

THE NOW HABIT

A Strategic Program for Overcoming Procrastination and Enjoying Guilt-Free Play

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MAIN IDEA

Despite the fact procrastination is a known drain on personal and organizational productivity, very few people ever take the time to define precisely what procrastination is.

A good working definition of procrastination is:
“Procrastination is a mechanism which people use to cope with the anxiety or stress involved in starting new tasks or completing old ones.”

When you adopt this definition, it then becomes clear the key to overcoming procrastination isn’t the usual collection of cliches:

- “Just get out and do more.”
- “Try harder.”
- “Get better organized.”
- “Stop being lazy.”

Instead, to genuinely overcome procrastination you’ve got to deal with your more deeply seated inner dialogues and your own personal definitions of “failure”, “perfectionism” and “work ethic”. Instead of a collection of how-to advice and tactics, you need to have a strategic system in place which will give you the tools needed so you can mentally shift gears into a higher level of functioning. Once you take more control over the way you think about your work and motivate yourself, you will then naturally become more efficient and productive.

“The procrastination habit catches people in a vicious cycle: get overwhelmed, feel pressured, fear failure, try harder, work longer, feel resentful, lose motivation, and then procrastinate. The cycle starts with the pressure of being overwhelmed and ends with an attempt to escape through procrastination. As long as you’re caught in the cycle, there is no escape. Instead, you can cultivate the Now Habit: the ability to put aside the fear of failure, the terror of feeling overwhelmed, and low self esteem, and focus your mind on what you can start now. The skills and strategies of the Now Habit program will let you think of yourself as a producer, feel like a producer, and act like a producer. To overcome procrastination you need a positive attitude about the human spirit.”

– Neil Fiore

Ten strategic tools for overcoming procrastination

- ▶ 1 Create a mental safety net
- ▶ 2 Use positive self-talk to reprogram your attitudes
- ▶ 3 Use the symptoms of procrastination to trigger the cure
- ▶ 4 Strategically schedule some guilt-free play time
- ▶ 5 Use three-dimensional thinking and reverse calendars
- ▶ 6 Make worry work for you rather than against you
- ▶ 7 Create and use an unschedule on a daily basis
- ▶ 8 Set a few realistic goals which deserve your attention
- ▶ 9 Learn how to work in your most productive flow state
- ▶ 10 Turn setbacks into opportunities to move forward

Tool #1 – Create a mental safety net Page 2
 Realize that whatever happens, you will survive and keep moving forward with your life.

Tool #2 – Use positive self-talk to reprogram your attitudes Page 2 - 3
 Always have a positive dialogue running inside your mind.

Tool #3 – Use the symptoms of procrastination to trigger the cure Page 3
 Every time you decide not to procrastinate, you make it easier to do the same in the future.

Tool #4 – Strategically schedule some guilt-free play time Page 4
 Shift your focus from how much you work to how much play time you can create.

Tool #5 – Use three-dimensional thinking and reverse calendars Pages 4 - 5
 These are tools which combat the terror of feeling overwhelmed.

Tool #6 – Make worry work for you rather than against you Page 5
 Worry can be an ally when it forces you to do your best work.

Tool #7 – Create and use an unschedule on a daily basis Page 6
 To find quality time to work on your projects, create some gaps in your schedule.

Tool #8 – Set just a few realistic goals which deserve your attention Page 7
 When it comes to goals, less is more.

Tool #9 – Learn how to work in your most productive flow state Pages 7 - 8
 Block out distractions and focus all your energy on the task at hand.

Tool #10 – Turn setbacks into opportunities to move forward Page 8
 Everyone has setbacks, but successful people persist until they achieve their goals.

