work area
   - Availability of needed materials
   - Adequate lighting
   - Distractions
   - Temperature
11. Physical conditions (e.g., fatigue)
12. Anxiety over expectations that others have of you (e.g., high pressure to succeed; expectations that you will fail)
13. All-or-nothing thinking (e.g., seeing one setback as total failure)
14. Task seems overwhelming or unmanageable
15. You are actually overextended, trying to manage too much

III. Management Strategies

11. Identify what is necessary to accomplish task in a given amount of time; get a sense of the entire project and what is required to complete it.
12. Set goals for what is to be accomplished.
13. Break goals into smaller sub-goals (e.g., concentrate on one section or a paper at a time).
14. Accept that there are no magical cures.
15. Fear of failure:
   - Acknowledge strengths/skills
   - Recall previous successes
   - Work on weaknesses
   - Take risks

Behavioral Strategies to Overcome Procrastination

Identify your special behavioral diversions:
- Determine what they are
- Note when and where you use them
- Plan how to diminish and control their use

Bits and Pieces:
- Break large tasks into small ones.
- Prioritize work and set deadlines.
- Use behavioral suggestions, e.g., lay the book you have to read out in plain view.
- The Ten Minute Plan: work on a dreaded task for ten minutes, then decide whether or not to continue.

I. Change location or position; take a break;
II. Switch subjects or tasks.

Contracts: Make them with yourself or someone you see regularly.

Premack Principle: Reward yourself for accomplishment.

Cognitive Strategies to Overcome Procrastination

- Prepare yourself mentally.
  Think of:
  - When..., not if...
  - The price of delay
  - Positive thoughts
- Learn to tolerate discomfort.
- Watch for mental self-seductions into behavioral diversions, (e.g., “I’ll do it tomorrow,” “What’s the harm of a half-hour of TV now? I’ve still got time,” or “I deserve some time for myself,” or “I can’t do it.”)
- Dispute mental diversions, (e.g., “I really don’t have that much time left, and other things are sure to come up later,” or “If I get this done, I’ll be better able to enjoy my time,” or “Once I get started, it won’t be that bad.”)
- Use Paradoxical thoughts.
Procrastination Problems?

Would you like to talk to a counselor or find further information on the subject?

Contact us at:
Counseling Services
Old Library 2122
715-836-5521

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Check out our web site virtual pamphlet collection at:
www.uwec.edu/counsel

Putting A Stop To Putting It Off!