

Avoiding Procrastination

Introduction: Is your procrastination related to a project? Or is it a habit? To remedy procrastination:

1. Begin with one, modest project
2. Answer these basic questions
3. Keep the answers before you as you mark your progress

Questions:

1. What do you want to do?

- What is the final objective, the end result? It may be obvious or not
- What are the major steps to get there? Don't get too detailed: think big
- What have you done so far? Acknowledge that you are already part of the way, even if it is through thinking! The longest journey begins with a first step.

2. Why do you want to do this?

- What is your biggest motivation? Do not concern yourself if your motivation is negative! This is honest and a good beginning. However, if your motivation is negative, re-phrase and re-work it until it is phrased positively
- What other positive results will flow from achieving your goal? Identifying these will help you uncover benefits that you may be avoiding: Dare to dream!

3. List out what stands in your way.

- What is in your power to change?
- What resources outside yourself do you need? Resources are not all physical (i.e. tools and money), and include time, people/professionals/elders, even attitude
- What will happen if you don't progress? It won't hurt to scare yourself a little...

Create a simple "To Do" list

This simple program will help you identify a few tasks, the reason for doing them, a timeline for getting them done, and then printing this simple list and posting it for reminders.

To develop your plan, list

- **Major, realistic steps.** A project is easier when it is built in stages; start small; add detail and complexity as you achieve and grow
- **How much time each will take.** A schedule helps you keep a progress chart and reinforce that there are way-stations on your path
- **What time of day, week, etc. you dedicate yourself to work.** This helps you develop a new habit of working, build a good work environment, and distance distractions (it is much easier to enjoy your project when distractions are set aside).



- **Rewards you will have at each station.** Also what you will deny yourself until you arrive at each station
- **Build in time for review.** Find a trusted friend, elder, or expert to help you motivate yourself or monitor progress

Admit to:

- **False starts and mistakes as learning experiences.** They can be more important than successes, and give meaning to "experience."
- **Distractions and escapes.** Do not deny they exist, but deny their temptation.
- **Emotion.** Admit to frustration when things don't seem to be going right. Admit that you have had a problem, but also that you are doing something about it.
- **Fantasy.** See yourself succeeding!

Finally, if procrastination is a habit of yours: Focus on the immediate task and project, and build up from there. Each journey begins with one step!