

10 Scientifically Proven Tips for Beating Procrastination

Vanessa Loder, Mindfulness Based Achievement

- 1. Pick Your Poison.** Start by choosing just ONE thing that you've been procrastinating and make a commitment to complete that task in the next hour, day, week, month, or year.
- 2. Start today.** Once you've narrowed it down to one task, take immediate action. Today. If it feels daunting or you don't think you have enough time to complete the task, do the Five Minute Miracle below.
- 3. Five Minute Miracle.** The Five Minute Miracle involves asking yourself; "What action can I take in less than five minutes TODAY that moves this forward even the tiniest bit?" Once you've identified a small action, set a timer for five minutes and spend five minutes working on the task. Remember: Small action is still action. Five minutes can make all the difference.
- 4. Make a Power Play.** Put away all distractions and work in concentrated chunks of time followed by short periods of rest, in order to harness the optimal performance of your brain and body. Science has discovered that our brain naturally goes through cycles with peaks and valleys so put that new knowledge to use.
- 5. Kill It with Kindness.** Research shows that the more you can forgive yourself for past procrastination, the more likely you are to overcome your current procrastination and act. Practice self-compassion when thinking of your past experience procrastinating.
- 6. Have a Procrastination Power Song.** Pick a song that really gets you energized, and play it whenever you want to tackle something you've been procrastinating. The brain likes to have a trigger to create a new habit, plus you're more likely to follow through when you're feeling good in your body.
- 7. Get under the hood.** Sometimes, it can be helpful to understand exactly *why* you've been procrastinating a specific task. Are you afraid of something? Maybe you feel overwhelmed and don't know where to start. Fill in the sentence; "I'm avoiding this task because..." and see what shows up. Identifying your fears can help you realize the monsters in the closet aren't as bad as you think.
- 8. Let It Go.** One way to stop procrastinating something is to decide you're never going to do it. What can you take off your to do list? Try crossing something off your list because you realize you don't really need to do that thing...ever. Give yourself permission to let it go.
- 9. Make a bet.** Make a bet with an accountability buddy. Choose a day and time that you will complete this task and then tell your friend or colleague; "I'll give you \$10/take you out to lunch/ buy you coffee/watch that awful movie you've been wanting to see if I haven't completed this task by next Wednesday at 10:00am." If you haven't completed your task by then...you owe them whatever you bet!
- 10. Make it fun.** Motivate yourself to complete a task with rewards. What can you treat yourself to once you've finished this task? The human brain responds to reward stimulus and this can be a good way to create habits.

REMEMBER, KIDS:

**DON'T
PROCRASTINATE
OR YOU'LL
NEVER FINISH
ANYTH**

