

Beyond "Just Try Harder": A Science-Based Approach to Conquering Procrastination

About the Speaker

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Worksheet: Strategies to Manage Procrastination

This worksheet will guide you through identifying specific procrastination triggers and choosing personalized strategies to help prevent and manage procrastination effectively.

Step 1: NAME IT

Identify Your Procrastination Indicators (Clues)

1. Productivity Clues

Mark any behaviors you notice in yourself:

- ☐ Frequently getting up (e.g., for snacks, drinks)
- ☐ Organizing your to do list
- ☐ Reorganizing or cleaning your space
- ☐ Do easy things first
- ☐ Doing simple, low-priority tasks
- ☐ Repeatedly check your email
- ☐ Perfecting minor details instead of progressing on the main task
- ☐ Other:

2. Distraction Clues

Check off distractions you turn to when avoiding tasks:

- ☐ Watching videos, playing games
- ☐ Social media scrolling
- ☐ Chatting with friends
- ☐ Any other pleasurable activities?

3. Timing Clues

Do you rely on these timing-related beliefs?

- ☐ "I work better under pressure."
- ☐ "There isn't enough time to start."
- ☐ "I'll do it closer to the deadline."

Identify Your Procrastination Triggers (Causes)

Reflect on how these thoughts might affect you. Check off any that apply:

4. Initiation Causes

- ☐ "I don't know where to start"
- ☐ "I don't have what I need to start."
- ☐ "I need more information."

5. Perfectionism:

- ☐ "I need this to be flawless"
- ☐ "I don't want to be criticized for how I do this."
- ☐ "What if I don't figure this out?"
- ☐ "What if I make a mistake?"

6. Value:

- ☐ "This isn't worth my time"
- ☐ "This is too tedious."
- ☐ "This task isn't worth it."
- ☐ "I doubt it will pay off."
- ☐ "I've put this off for so long it's not worth starting."

Step 2: Tame It (Forgive and Forget)

Taming Negative Thought Loops

Mark the affirmations can help build a self-forgiving mindset that supports consistent, compassionate progress.

- ☐ **Recognize My Humanity:** "I acknowledge that procrastination is a natural coping mechanism, and it doesn't define my worth or abilities."
- ☐ **Be Kind to Myself:** "I will recognize my thoughts and feelings without judgment and treat myself with compassion instead of criticism."
- ☐ **Forgive to Fuel My Future:** "I forgive myself for past procrastination and release it, knowing this will help me take positive steps forward."
- ☐ **Celebrate Small Wins:** "I will celebrate every step I take, no matter how small, as progress toward my goals."

These shifts aim to replace self-criticism with self-compassion. Which mindset changes could help you let go of self-shame related to procrastination?

- ☐ **Reframe Negative Thoughts:** "I recognize that negative self-talk fuels procrastination. By shifting my thoughts, I enable positive action."
- ☐ **Reduce Stress by Being Kind:** "Self-criticism increases stress, so I choose supportive self-talk to feel empowered to move forward."
- ☐ **Start Fresh Without Judgment:** "I can let go of past delays and distractions—each moment is a chance to begin anew."

Strategy: For each thought, write down one small way to shift perspective (e.g., "What's one small thing I could gain from finishing this?")

Step 3: Claim It - Choose Actionable Strategies

Based on the areas you struggle with most, choose strategies below that resonate with you.

- ☐ **Vote for Yourself**
 - **Description:** Take small actions that align with the type of person you want to become.
 - **How to Apply:** Write one small action that reflects the productive person you aim to be.
 - ☐ **Step on the Mat**
 - **Description:** Start even if you don't feel ready; once started, momentum will follow.
 - **How to Apply:** What's one thing you can do today without overthinking?
 - ☐ **Two-Minute Rule**
 - **Description:** Commit to the task for two minutes; often, this is enough to break the initial resistance.
 - **How to Apply:** Select a task you can try this with today and set a timer.
 - ☐ **Silence the Noise**
 - **Description:** Reduce distractions in your workspace.
 - **How to Apply:** List two changes to reduce distractions (e.g., turn off notifications, set up an accountability buddy).
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Reflection

- **Personal Insights:** After completing this worksheet, list any new insights about your procrastination triggers.
- **Next Steps:** Write down two or three strategies you plan to try.

Goal: Develop awareness of your procrastination patterns and build a toolbox of strategies that can help you manage and overcome them.