

# PROCRASTINATION

'Everything is due tomorrow. I need to get it done now!' Does this sound familiar to you? You suspect that you could be much better if only you didn't put off study/assignment until the very last minute. However, you just can't help it. Everyone procrastinates.

We put things off because we have too many other things on our plate, or it could be that we have no interest in them, or it might be because we just don't want to deal with them.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF PROCRASTINATORS

Overly optimistic:

"Don't worry; I can complete my homework within a day. I just need to skip my sleep hours."

Low self confidence:

"I need extra days as I doubt I can finish the task on time."

Stubbornness:

"Don't think you can push me to do what you want. I know my stuff and I will do it when I'm good and ready."

Manipulative:

"Sorry, I am not on time because my car was sent to the mechanic. Can we fix another appointment?"

Don't care attitude:

"No worries, it won't affect my final result. Just stay cool."

Tomorrow

After

Later

# WHY WE DO IT ?



- **Fear and anxiety.** You may be overwhelmed by the task and are afraid of failing the subject/task. As a result, you spend a great deal of time worrying about your upcoming exams, projects, and quizzes rather than completing them.
- **Expect yourself to be perfect.** When you expect too much from yourself, it will be hard for you to move on because you are doubtful that the decision/steps that you take will benefit you. You believe that you must read and know everything before you start a task.
- **Poor time management.** You do not manage your time wisely. You may be uncertain of your priorities, goals, and objectives. You keep putting off your academic assignments because you prefer to spend time with your friends and social activities, or worrying about upcoming examination, class project and papers.
- **Overly optimistic.** You underestimate the task you are handling and you take things for granted. You are optimistic about your ability to complete a task within a tight schedule.
- **Difficulty concentrating.** You find yourself daydreaming, staring into space, looking at the picture of the person you like when you should be starting on your task.
- **Negative beliefs.** "I cannot succeed in anything" and "I lack the necessary skills to perform the task" may allow you to stop yourself from getting work done.
- **Personal problems.** For example, relationship issues, financial difficulties, problems with parents.
- **Finding the task boring.** The task assigned to you is not to your liking

Procrastinators, no one is beyond help. However, there are no quick fixes. You are not going to wake up tomorrow and find yourself no longer procrastinating. You will need to be patient when you are implementing the steps.

Set realistic goals - Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses and set realistic goals or you risk becoming frustrated if you do not accomplish any of them.

Getting help - If you find that you need someone by your side to coach you, get out and ask for help. Ask your parents, siblings, teachers, friends or even counsellors.

Break it down - Break tasks into small pieces so that you can handle it better. Example, when lecturer gives you assignment, break it into topics and tackle it one by one.

Recognize self defeating problems - Seek help from professionals if you have self defeating problems such as fear and anxiety, difficulty concentrating, poor time management, indecisiveness and perfectionism.

Challenge your myths - Prove that your thoughts may just be an excuse for you to delay doing the task.

Create a productive environment - Eliminate or minimize noise/distraction. Ensure adequate lighting and all the necessary stationery and books are by your side. Choose a place that you feel comfortable.

Set priorities - Setting priorities, will help direct your attention to the most important ones.

Manage your time - By managing your time, you will gain more time, motivation and initiative. It also promotes review, provides balance in life, eliminates cramming, reduces stress and help reduce avoidance issues.

## WAYS TO COPE WITH PROCRASTINATION