

PROCRASTINATION JOURNAL

CHANGE

Use this journal weekly to understand your procrastination tendencies and how to overcome them.

What did you want / intend to do this week? *(you could copy this from last week / yesterday)*

What didn't get done?

What did you do instead?

What came up when facing the task you procrastinated on?

Thoughts / Feelings / Responses...

Why did you (really) choose the alternative task?

What was the result of procrastinating?

Were there any times when you wanted to delay but didn't? What happened / was different?

What have you learned you can use to avoid procrastinating next time?

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What do you want to do tomorrow / next week?

What will it feel / mean to you, to have completed this task?

What is your most productive time to start the harder tasks?

What is likely to prevent you from getting on with the task?

What is your contingency If / Then Plan? (see also guidance notes below)

If...	Then
<i>I feel tired when I plan to go to the gym I have 20 minutes before a meeting If it's after 10pm</i>	<i>I will change at work and commit to 10 mins I will complete one of my planned short tasks I will stop using social media and go to bed</i>

Who can help you in holding yourself to account, and how are you going to ask for their input?

PROMPTS TO AID REFLECTION

Procrastination is largely about choosing short term value over long term gain. When short term priorities dominate over future benefits procrastination arises and is often followed with regret.

Reasons we procrastinate

- **Future Time Perspective**

Focused more on seeking comfort or pleasure on the present rather than planning for the future.

Try to visualise what it will feel like once it's been done (sense of achievement, recognition from others, chance of progression, a reward) and reward yourself for short term effort.

- **Avoidance**

Fear of the task itself – worried about whether it will be good enough or what happens when it is complete.

Recognise that delay will only add to your anxiety and make a choice to reduce it. Share your worries and seek support or reassurance from others.

- **Values**

You don't see the benefit in investing time in a task as you aren't bought into why it needs to be done, or see other activities as more important. Social values of spending time with friends may be more important than working late for a project that doesn't help your promotion.

Try to link it something that does (benefit of the group, contribution to a bigger output, customer / boss satisfaction).

- **Reduced self-regulation**

Underestimating how long something will take or meaning to start tasks and getting distracted.

If organisation isn't your strength try setting up time and to do lists for next week before you finish this one. Break the task down into smaller parts and practice time management tools.

If / then planning

If / then planning helps improve motivation ahead of time by activating subconscious instructions from yourself. After time and practice it becomes autonomous.

Taking a decision out of the momentary temptation to do something more enjoyable (but less productive) helps train our brains into action.

Making If/When plans ahead of time reduces the need for decisions at times we feel less motivated and can more easily recall the long term goals, rewards or benefits than when energy or drive is low.

The key is planning ahead for the obstacles (situations most likely to trigger procrastination) or recognise when it crops up to trigger yourself into action instead of momentary enjoyment or avoidance.