

How to cure Procrastination

Procrastination is a big aspect that might play a role in holding you back from getting into action or even working through this book. A study found that this is normal behavior for about 95% of people - so almost everybody is affected by putting things off at some point or another. Tim Pychyl has identified 7 triggers that make people procrastinate more:

- Boring
- Frustrating
- Difficult
- Ambiguous
- Unstructured
- Not intrinsically rewarding (i.e., you don't find the process fun)
- Lacking in personal meaning

Here are a few tips from Tim Pychyl's research that can help you to get going with an activity you are currently procrastinating:

- Identify the trigger from the list above that is most present in the activity you are procrastinating. And then try to turn it around. E.g. when something is boring, try to add a competitive edge to it or make it more fun somehow. If its because its unstructured, then add detailed steps that are needed to take
- List the cost of procrastinating and all the effects it has on your life. Take your time to fully list out what it costs you in mental energy, financial impact, and maybe even heartache while you are procrastinating. This might help you to switch perspective and work on it
- Just do something, literally any small step will take you forward. Just start with your task for a few minutes. And maybe you keep going as our brains don't like unfinished tasks once we start. So if you need to write an article, just start researching slides or fun images about the topic and see where this takes you.

Here are a few more tips that will help you to get going:

1. Research shows you are not avoiding work but feelings. Usually, a master procrastinator's house is spotless and all clothes perfectly ironed - you are not avoiding work but an emotion that is connected to that specific task. Become aware of what feelings you are avoiding by not getting started. Is it 'not being smart enough to get this done? Are you avoiding failure? Are you avoiding looking weird in front of other people?
2. Make it harder to procrastinate with micro-delays: Set a password on your Netflix account you have to type in each time. Set time limits on your phone for Facebook and news.
3. Plan your day in advance with time blocks when and on what you will be working. And then stick to it - only keep the relevant items in the calendar and remove all others that you don't really follow through with anymore.
4. In most cases, you just need to suck it up and get started with a small step, just 5 minutes. Remind yourself of what emotion you might be avoiding and then get started. And by now you will know that you are retraining your brain to get started and building a new neural pattern. Because of neuroplasticity.

And at the end of the day, it's up to you to make the first step and keep going - no trick in the world can replace that.

Happy getting started!

In case somebody forwarded this to you: I'm [Miguel Baumann](#) 🚀 (click to follow me on LinkedIn for Leadership & Startup tips).