
FRONT COVER:

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Foreword

So here's what occurs: You've a plan – let's suppose, to awaken at 7; be washed and dressed to kill and breakfasted by 8; at your desk, easel or other workspace by 9; work 3 hours; exercise during your lunch; eat a fit salad at your desk; work 4 more hours; come home; eat supper with your mate; work a few more hours in the evening; and then curl up in bed with a great book. But you don't abide by the plan.

Maybe you awaken late at 8, or 9, or...noon! The plan is trashed before you even get moving. Or, perhaps, it takes you not one, but 3 hours to make it to your desk. And then, when you're there, you drop an hour or three reading the paper, net surfing, and making personal calls. Or, perhaps when lunch comes around you don't exercise and rather than a salad eat a mammoth sandwich and then spend the rest of the afternoon feeling slow and don't get much done. Etc.

Procrastination is when you get bumped off the "course" you set for yourself for the day. The challenge of outfoxing procrastination is the challenge of resisting the itch to leave your course. This is likewise the challenge of beating blocks, since a block is truly an ongoing procrastination issue that lasts weeks, months, years or decades.

This e-book will help you work out what is causing you to leave your daily course, and what you may do to stay dedicated and finally live the productive and happy life you've always wished-for.

Procrastinating Your Procrastination

Developing The Important 'NOW' Habit And Strategies That Will Help You To Take The First Step Quickly!

Chapter 1:

Matters That Throw Us Off Our Course

Synopsis

Let's suppose you planned to be at your PC, working at a project, at 10 a.m. on a Monday morning, but you're not. How come? The answer may be one or more of the accompanying.



The Enemies

- Woke up late.
- Scrapped with your lover last night, and continue reliving the quarrel in your brain.
- Are too sapped – the coffee hasn't set in yet.
- Are overly hyper – drank too much coffee and can't sit motionless.
- Are disquieted by the weather – it's amazing out and you'd love to take a walk or bike ride.
- Are disquieted by the weather – it's atrocious and depressing.
- Got a telephone call (or e-mail or instant message) from a friend, who's depressed (though not in crisis) and asked to talk.
- Got a telephone call from a friend (or e-mail or instant message) that's happy and wished to share great news.
- Are reading the paper – every last word of it.
- Are net surfing or net shopping.
- Are playing Solitaire.
- Simply realized that it's highly crucial to work on another project.
- Or, if you work in a home office:
- Switched on the television set for “a minute” and saw that one of your favorite actors was being interviewed, so you decide to view the interview.
- Simply realized that the laundry urgently needs to get done!

These are common things that may throw you off your course. It's only a partial list; naturally, you may likely add many other entries to it. There are likely 100s of potential “bumps” that may knock you off your course.

One crucial thing to point out is that, while a few of these bumps appear “good” or “worthwhile” (like commiserating with your unhappy acquaintance or doing the laundry), and some seem “foul” or “frivolous” (like playing Solitaire), they're all equally unacceptable from the viewpoint of beating your procrastination habit.

You'll need to learn to resist the urge to get absorbed into activities not on your schedule, regardless how crucial or virtuous they appear at the moment. The one exception, naturally, is emergencies, by which I mean actions that can't be put off without significant harm to yourself or other people. However even with an emergency, after you've handled it, ask yourself whether it may have been prevented by finer planning, or whether somebody else could have handled it. If you've got a challenging goal, it's really crucial to learn to minimize the number of preventable emergencies in your life, and to learn to delegate as much as conceivable.

If it appears like I'm taking a hard line, I am. I have to, as procrastinators are frequently adept at rationalizing their diversions. Obviously, if somebody is ill or otherwise incapacitated, we ought to help them, but to what degree? It's not always clear, and a lot of procrastinators misjudge, sacrificing too much of their own time to assist other people, even when those other people aren't particularly needy or when somebody else is available to help. This issue may be hard to identify, much less solve, as the (deservedly) good feeling one gets from assisting frequently offsets the guilt that the procrastination commonly spawns.

Chapter 2:

View Your Commitments Differently

Synopsis

When you begin viewing your commitments from the viewpoint of somebody who's determined to succeed at their challenging dream – meaning, somebody who must utilize their time optimally, fresh solutions to formerly “unresolvable” quandaries frequently present themselves. So, for example:



What's Crucial

- Your aged parents may likely find somebody else to mow their lawn and pick up the groceries like a different family member, or the high school youngster down the block who requires a few extra bucks. Or,
- Your mate and kids may likely survive on takeout (or cook their own food!) A couple of nights a week. Or,
- Your acquaintance who needs a lot of support may find other people or even professionals, like a therapist to help furnish it.

If you didn't have a challenging dream that you were following on top of life's average demands, then perhaps you could get away with mowing the lawn, fixing all the meals, and talking for hours daily with your friend.

However when you own up to your challenging dream, you're basically declaring that you'll be really particular and self-directed in how you spend your time, as you have to reserve as much time as possible for your aspiration. This is in direct contrast to most individuals, who let other people including family, friends, neighbors, colleagues and corporations control their time for them.

Nearly all ambitious dreamers, for example, have to reduce the time they spend on ho-hum household chores to as close as possible to zilch, so that they may utilize the reclaimed time and energy to work at their aspiration.

All right, if you like gardening and it feeds your soul, then don't quit. But washing? Yard work? Wiping up floors? Standing in line at the market? To the extent you're able to find somebody else to do it. Send your wash out to be done, hire somebody to maintain the lawn (or get your mate or children to do it), purchase a floor mopping robot, and have your foodstuffs delivered.

If you feel peculiar doing any of that, get over it: cutting down your housework burden is an investment in yourself. Likewise, it's unrealistic to believe that you may spend your time the same way non-ambitious dreamers do and yet achieve your challenging dream.

None of this ought to be taken to mean that you desert your loved ones or friends. It simply implies you invest your time judiciously. Even though you're not cutting your parents' lawn, for example, you may still be taking them to checkup appointments: that's a much higher value activity that's likely a far better utilization of your time.

And even though you're not fixing home cooked dinners nightly, you may still do it a few times a week. And even if you're not going to be able to speak to your friend for hours daily, you may still be available to her in times of true need.

It may be scary to alter the terms of our interaction with somebody, particularly if we've been interacting with them a particular way for years. (Double particularly if we've been taught to subordinate our needs to other people, as many women particularly are.)

Individuals frequently respond badly when we tell them we can't do as much for them, or spend as much time with them, as we have been. Frequently, however, if we take the time to share our state of affairs,

aspirations and needs, they're surprisingly empathic and eager to help. So don't simply tell individuals you'll be less available tell them why, and invite their support and help.

If, after you share your story, a few individuals still aren't empathic, or are actively unfriendly, that's a sorry issue to have, but a typical one. That's why successful individuals learn to say "no", and also to distance themselves from unsupportive or toxic individuals, even if they happen to be related to them.

Whatever time you choose to spend helping other people you ought to build into your weekly or monthly schedule. You ought to likewise build in time both for your own relaxation and for unintentional events and emergencies.

Many individuals think time management is about attempting to stuff as much as possible into one's schedule, but it's not; it's regarding clearing as much as conceivable off your schedule so you may work, at a comfortable, non-stressful pace, on your crucial goals.

To summarize: whatever bumps you off your course that isn't an unpreventable emergency is procrastination, regardless how crucial it might seem at the time.

Chapter 3:

Desperation...and Promise

Synopsis

Many procrastinators tell themselves stuff like: “I’m lazy. I’m undisciplined. I’m a failure. I’m hopeless. I’ve got no self-control. I’ll never win at anything.”

Many creative persons, activists, and other ambitious dreamers take the self-abuse a step farther, framing their procrastination as a moral defect: “I’m a sellout, unattached, shallow”.

A lot of procrastinators lead a double life, acting happy and productive while truly feeling hemmed in. Their boasts about their big workloads, power to work under pressure, and steady need to pull all-nighters are frequently just a cover for shame and despair; and frequently, when matters get really hot when they're about to miss a serious deadline, thereby showing their real, “shameful” nature they cut and run, deserting a project, class, job, relationship or other commitment.”

Frequently, procrastinators become depressed almost as soon as they wake as they recognize they're destined to procrastinate that day. Procrastination may also feel really confusing.

The Feeling

At bedtime, you retrospect on the day and can't figure out where your time went. You remember reading the headlines, drinking a cup of java with your officemates, watching some TV, and surfing the net, but those random activities couldn't possibly have filled the whole day, could they? But, naturally, they did. Procrastination is, "the thief of time". To a procrastinator, it truly does feel as if his or her time were somehow stolen.

If a procrastination issue is severe enough, and lasts long enough, it's often called a "block", as in "writer's block". Anybody may be blocked, and many individuals, maybe most, are. Occasionally, blocks last for weeks or months, but oftentimes, tragically, they last for years, decades or even entire life spans. Being blocked is among the riskiest feelings in the world; it drives some individuals to absolute desperation.

But wait there's no need to feel ashamed or desperate! When someone confesses to a procrastination issue, I congratulate her. Yes, congratulate. Here's how come: Procrastination is an affliction of ambitious individuals. If you don't trust me, do a net search on procrastination: you'll acquire links to 100s of pages advising you on how not to procrastinate while writing your novel or thesis, following a fitness program, or seeking a new career. These are all challenging endeavors, and individuals who follow them ought to be admired even if they do procrastinate.

All procrastinators, regardless how baffled, may boast at least one accomplishment: they haven't quit on their dream. If they had, they wouldn't be concerned about procrastinating on it.

To hang onto a challenging dream despite one's fears, and likewise (frequently) despite disheartenment and disapproval from those around us and society itself, requires vision, dedication and bravery. So, rather than seeing your procrastination issue as a shameful defect, attempt viewing it instead as a symbol of something enceinte inside you. Yeah, you've got a little work to do to recognize your full potential like who hasn't. But at least you continue showing up and fighting the great fight.

A different reason not to feel bad about your procrastination issue is that pretty much everybody procrastinates.

Let's likewise not forget that ambitious dreamers choose to follow exceptionally hard goals otherwise, they'd be ambitionless dreamers, right? Average life is pretty complex stuff, but in addition to the complexities of average life, ambitious dreamers may expect to face financial risk if not likely impoverishment; emotional risk and rejection; lack of support from loved ones and/or society; and nerve-racking working conditions. And that doesn't even count the underlying difficulties of the goal itself i.e., the need of the person to perfect her craft and sell her work, or to finish a product.

A lot of individuals flee from these sorts of stresses, and I, for one, can't blame them. The issue, however, is that in doing so they likewise flee from their aspirations. Whenever I teach, I remind my pupils who are frequently deeply ashamed of their procrastination issue of the many individuals who have given up on their aspirations.

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