

18

WAYS TO
De-Procrastinate
Your Life!



Avi Maderer

Certified Life Coach

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

Thank you for downloading this powerful guide to De-Procrastinating your life. I am sure that if only part of the tips outlined here are applied, your life will become one of peace, productivity and freedom!

Wishing you much Success!



Avi Maderer

Certified

Productivity &

Anti-

Procrastination

Coach

www.avimaderer.com

avi@avimaderer.com

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

Introduction

Procrastination is one of the biggest dream killers

In this day and age we are so inundated with choice and opportunity that you might even say that we are spoiled for choice. There is just so much that we could do that we often end up not doing anything at all.

Procrastination is one of the biggest dream killers. In a world where there is so much demand on your attention it is becoming ever more difficult to stay focused and act on the things that would truly give you an extraordinary quality of life. Time is, was and will always be your most valuable asset and the way you use it will determine what you create or fail to create with and for your life. Having an effective strategy for overcoming procrastination is critical if you truly want to push past short term obstacles to create a life of fulfilment.

The abundance that modern life offers tends to overwhelm us, which leads to an emotional overload that will distract you and scatter your effort and concentration. There simply isn't enough time to do everything, but there is always enough time for the most important things in your life. Success at anything in life, whether it be your finances, your relationships or your health, requires an investment of time and effort from you. You need to focus and concentrate your physical and emotional resources on creating your desired results.

The first step in overcoming procrastination is to get really clear on exactly what you want from every area of your life. This clarity will give you the power to look past distractions that may throw you off course. It gives you a direction and a target and will help to build a mental picture of the life you desire. One of the most destructive effects of procrastination is that it makes you feel out of control; as if the events of your life are controlling you. If you don't know what you want, it is all too easy to jump from the one task to the next. Additionally, apart from knowing what you want, you should also develop some strong reasons as to why you want it. This will give you a sense of purpose and motivation that is critical for staying focused long term.

The truth is that most people know what they need to do to in order to create the life they want. The challenge is not with knowing what to do, but in doing what you know. The only way you will create any result in your life is by taking action and procrastination is what prevents you from acting on the very things you know would give you a greater quality of life.

FEAR: False Evidence Appearing Real

The reason why people procrastinate is primarily because of fear, especially fear of failure. By not taking action and postponing important actions you avoid possible failure. The only reason why you procrastinate about anything is because at some level you link more pain to taking

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

action than to not taking action. The ridiculous truth is that these “links” are mostly conjured up (by you) in your mind and they are not even real, false evidence appearing real. When you allow a task to become too big in your mind it will overwhelm you and it will seem too difficult and too big, and you will end up procrastinating.

One of the most powerful strategies for overcoming procrastination is to learn how to break your tasks up into bite size pieces. Any task, no matter how big can be broken down into small manageable tasks that are easy to do. If you focus on climbing Mount Everest it will probably put you off immediately, but if you focus on climbing seven small mountain sections it becomes more believable. The power of chunking down your “big” tasks empowers you to take back control of any overwhelming situation. You cut it down to size. Your size.

Another way to quickly overcome procrastination and break through the fear is to learn to utilize the power of immediacy. What can you do immediately? What action can you take right now that will move you closer to your goal? Doing something, no matter how small, will immediately break your mental pattern of procrastination and put you back in control. Taking the first step, even if it is a small one, will create momentum and you will almost automatically be driven to take another step. Don't wait for everything to be perfect before you take the first step. Just do it. Just get it going. Often you will only know what to do next after taking that first step.

There are many strategies and skills you can use for overcoming procrastination. You do not have to stay stuck or spin your wheels. Like any skill, you need to learn and practise it until you get good at it. Eventually it will become an automatic response and you will develop the habit of taking action despite your fears and apparent limitations.

The Hidden Costs of Procrastination

Be honest – are you one of those people who puts things off? It's ok – we all do it. It's human nature. “Why do something today when you can do it tomorrow,” or so the saying goes. But procrastination (to give it it's “proper” name) can cost us more than we can imagine. Or, perhaps it has already cost us more than we thought it would.

Why do we procrastinate? In general, we procrastinate because the task we are putting off is unpleasant in some way. Either we don't like doing it (like calling a bank), or there is some physical discomfort (like going to the dentist). The task may even be boring and monotonous, or just plain difficult. And in many cases, as mentioned above, an underlying fear keeps us from moving forward.

But the effects of procrastination can run deeper than just not doing the task. Other problems it may cause are:

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

Being branded as lazy: When people notice that you haven't completed particular tasks, you can be branded as a lazy person. Not only can this affect your job or personal life (promotions and the like), but it may mean the tasks you really want to do are offered to someone else who is considered more reliable!

Creates clutter: Many unfinished tasks can leave a lot of clutter around – books, papers or other items that are needed to perform the job. This is true for the physical realm as well as of course the spiritual, emotional and mental areas of life as well. A cluttered mind is a less productive mind.

Bad for morale: There is nothing worse than knowing you have a job you need to do, and suddenly finding at the end of the day that the job wasn't done. It can make you feel down, and even preoccupy your mind while you're trying to concentrate on other things.

You have no leeway: When you put something off, jobs accumulate. This means that if an urgent task suddenly comes in, you have no leeway to drop everything and work on it – there are too many other outstanding things that need doing.

It becomes more unpleasant: The job itself may not change by putting it off, but the feeling in our mind of how unpleasant we think the job will be grows. We think about how we have to explain not doing the job to other people, and the whole situation feeds on itself and becomes ugly.

Now to be fair, sometimes procrastinating isn't a conscious "on purpose" action. Particular jobs just never seem to get done, even though you never consciously decided not to do them, while at other times you do make the decision not to do the job at the moment, and just put it off. All this creates tremendous amounts of stress and anxiety.

You can however save yourself a lot of mental clutter, and perhaps even more discomfort later on, if you just adopt a "do it now" attitude. Decide that you're just going to get the job out of the way when it comes in, no matter how uncomfortable it may be. Often, by doing the job straight away, you will realize that the discomfort you associated with the task was simply your mind feeding on itself as you were putting it off. The sense of relief you get from finishing the task is well worth it.

So, now that you know about procrastination you have to ask yourself the question – "what am I going to do about it?" Hopefully you will decide to banish procrastination from your life, and reap the rewards of that decision!

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

I have compiled the following list, or rather, “tool kit” in order to help you on your journey from procrastination to productivity. From a life of reasons to one of results. Any one of them on their own will make you more productive. Combine them and you will become a powerhouse of results!

1. Perfectionism

Perfectionism can be defined as striving towards impossibly high goals. Perfectionists are caught in a trap that they can never be good enough. They engage in rigid, black or white thinking about their own performance. If it isn't perfect, it's horrible.

Ironically, perfectionists often achieve a product that is far less than perfect. At times, their performance is of low quality. In contrast, those who aim at more realistic goals can outperform the perfectionists. How can this be? The procrastination and paralysis that result from overly high standards causes the perfectionist to wait until it's “perfect”. But then it's too late. They then rush to do something; anything. They tweak and go with what they have but not only is it now not “good enough”, its actually mediocre!

The more relaxed realist in the meantime, is able to put an effort in earlier, over a more prolonged period of time, with more chance to let time and subsequent changes or editing improve the final product.

To be clear, we should always strive for the highest quality in all that we do. We just need to be weary of that all allusive goal of “perfection”.

Steps that you can take to avoid falling into this trap:

A. Become aware of the perfectionistic audience voices in your head (no, you're not crazy.) You can't learn to ignore them if you don't know that they're talking to you.

B. Learn how to answer them, those voices in your head, back. An example would be, “OK it's not perfect but it's close, and at least I'm finishing it”.

C. Look for role models who are satisfied with good enough. Note how they get things done and are not looked down on by others.

D. Set up realistic goals. One way to tell if a goal is realistic is if you can actually do it. For example, “Read 2 articles and write for 15 minutes before 5:00 tonight” is a realistic goal. “Read two articles and write for 6 hours. Write 10 pages before 5:00 tonight” is not a realistic goal.

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

2. Eat a Frog

A very simple step you can take in order to beat procrastination is to do the task that you like the least at the top of all your other tasks. The advantage of taking this option is that much like swallowing a frog, once you get that into your system the rest of the tasks will pass off much better and will be easier to do.

3. Break down tasks

A second step you can take to cure procrastination is to break down tasks into easily manageable smaller tasks. If you remember that the best way to climb a mountain is to take one step at a time then the wisdom of breaking down tasks into smaller tasks will make more sense to you and thus prove an effective remedy to procrastination.

Those putting off exceptionally difficult tasks can learn how to overcome procrastination by thinking of the task in small pieces rather than a large problem. Think back to other projects that were completed and relate them to the existing one. To learn the habit of overcoming procrastination, start with tasks that can be done in five or ten minutes and do not stop until either the time expires or the job is complete. Either way it will be a positive step in the right direction.

4. Fifteen (15) minutes

Similar to the above, another useful method that can be employed at conquering procrastination is taking just fifteen minutes on every task that needs to be performed in which time you can get the task moved ahead. Momentum is built this way that will make the rest of the task easier to complete.

Just spend 15 minutes on a task. I have the attitude that I can spend 15 minutes doing virtually anything and I can certainly survive spending 15 minutes on something. Often by spending the 15 minutes on a task, I either complete it or I will get it moved forward enough that it has momentum to finish.

5. Use a friend

I am not actually referring to delegation (but of course I don't mind that either); what I mean is to tell a friend what you want to do and get them to help you start the task. Often it is the act of starting a task that is enough to get the task done.

6. Track it

The simple act of tracking a goal is often enough to keep the goal moving forward. It seems odd, but knowing that you are going to write down whether or not you have done something is often enough to make you move forward.

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

7. Reward or punish

The reason we do something is because it is more painful than not getting it done, so if we can make the completion a task more rewarding or the consequences of not completing it more painful, then we tend to move forward on things. Tying successful completion of a task to a reward is often a successful technique.

8. What are you afraid of?

Ask yourself, “What could I possibly be afraid of here?” “What’s my fear?”.

Perhaps: Fear of talking with strangers; Fear of ridicule; Not knowing what you will do once you finish.

Unacknowledged fears are the #1 cause of continually postponed projects. Just naming the fear often enables you to ignore or overcome it.

9. Do you really want to do the task?

Ask yourself, “Do I really, wholeheartedly want to get this thing done?”

Choices: Yes; No; or Maybe.

Ambivalence is the second major cause of procrastination. If you resent having to do something, or aren’t sure its the best course of action, recognizing hesitations allows you to make a deliberate choice of whether or not to go ahead.

10. Brainstorm

Brainstorm ways to get the task done that would be fun for you.

For instance: Invite friends over for a most-hated-task party; do your exercise walking at a favorite place; turn music on and dance while cleaning up. Have a “writing party”!

Who said your task has to be unpleasant? With a little imagination, you can re-engineer it so you’ll have more enjoyment getting it done.

11. Take a step now!

Take some step immediately toward completion every time you find yourself thinking about the task you have the problem with.

Do something small right now! Make a phone call; collect your tax records; Make an outline of the project and do one item. Don’t just plan, do something!

By taking advantage of the energy of the moment, you make progress.

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

12. Decide

Many people today suffer from procrastination. Stopping procrastination is not very difficult. It is just hard in our minds. One way to put an end to procrastination is to make a decision. Either do it or don't do it. If you are going to do it put it in your planner right away and block a time to get it done. By making a decision, there is no reason to procrastinate. Most decisions take only a few minutes to decide on. When you ignore or walk away from the decisions, you will pay a consequence at the end, whether it will be good or bad. When making decisions, decide what is important to do and then get it done fast. This will put you in the fast lane towards opportunities and success.

13. Recognize your behaviors

Some people avoid making decisions by watching TV, going shopping, going to bars, or cruising Facebook. These are all attempts to push off the decision that needs to be made at that time. I know this first hand because in the past I have used shopping to walk away from decisions that need to be taken care of.

Ignoring issues will not make them go away. It takes self-discipline and self control to break this dreadful disease. However, once you break through this barrier, your life will start to transform. Amazing things will start to happen in both your personal and business life. So recognize your behaviors, step up, and make a decision. Take action today.

As Tony Robbins says, "It is in our moments of decision that our destiny is shaped".

14. Call to action

Procrastination is a call to action. It is a signal that you must act on the very things that you do not want to act on and DO the very things that you are avoiding. It is the necessary resistance you need to be able to grow, develop and gain self-confidence that only comes from actually doing it. When you do break through the short term pain that held you back you come out on the other side with an increased sense of esteem for yourself, of more and with confidence in yourself. You start to see yourself and your abilities from a different perspective. The fact that you are procrastinating about something means that it holds significant enough value for you to be uncomfortable with not taking action.

The things that are holding you back most are those which will free you most – once you take action. What will free you most is taking action. Not because of the absence of procrastination, but despite the procrastinating.

15. Detach yourself from your behavior

Realize that you are not your behavior. As soon as you start identifying with a behavior you label yourself as such. Just because you procrastinate at times does not make you a "procrastinator" unless you believe it. One of the strongest forces within the human personality is for your

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

behavior to be consistent with your self-concept. Once you believe that you are a procrastinator, all your actions will be filtered through this belief. Since all beliefs are self-reinforcing you will only strengthen this belief with your (in)action.

Instead, you must start by building a positive self-image and develop empowering beliefs. Choose different ways of defining yourself and forget about what you've done up until now. This is a fresh moment and you can change everything around, right now, by changing your beliefs about yourself. Work with a certified Life Coach to accelerate the process. If their specialty is procrastination, all the better.

16. Change your perception

One of the most profound teachings that has its roots in eastern philosophy, is that when you change the way you look at things, things change. This idea can free you from virtually anything that might be holding you down. All of life relies on perception. What you take in with your senses is nothing but a vast array of sounds, colors, shapes, images and smells. None of it has any meaning in itself. You are the one that gives it meaning, and you are the one that can decide how you interpret this information.

Procrastination is nothing but a way of evaluating something and assigning a meaning to it that keeps you from taking action. At some level, mostly subconscious, you believe that taking action will be more painful than not taking action, and by design, you will prevent yourself from taking action.

This is one of the most powerful de-procrastination tips and you can liberate yourself by starting to change the way you look at the things that you are procrastinating about. Ask yourself what else can this mean and instead of saying that you "have to do it" say that you "choose to do it". The difference is subtle, but significant. Change the way you look at things and the things will change.

17. Create a sense of urgency

When a task does not come with a deadline, it can be easy to postpone, but that item will still nag at you. You start feeling guilty about not getting enough done, and the accumulation of incomplete activities in turn ends up adding to your daily stress.

Solution: Think of positive outcomes and set your own deadline. Move the deadline up!

18. You do not know where to begin

The project is so large and detailed that you do not have a clear picture of the processes. It might have been fairly simple at the beginning but, by delaying, the project has now become overwhelming.

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

Solution: Write down, in order, the steps that need to be taken. You are more likely to tackle a small task than commit to a large block of time. Be sure to schedule each of the steps on your calendar.

A couple of bonus tips!

19. It is not where your interests or skill levels lie

You may dislike the chore, like filing or yard work, or it could be a project that you do not know how to do and have no interest in learning. You stall for days or weeks. Then when you finally have no choice, it is even worse than you expected.

Solution: Can you hire someone, or trade services? When you are interested in the work, you are certainly more efficient in accomplishing that task. If it is something you hate to do, try to find an alternative rather than allowing it to loom.

20. Approach the task differently

Can you approach the task differently? Always be mindful of how you approach tasks. Ask yourself: Do I need to use a different technique? Will a new way of approaching this task make me feel better? How can I get some JOY out of starting this project? We all work in different ways and are inspired by different things. Find what works well for you and go with it.

A word on “Time Management”

Time stops for no one. It just keeps marching on. The question is, can we, as human beings, really “manage time”? Well, the answer is NO! We cannot manage time. We cannot grasp time in the physical, and not in the mental or spiritual realms. It’s impossible. What we CAN DO however, is manage what we do within the space of time we are gifted with at each moment. So, it’s really about managing ourselves, and not time per se.

I know this sounds like a bit of a dance with semantics but the central point here is critical. When it comes to de-procrastination, it’s about managing ourselves, and very little, if anything, external to us.

18 Ways to De-Procrastinate Your Life

In conclusion

Thank you for your time in reading this book. It can change your life. It is my sincere wish that you take at least a few of the steps and methods outlined in this book and begin to create the productive, peaceful, happy and free life you deserve. You can do them all, and that would be great! Like all new and healthy habits however, its best to acquire, to take ownership of each one on their own and not all at once. Start with one that you find easiest to grasp and keep at it for just 21 days and it will be yours for life! This will allow you to truly shine!

To your success!

Avi

I hope that you have gained as much as I have from this book and its life-critical tools.

**Want to really take your
Productivity and
De-Procrastination
to the next level?**

I invite you to work with me FREE of charge
for a results packed, no obligation 20 minute coaching session.

Email me for details:

avi@avimaderer.com

Avi Maderer

Certified

Productivity &

Anti-Procrastination

Coach

www.avimaderer.com

avi@avimaderer.com