

Overcoming Procrastination

Worksheets

Worksheet # 1 – “Why We Procrastinate”

Directions. Take your best guess and rank the following reasons for why we procrastinate from 1 to 5 starting with “1” being the biggest reason we procrastinate and “5” being the smallest.

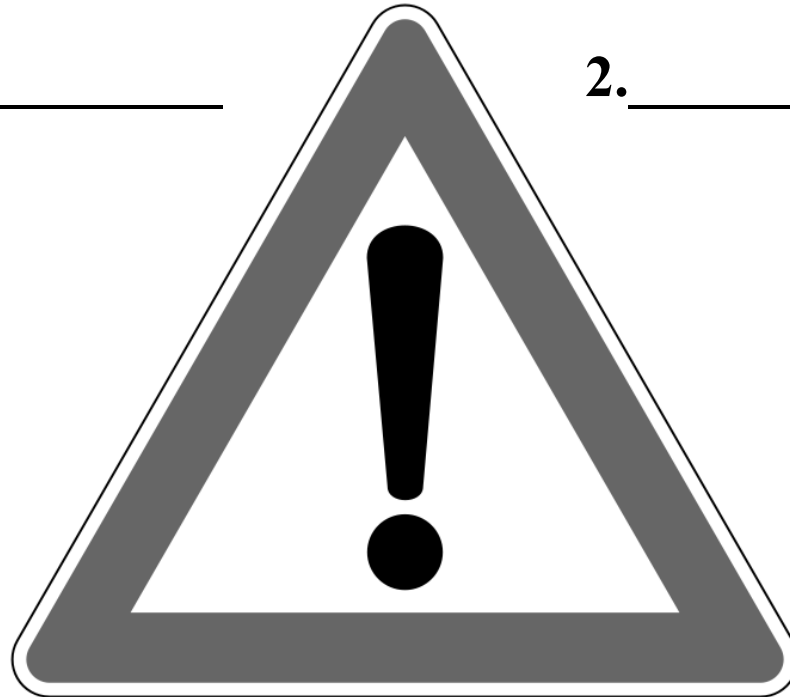
		Feeling Overwhelmed – A feeling that there is too much that needs to be done in order to accomplish a task, thus paralyzing us from even taking the first step towards achieving it.
		Task Unpleasant – We view the task as boring or tiring or that it will make us uncomfortable in some way.
		Fear of Failing – If we take action towards reaching our goals yet fail to realize them, we fear we will be seen as a failure. We fear being rejected or made to look like a fool.
		Lacking Motivation – We find no internal motivation or benefit for doing the task, and there is no penalty for not doing it, leading us to not do it at all. The cost in terms of time and energy seem to outweigh the benefits.
		Lacking Focus – Unable to stay on task because something has come up. The ‘something else’ can be anything that distracts the person from continuing to work on a main task.

Worksheet # 2 – “The Warning Signs You’re Procrastinating”

Procrastination is happening when there’s a significant space of time between having identified a task that needs to get done, and then actually doing it. This space of time gets filled up with the following three behaviors:

1. _____

2. _____



3. _____

Worksheet # 3 – “Procrastination Warning Signs in My Life”

1. Assign a point value to each of the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 indicating that the statement is not true for you, and 5 indicating that the statement is strongly true for you.

Point Value	Procrastination Statement
	1. I usually find reasons for not acting immediately on a difficult assignment.
	2. I know what I have to do but frequently find I spend my time doing something else that is more enjoyable.
	3. I work best at the “last minute” when the pressure is really on.
	4. There are too many interruptions that interfere with me accomplishing my top priorities.
	5. It feels unfair when I am pressed to make an unpleasant decision.
	6. I take half measures to delay unpleasant or difficult actions.
	7. When tired I really just want to ‘veg out’ rather than do the difficult tasks I face.
	8. I question why tasks always have to be so difficult all the time.
	9. I find myself waiting for inspiration before starting important tasks.

Worksheet # 3 – “Procrastination Warning Signs in My Life” - Continued

2. Next, add up the point values assigned according to the following grouping of statements.

Questions: $2 + 3 + 7 =$ _____ points

Questions: $1 + 4 + 9 =$ _____ points

Questions: $5 + 6 + 8 =$ _____ points

3. With the above point totals determined, assess which procrastination warning sign (highest point total) is most prevalent in your life.

Based on your highest score:

Questions: $2 + 3 + 7 =$ May be inclined at **Indulging in Distractions**

Questions: $1 + 4 + 9 =$ May be inclined to **Making Excuses**

Questions: $5 + 6 + 8 =$ May be inclined to **Feeling Despair**

Worksheet # 4 – “Procrastination Matrix”

Directions. Use this matrix to connect the most popular reasons people procrastinate to the strategies that can help to overcome them.

		Strategies for Overcoming Procrastination									
		Vocabulary	Reverse Calendar	Filling Up Your Schedule	Work in Flow State	Fully Embraced Goals	Look at the Tiny Steps	Make Your Own Rewards	Reframe its Importance	Sleep, Eat Healthy, Exercise	Uncover Start & End Points
Reasons for Procrastinating	Fear of Failing	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			■
	Lacking Motivation			■		■		■	■		■
	Lacking Focus			■	■	■	■	■		■	
	Feeling Overwhelmed	■	■		■		■			■	■
	Task Unpleasant	■			■	■		■	■		■

Worksheet # 5 – “Procrastination Matrix Terminology”

Strategies for Overcoming Procrastination:

1. **Vocabulary** – Watch your choice of words when you talk about a task you need to do. The words you use will have a strong influence on your perception. *“Positive words yield positive results.”*
2. **Reverse Calendar** – Start with the ultimate deadline, and then work backwards creating smaller deadlines leading up to the beginning of the task. Do your best to make sure these deadlines are within your control. *“Many small steps are what get things done.”*
3. **Filling Up Your Schedule** – Reduce the time you think you have available for working on important tasks by scheduling recreational and non-work related activities. Since the time when you can work on important tasks will be limited this way, you will have a tendency to make the most of the time available. *“If I have less time to do this, I’ll act.”*
4. **Work in Flow State** – We’re most productive when fully focused. Distractions, intense emotions and other concerns undermine our focus and productivity. Deal with these distractions by conducting a simple 2-minute meditation by closing your eyes, taking several deep breaths, emptying your mind, and visualizing yourself completing your task. *“Plant seeds of success.”*
5. **Fully Embraced Goals** – Do not work on things you do not care about. This will only reinforce existing procrastination patterns. Commit to a task, not comply with it. *“Practice makes perfect.”*

Worksheet # 5 – “Procrastination Matrix Terminology” - Continued

6. **Look at the Tiny Steps** – If looking at the big picture overwhelms, break it down into smaller steps. Tackle these tiny steps one by one as individual victories. Before you know it, you will reach success. *“Think: Little wins!”*
7. **Make Your Own Rewards** – Promise yourself a treat once a certain task is completed. Note how good it feels to finish things. *“A small treat awaits you.”*
8. **Reframe its Importance** – If you know a task has to be done, but it’s not emotionally important to you, find a way to make it important. *“It will please the people I love if I do this.”*
9. **Sleep Eat Healthy and Exercise** – It’s hard to focus on completing a task when you are tired. So get enough sleep, eat healthy, and exercise regularly. *“Nothing is so fatiguing as the hanging on of an uncompleted task.”*
10. **Uncover Start and End Points** – Once something has a beginning and an end, it’s a lot easier to start filling in the middle. Define the start and end points of your task so you know how big or small it is. *The beginning is the most important part of the work.”*

Worksheet # 6 – “Where, Why, and What to Do about My Procrastination”

Directions. 1) Identify a task that you usually end up procrastinating around. 2) From the “Procrastination Matrix,” pick the most appropriate reason from the five listed that explains why you procrastinate on this task. 3) From the “Procrastination Matrix,” choose a strategy that can help you to overcome this reason for why you are procrastinating.

1) The task I usually procrastinate on is:	2) The reason why I usually procrastinate on this task is:	3) The strategy that I could use to overcome this is:

Worksheet # 7 – “Ad Creation”

Directions. If there was just one thing you could tell others about procrastination and how to overcome it that you’ve learned in this training course, what message would you give? Write your message in the blank space on the billboard sign below.



Homework – “Modeling the Attributes of Others”

Sometimes we dwell too much on ourselves when trying to overcome our procrastination habits. But it may help to instead focus on others, and to identify qualities in others that we admire and that seem to be necessary in order to *‘fight the good fight’* against our procrastination. With that in mind, please take a few minutes to complete the following assignment.

1. Create a list of people in your life that you feel work hard, consistently demonstrate a high level of productivity, and always seem to be able to get into action and complete many tasks.
2. Next, write down one attribute from each person that you feel helps that person NOT to procrastinate.
3. Finally, describe how you would feel, or what it would be like for you, if you also possessed that attribute and could avoid procrastinating because of it.