

Overcoming Procrastination

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Procrastination creates unnecessary stress for the individual and those with whom they interact. We will explore the major benefits and reasons why people procrastinate. Then we use kinesiological techniques to begin changing the patterns.

Overcoming procrastination is one of the most useful things we can do to regain control of our time. First, however, we need awareness of the problem, and then we need understanding of what we can do about it.

A Why is Procrastination Harmful?

- 1) It creates much unnecessary stress. Crisis' are created that would not occur had action been taken earlier.
- 2) It creates anxiety for the procrastinator.
- 3) It creates stress for those close to the procrastinator.
- 4) It can lead to alcoholism and depression.

B Why do People Procrastinate?

- 1) Fear of the project – e.g. we put off making an unpleasant phone call.
- 2) Boredom – we put off the mundane, less exciting tasks.
- 3) Dislike of the task – if we forget it, maybe it will get lost, or maybe someone else will step in and complete the task.
- 4) Rebelliousness – maybe we are angry at having to do something, so procrastinating gives us a passive aggressive way to get back at someone.

William Knaus, Ed.D., author of *Do It Now: How to Stop Procrastination* believes there are two major reasons for procrastination:

1. Self doubt

Such procrastinators are “stewers” rather than “doers.” They are indecisive – “should I or shouldn’t I?”. They have shaky self-confidence, tend to be very critical of themselves, and have a high fear of failure. They are often perfectionists : procrastinating is better than trying but falling short.

2. Discomfort dodgers

These people have a low tolerance for tension and frustration. They procrastinate because they are afraid of the anxious or uncomfortable feelings they associate with beginning a task. They procrastinate to avoid anticipated pain.

Dr. Linda Sapadin (1996) identifies six styles of procrastination : the Perfectionist, the Dreamer, the Worrier, the Defier, the Crisis-Maker, and the Overdoer. Completing a questionnaire in her book allows you to identify your major and minor procrastination styles.

Working with Procrastination

When I am working with a client who wants to eliminate their procrastination behavior, I will have them complete the questionnaire referred to above. That then provides us with the raw data from which to create statements that can be used in our stress release work.

For example, let’s say the client circles F (for frequently) with regard to the question: “Am I reluctant to delegate tasks or work with others unless they do things my way?” If the client were to state out loud, “I feel

comfortable allowing others to do things their way," their indicator muscles (IMs) would almost certainly unlock denoting that stress is triggered. Why? Because the statement is not congruent with the client's beliefs, behavior patterns, or experiences. Having the client do eye rotations in clockwise and counter-clockwise directions while holding the tip of the thumb to the tip of the ring finger (bilaterally) and with the pads of the index and middle fingers on the frontal eminences (2 to 2.5 inches above the eyes) while repeating the statement out loud, defuses the stress triggered by saying the statement. Have the client repeat the statement, and the IMs should stay switched on showing that the stressful reaction is no longer being triggered. This doesn't mean necessarily that the client will automatically *feel comfortable*, allowing others to do things their way. However, eliminating the negative emotion, fear, anxiety, discomfort, etc., from this area then allows the client to more easily shift his or her behaviors and to make new choices. It becomes easier to allow people who have been delegated tasks to do things their way. In time the client could even become very comfortable in that role.

Statements can be used to probe an area, to identify where the distress is. They can be stated positively, as in the example above. Or, they can be stated in a double negative format, e.g. "I no longer feel uncomfortable allowing others to do things their way." The client may also be asked to visualize or imagine themselves feeling comfortable, surrounded by people who are accomplishing things – their way – while they do the stress release procedures to defuse stress.

Decreasing the stress clears away obstacles that would normally keep one stuck in certain patterns.

Procrastination Exercise

1. Think of a task that you recognize you have been putting off. What task are you avoiding?

2. Why are you avoiding this task?
(read earlier portions of this paper for ideas; fear of failure, fear of rejection,

anxiety, etc.).

3. Imagine yourself doing the task.
What body sensations or head chatter are you experiencing that indicates a problem?

If you had to rate this discomfort on a scale of 0 – 10, where 0 is no discomfort and 10 is extremely uncomfortable, how would you rate yourself?

Circle the number.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What is the worst thing that could happen?

Could you handle it?

Do ESR while imagining that scenario.
Do ESR while imagining other possible scenarios.

Do ESR while imagining everything working out beautifully.

5. Design and muscle test statements that have a bearing on the issue. Do relevant brain integration or eye rotation corrections and list those statements here. You may want to continue using them as daily affirmations.

References

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