

PROCRASTINATION

Understanding Procrastination

Fact #1: It's Rarely About Time Management

Procrastination is more about unrealistic expectations, avoidance, coping with stress, or fear of failure.

Fact #2: Coping

Procrastination is an attempt to cope with external pressures and negative internal experiences. So it feels adaptive in the moment.

Fact #3: Procrastination & Stress

Procrastination is linked with higher stress levels, illness, and lower academic performance among college students.

Fact #4: Creating Bad Habits

Experiencing positive outcomes from last-minute work and cramming, plus holding beliefs like "I only work well under pressure" can fuel the habit.

Overcome procrastination by understanding the specific contributors:



DONE IS BETTER THAN PERFECT.

AND NO ONE'S WORK IS PERFECT ALL THE TIME

Negative Self-Talk

Feeling: down, defeated, and distracted before and while working

Sounds like: a mean internal coach downplaying your abilities and performance ("What's the point?")

Concentration Difficulty

Feeling: bored by the content of tasks or overwhelmed by their complexity

Sounds like: doing everything but your work, getting caught up in external and internal distractions

Fear of Failure and Perfectionism

Feeling: worried about future outcomes of academic tasks

Sounds like: overthinking how to finish a task, spending too much time on a certain part of a task, or over-planning rather than actually working



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Creating Conditions for Success

Create an Environment and Circumstances That Promote Productivity

- Find the time of day you have the most energy and focus. Do your hardest tasks then.
- Cut out external distractions - consider lighting, presence of people, level of noise.
- Put your phone in "do not disturb."
- Schedule a reward after every working block (e.g., a walk or a chat with a friend)

Address Emotional Barriers

- Make a stressful and demanding task more doable by breaking it into smaller chunks.
- Reframe procrastination as avoidance - when you avoid a task, you might be making it more stressful.
- Identify each action as a choice point. What behavior will you engage in next? Work or procrastination?

Time to Act!

- Just start! Perfectionism can be paralyzing. Strive for progress instead.
- It's better to be a perfectionistic editor than a perfectionistic creator.
- Set limits on how long you'll work. Rather than schedule an entire day, give yourself time for work and play.

Campus Resources

Habif Health and Wellness Center

Medical Services: 314-935-6666

Mental Health Services: 314-935-6695

Health Promotion Services: 314-935-7139

Visiting Us

Habif is on the lower level of Dardick House on the South 40 on Shepley Drive.

The Zenker Wellness Suite is in the Summers Recreation Center (room 303).

habif.wustl.edu



Habif Health and
Wellness Center

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