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STOP PROCRASTINATING FOR GOOD

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12 SECRETS OF MOTIVATED PEOPLE

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ISSUE NO. 8 | OCTOBER 2019

THE PROCRASTINATION ISSUE



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happy october!

October might be my favorite month of the year. It's chilly and cozy but it's not so cold that winter boots and big puffy coats are a staple for every time I have to leave the house. The one downfall is that it rains A LOT where I live so the pull to want to curl up in my favorite reading nook or Netflix watching spot with a warm cup of cocoa is extra strong this time of year.

But what about all the things we have to do? Like the grocery shopping, exercise, helping with homework, cleaning, and doing our work? We can just do those things later... Right?

We could, but we shouldn't. Procrastination is a funny thing. I think of it as a thief. If we choose to procrastinate by doing something we enjoy, we actually tend to enjoy it LESS than we normally would because at the back of our minds, we know we should be doing something else. Procrastination also feels like it steals time from us because all of a sudden, it's dinner time and we have no plan and a seriously hungry family to feed!

Once we get to that point of losing control—more often than not—we're out of time to truly enjoy the things we love.

Conquering procrastination doesn't mean giving up all the things you love to do for pleasure. It means being more intentional with your time so

you can enjoy those things more, knowing that what you must do has already been tackled.

We'll start by sharing some awesome tips on how to (finally!) Stop Procrastinating For Good (on pg. 4). And then—because we could all use some extra motivation!—We're sharing with you 12 Secrets of Motivated People (on pg. 12). But sometimes we can do all the right things, make a plan, and stick to it but unfortunately that's still not enough and we just simply need more time... Or a clone! So we're giving you the next best thing with 7 Smart Ways to Multitask (on pg. 20).

One of our favorite books here at RSO is *Eat That Frog* by Brian Tracy and for good reason! This book not only explains the importance of doing your most important (and often most daunting) task of the day first, but also how to go about implementing this principle in your life (pg.10).

We polled our community on how to combat procrastination and let me tell you... You did not disappoint in sharing some awesome tips (pg. 28)! You will be able to pull that inspiration into filling out the Practical Application worksheets (on pg. 30) as you make a plan to no longer let procrastination get in your way. You got this!

All my best,



Amanda
EDITOR IN CHIEF

STOP PROCRASTINATING FOR GOOD

5 REASONS WE PROCRASTINATE AND HOW TO STOP

RUTH SOUKUP

We've all experienced the horrible pressure of a deadline hanging over our head. Maybe you've put a task or agenda item off for a while knowing the job would eventually rear its ugly head. Maybe you've ignored a project for too long, avoided a doctor's appointment, or dragged your feet on a task you need to face.

Procrastination is the worst! But we've ALL been there before.

Of course, there are little white lies we tell ourselves like, "I do my best work under pressure," or "I multitask and juggle it." Then our future self must pay the price when the time comes—stress, lost sleep, embarrassment, even loss of income. Procrastination seems like no big deal, but putting off tasks end up costing us plenty!

So, how can we stop lying to ourselves and tackle this ugly procrastination monster once and for all? Why do we do this to ourselves and how do we stop it now? Here are five reasons we procrastinate and how to combat each:

NUMBER 1: WE FEEL FEAR SO WE AVOID

One major reason we procrastinate is out of fear. We may fear the scope of the project. We may avoid taking on a big project because we're not sure if we can do it. We're afraid we're going to flop and fall flat on our face. We fear failure. Even more mind blowing? We may even fear success, too.

Change is scary, friends. We all tend to avoid major life changes and shake-ups. Even when they're positive and will get us to a better place. Taking on a big project or job, when the chance between failure and success is on the line? That's big-time scary stuff.

When you're avoiding a project or an activity, even when you know you'd be better for it, look at your fear levels. Are you afraid of the potential outcomes? Is fear or uncertainty holding you back?

How to Stop: Do It Scared



Jump in. As most of you already know: One of my favorite sayings is, “Do it scared.” So often, we play through “what if” scenarios in our heads. What if we fail? What if this doesn’t turn out like we’d hoped? What if we disappoint someone? What if we are embarrassed?

Sometimes we must simply do it scared. Yes, we’re afraid. Yes, it’s tough and plenty could go wrong. It’s okay to acknowledge our fear and feel it. What’s not okay is to hold ourselves back from doing a job or taking on a task because we’re too afraid of making mistakes. Don’t miss an opportunity!

Life is too short. When you look back on your life, you won’t fondly remember all the experiences you avoided because you were scared, or all the times you opted for the safe route even if the path wasn’t the way you wanted to go. We can’t turn our fear off, but we can force ourselves to do what we want, even if we’re frightened.

Think of this Erin Hansen quote, “There is freedom waiting for you on the breezes of the sky, and you ask, ‘what if I fall?’ Oh, but my darling, what if you fly?”

NUMBER 2: WE DON’T WANNA

Certain jobs aren’t hard or scary—we simply just “don’t wanna” do them. Tasks like facing chores, getting the

car serviced, cooking dinner for a neighbor. We know we should do it. We know it’s on our list, but UGH, we sure don’t want to.

Putting off tasks we don’t want to do is common and it’s tough to work up the motivation.

Let’s face it—in life certain jobs aren’t fun, especially as adults. We go to work, pay bills, fix dinner, and clean the house. These jobs are important and boost our quality of life, but most of them aren’t nearly as fun as reading a book, getting a pedicure, or sitting on the beach.

We might avoid a task because it’s complicated or unpleasant. It might simply be a job we hate doing—like filling up the gas in the car. So, what do we do? We put getting gas off until we’re driving on fumes or the car stalls on the side of the road. Now we’re faced with a way bigger problem.

How to Stop: Eat the Frog.

Mark Twain’s well-known quote, “If it’s your job to eat a frog, it’s best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it’s your job to eat two frogs, it’s best to eat the biggest one first,” applies well; as does the second part of the quote, “Eat a live frog first thing in the morning and nothing worse will happen the rest of the day.”

But what do we do instead? We put the frog off until later. We think, “I can’t deal with this right now,” but there’s the little green monster, staring at us, and hanging over our heads. We know our future self must face it, but at least we don’t need to deal with it right this second.

It turns out, we’re not always so kind to our future-selves. In a study where participants were given the option of drinking a not-so-appetizing drink of soy sauce and ketchup now, or a half a cup next week, many participants choose to put the yucky drink off. This process is called temporal discounting. Somehow, the further we are from an unpleasant event, the easier it sounds.

This explains a lot about instant gratification and why we agree to lofty commitments like signing up for a 5k in six months (when we’ve never run a day in our lives).

The truth is, we’re going to face the task whenever the time comes. It’s only going to get more stressful if we’re less prepared or under a time crunch. If we follow the adage of Mark Twain, we might as well get the worst over with now. Do the job and put it behind you.

The good news is, often when we tackle that frog we realize it wasn’t as bad as we’d previously imagined. I know I often marvel at how little jobs I dread end up taking only a few minutes. Sometimes it’s worth those few minutes of pain to experience the relief of putting something unpleasant behind you.

So, eat that frog first thing and then move on to the stuff you’d rather do.

NUMBER 3: THERE’S NO CLEAR TIMELINE

Another reason we fall prey to the procrastination bug is simply because we haven’t set up a clear timeline of **WHEN** we need to complete a task. When we set lofty goals, like “lose 25 pounds”, without a clear methodology or timeline, we leave ourselves running off on an endless treadmill going nowhere—we spin our wheels.

Goals without a timeframe (or with a very broad timeframe) give us plenty of time to postpone them and put them off. We figure we’re blessed with all the time in the world, so why do the job today? We know we want to achieve our goal eventually, but wandering without a clear timeline leaves us unfocused and lost.

Many “annual” goals fall into this category. If we think we’d like to achieve a task in the next year, but don’t set up a plan, we may find ourselves scrambling in month 11. As the old saying goes, those who fail to plan, plan to fail.

How to Stop: Set **SMART** Goals (Emphasis on the T)!

SMART: stands for **specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound**. Keeping goals in this category is **VITAL** if you want to crush them. Often, we assume all goals automatically fall into these parameters, but it’s actually quite rare.

Think about the goals you’ve set—maybe it’s a financial goal, a fitness goal, a goal for a project around your home, or in your business—without a clear end date on the goal, it’s hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. It’s hard to know what you’re working towards.

Similarly, if one of the best ways to achieve a goal is to break that big goal down into smaller, manageable components. Assign a timeframe to each one of these steps as well.

For example, if you'd like to commit two hours a week to your goal, break it down even further—could you dedicate 20 minutes per day? Suddenly when we work on our goals for small chunks of time, they become much more manageable. As the end of the week approaches, you'll know if you need to factor in a little more time to hit your two-hour goal (or if you're on track).

Time is one of those factors we can't control, but we can learn to maximize. If time seems to escape you or inexplicably disappear, take back your time. Plan out specific blocks to work on what you need to do. Set a timer. Check in with yourself frequently—are you on task? If you can't stay within your time frame, break it down even further. What will you do in the next ten minutes to achieve a task? The next? And so on....

Get time back on your side by making your goals SMART and keeping them time-bound!

NUMBER 4: WE'RE NOT READY TO DO OUR BEST

We've all put off a job because we don't feel like we're ready to do our best. Maybe we're not sure we are able to do it at all or maybe we know it's a job we struggle with.

Everyone likes to do tasks they rock at. We gravitate toward tasks we know we'll tackle and slay easily. We all love to feel successful and awesome at everything we do.

But guess what? None of us are awesome at Every. Single. Thing. None of us.

We all struggle with certain tasks and we all fall flat on our faces sometimes. It's not fun, and it may compel us to avoid the jobs we don't feel like we do well. This avoidance becomes procrastination. We put tasks off because we don't want to face our insecurities. We don't want to do it because we know it's hard and we aren't sure we can do our best.

How to Stop: Aim for Progress Not Perfection





Let go of perfection. So many of us put such high expectations on ourselves. We expect more of ourselves than we would of a friend, a colleague or our spouse. We feel like we're failing if everything in our house isn't Pinterest-perfect. We beat ourselves up over the extra 10 pounds, the disorganized cupboards or a less-than-ideal work outcome.

We are all works in progress. Life is long and full of opportunities to learn, grow and keep learning. To get over a fear of not doing or being our best, we must embrace experiences as learning opportunities.

Look at athletes. Do you think Olympic ice skaters or gymnasts are able to land every jump on the first attempt? Of course not! When we see them in competition they're at the pinnacle of their careers. They've practiced every day for hours and hours to get there. Even then, they still make mistakes. There is only one gold medalist.

Rather than expecting you'll be wildly successful on your first attempt, just give it your best effort and move through it. View this as a first attempt and tell yourself you can always go back later and amend or smooth it out later. Let yourself get started and produce something—even if it's not perfect or the best. Put forth a good effort, work hard, but don't weigh yourself down with perfection.

None of us are perfect. We're all still learning as we go.

NUMBER 5: WE'RE BOTHERED BY DISTRACTIONS

Sometimes procrastination is simply a symptom of being distracted. There's a lot going on in your life. You care for your kids, a spouse. Maybe you answer to a boss, run a business and face other major responsibilities. You're committed to your kid's school, your parent groups, friends, and social circles. It's a lot.

It's easy to address the squeaky wheels in our lives. We see them, hear them and know we need to take care of them. The quieter pieces are no less important, but they fall by the wayside and go under the radar.

We might put off caring for ourselves. We might put off following up on a lead or taking care of a bill. Maybe we don't fill out paperwork or check our budgets, worry about our savings or do preventative maintenance. Why? Because it's not squeaking right now.

These tasks hang over us. We know we need to get them finished and may even feel bad we never seem to find the time. When the time comes to face the job though, distractions get in the way.



How to Stop: Simplify, Focus and Time-Block

Simplifying our lives will help us manage the important stuff. In our busy lives, there's so much "noise" and so many jobs to keep up with. It's easy to feel distracted when we're constantly bombarded, our schedules are full and our spaces are cluttered.

Decluttering, simplifying, and essentially "getting down to brass tacks" helps us find more focus. A clear, quiet space to work will help us become more productive. A block of time scheduled where we dedicate ourselves to the task at hand helps us accomplish far more than "multitasking."

Time-blocking is a method of breaking down our schedules into 15, 20, 30 or 60-minute blocks. During each block, we focus on a singular task. Setting a timer will help keep you focused and on-task. Keep your blocked appointments as you would keep any meeting or obligation in your Living Well Planner.

If you're sitting down to do desk work and find yourself tempted by the siren song of the Internet, using software to block distractions will help. There are apps and tools such as Freedom, Flora and Inbox Pause to help you temporarily block access to websites, email or your phone if you need an extra layer of focus assistance.

Figure out what conditions you work best under. Do you need quiet? Do you prefer a clear desk? Do you need bright light or do you prefer soft lighting? Aim to set your workspace up to be as ideal and motivating as possible to help you stick to the task at hand.

Procrastination is a common challenge. Whether you find yourself distracted or you're avoiding tackling a job out of fear, expectations or general overwhelm, it's time to get it under control! We all battle procrastination sometimes and we may even tell ourselves we work better under pressure.

In reality, doing activities at the last minute doesn't allow us to reach our full potential. Procrastination causes us to feel stressed out, frazzled and frustrated.

Give yourself time to really dedicate to getting your goals and tasks achieved. Stop procrastination in its tracks so you get more accomplished today!

Second Edition, Revised and Updated with Two New Chapters

Eat That Frog!

International Bestseller
More Than One Million
Copies Sold

21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating
and Get More Done in Less Time

Brian Tracy



do^{ing} it scared

book of the month

Eat That Frog

by Brian Tracy

Executive Summary

AMANDA KADZIOLKA



There just isn't enough time for everything on our to-do list—and there never will be. Successful people don't try to do everything. They learn to focus on the most important tasks and make sure those get done. They eat their frogs.

There's an old saying that if the first thing you do each morning is eat a live frog, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing you're done with the worst thing you'll have to do all day. For Tracy, eating a frog is a metaphor for tackling your most challenging task—but also the one that can have the greatest positive impact on your life. *Eat That Frog!* shows you how to organize each day so you can zero in on these critical tasks and accomplish them efficiently and effectively.

In this fully revised and updated edition, Tracy adds two new chapters. The first explains how you can use technology to remind yourself of what is most important and protect yourself from what is least important. The second offers advice for maintaining focus in our era of constant distractions, electronic and otherwise.

But one thing remains unchanged: Brian Tracy cuts to the core of what is vital to effective time management: decision, discipline, and determination. This life-changing book will ensure that you get more of your important tasks done—today!

Why you should read it

This book is a quick read but it packs such a huge punch. If you frequently find yourself getting to the end of your day feeling exhausted, like you've been running around non-stop all day and yet, you can't recall actually doing anything that really MATTERS, you need to read this book.

It will teach you how to stop procrastinating and finally begin to accomplish those big, daunting tasks and goals that feel so overwhelming at first glance.

When you can learn to master this—to not let the fear of hard things get in your way—your life will truly change. Not only will you finally start to knock big things off your ever-growing to-do list, but you will feel such a sense of freedom by taking away the power that those big and scary tasks have over your mind.

So don't procrastinate reading this book! Order it on Amazon, head to your closest book store or get it from the library (physical, e-book, or audio are all great options) TODAY!

12 SECRETS OF MOTIVATED PEOPLE

KICK YOUR OWN PRODUCTIVITY INTO HIGH GEAR

RUTH SOUKUP

Have you ever looked at a celebrity mom and wondered how she somehow manages to get so much done? We all have the same amount of time in a day. So why is Angelina Jolie somehow able to balance raising six kids with working for the United Nations AND directing and starring in multiple award-winning films, all while looking fabulous. In other words, why do some people seem to achieve so much more than others?

Part of it's the fact that celebrities have a great deal of control over how they spend their time. If you're a working single mom of three who's barely making ends meet, chances are you don't have the luxury of an entourage (don't we wish!) or the finances to jet off to the south of France whenever you need a reboot.

Despite the doldrums of normalcy, there are many people who manage to achieve quite a bit in their day, while for others 24 hours can seem like barely enough time to get one or two things checked off the list. Part of it's prioritizing, part of it's attitude, and part of it's perception. Just as it was outlined the famous 1989 Stephen Covey game-changing book, the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, there are certain commonalities motivated people have. By learning and applying these ideas, we can all become the type of person who can "Get 'er done."

SECRET #1: THEY LOVE THEIR CALENDARS

Prioritizing, scheduling, setting a timer and blocking out time to achieve tasks are at the absolute basic foundation of getting anything done. Whenever you're faced with a task, assess it (before it even gets a coveted spot on your calendar). Is this something in line with your values and worth your time? Own your calendar and schedule and don't allow anything to eat it up that's not worth it.

Once a task is deemed worthy, get it on your calendar. Whether you use Google Calendar or a paper planner like our Living Well Planner®, block out time and even consider setting a timer. Being cognizant of the way your time is spent (and avoiding distractions and time wasters) is key in managing those 24 hours and packing in as many worthwhile activities as possible.

SECRET #2: THEY GET UP EARLY

We're only given so much time in a day and if you tackle the big jobs and the hard stuff first, then the little stuff and easy stuff can fill in the cracks.

“But, I am NOT a morning person,” you’re saying. I get it. Not everyone is. However, universally, getting up a little bit early does help you get things done. Try pushing yourself to get up 10 minutes earlier each day until you gradually hit the desired wakeup time. (Adjust your bedtime accordingly.)

Maybe you’re not functional at 5 am or maybe you do your best work late at night, but there’s something to be said for being out and about during “normal” business hours. Getting to the store, making appointments, or even getting to the gym in the morning can mean you beat the crowds and get things done in a more efficient way. Create a morning routine that works for you.

Even if your “morning” starts at 10 am, make it a routine and tackle your difficult tasks first. Don’t start down the rabbit hole of email checking and social media updates first thing. Instead, do some concrete activities to get your day started—exercise, move to get your blood flowing, drink a big glass of water (and a big coffee if you need it) and wake up ready to tackle the world.

SECRET #3: THEY SET CONCRETE, ACHIEVABLE SMART GOALS

Goals are funny things. Sometimes a goal can be too lofty, too nebulous, or too hard and it just fizzles out and dies. Motivated people know achieving goals keeps motivation flowing. Every time you accomplish something, it’s little “rush” as you check it off your list. Harness momentum by making your goals achievable and concrete.

SMART stands for “Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time Bound.” Things like “get skinny” are too non-specific. (How much weight do you want to lose? By when? How will you do it? How will you know when you are at “skinny”?) Instead try setting goals like this: “I will walk five days a week and track my food to lose 1-2 pounds per week for the next six weeks, to meet my overall goal of losing 10 pounds.”


The difference in setting concrete, achievable SMART goals is you’ll taste the thrill of victory each time you

take a step in the right direction. You’ll be able to measure your success clearly and redirect yourself should you get off-track or sidelined.

SECRET #4: THEY INVEST IN THEMSELVES

Motivated people know they can be their own worst enemy or their own biggest cheerleader. To be motivated, you have to make your goals and dreams a priority. It can seem selfish or counterintuitive, but think of it like training for a marathon or learning to play piano. You have to invest time in practicing every single day. You must schedule out time, and if it’s really your dream, keep your eye on the long-term outcomes.

Chances are, whatever your dream, it will probably benefit your spouse and family in the long run. If you keep that fact in mind, investing the time, effort and resources in yourself doesn’t seem as selfish. Your happiness and achievement will reflect positively on those around you so investing in yourself is worth every penny. If you have a goal of going back to school, then look at the time and tuition as an investment in your long-term desire to get a better career and accomplish your life goals. See? Everybody wins.



The difference in setting concrete, achievable SMART goals is you’ll taste the thrill of victory each time you take a step in the right direction. You’ll be able to measure your success clearly and redirect yourself should you get off-track or sidelined.



SECRET #5: THEY BREAK OFF BITE-SIZED PIECES

Goals are a series of small steps. Getting things done and harnessing your motivation means not getting overwhelmed by the big picture (which can quickly derail and frustrate the best of intentions). Any time a task seems too daunting or unattainable, break it down into smaller steps.

A few years ago, there was a big trend in “52 week savings” goals. (As in, put away \$1 on week one, \$2 week two and so on.) The reason this was so successful is that people built on a little, manageable goal each week and ended up with \$1,400 at the end of the year.

The same results go for the popular “Couch to 5K” program. Each week there are three workouts gradually building up to running an entire 5K. Motivated people understand making the first step is the hardest. After that, it’s about simply completing the small task in front of you, a little at a time.



SECRET #6: THEY KNOW WHEN TO TURN OFF OR TUNE OUT

There’s a growing trend of turning off your cell phone and going on a digital detox. Whether it’s an hour or two a day right before bed or taking a full-blown digital “Sabbath” once a week, people are understanding the power of disconnecting from the Internet, television and electronics—and reconnecting with their loved ones.

Motivated people understand while the Internet can be a great resource and a powerful tool for good, it can also become a huge distraction and time-waster. Unplugging yourself or managing your social media time, email hours and other distracting habits can help you achieve more in a shorter amount of time.

If you have a very difficult time keeping yourself off Pinterest or FB, try a website blocking app like Freedom. You might be surprised at how much time you suddenly have when you let go of these distracters. At the very least, learn to put your cellphone down during conversation and keep it off at the dinner table. That’s just called having good manners!

SECRET #7: THEY TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

We’ve all heard the mantra YOU are responsible for your own happiness. One thing motivated people understand is that the power to change, to achieve what we want, and to conquer whatever goals we have set, is within us. Many of us have overcome great personal hardships and circumstances beyond our control that may have been painful or held us back, but the power to overcome is always there.





Sharing my own story of being delivered by Grace and overcoming challenges has been a source of motivation for me. Knowing I'm no more important or special than anyone else, and yet, I've been able to come so far (and I'm still working on it) has made me realize my purpose to be an example for others who might be facing similar struggles. We have to take responsibility for ourselves and know we're in control of our own lives. Through the Grace of God, we can find the power within ourselves to tackle anything that comes our way. The power is within.

SECRET #8: THEY FIND JOY IN THE JOURNEY

Motivated people are focused on the finish line, but they also find joy in the journey to the end goal. No one who wins a gold medal skiing hates to be on the slopes and there are no Grammy award winning musicians who just HATE singing. If you are passionate about what you're doing and working towards your goals, there should be joy and accomplishment every step of the way.

Think of it like a vacation. If you've ever been on a road trip to visit some great destination, you know full well half the fun and most of the memories are built on the road and not at the destination.

Every step towards your goals should be a learning experience and an opportunity to try something new. Motivated people know it's about reframing your perception to create a new lifestyle as opposed to a simple race to the finish.

SECRET #9: THEY DON'T GIVE UP

This is one of the most difficult "secrets" to apply, but it's the most important. Motivated people don't give up. They know there are always setbacks to achieving anything. They know there will be some days when the house is a wreck, and you lose your temper and you question your existence and purpose and well, just about everything.

The difference is, when things fall apart, the motivated don't quit. Not to say every goal is achieved, but motivated people understand sometimes it's about reframing and rerouting, but never giving up. If you're trying to pay off your debt, teach your children about responsibility, or do something else that seems almost impossible (and may make you think you've lost your mind), don't give up.

SECRET #10: THEY RELY ON OTHERS

Like the entourage of Oprah and Martha Stewart, your own entourage can help you stay motivated and keep you on your path. I find blogging to be a huge accountability check (let me tell you—people don't hold back their opinions online) and it's pretty motivating to know when I've stated a goal, I have readers I have to answer to.

Posting your goals to social media, asking for a weekly “accountability check” with a friend, or relying on your spouse to keep you in check can help you keep a handle on the big picture and head off any roadblocks you might not see coming.

Similarly, motivated people know when they need to delegate and ask for help. Maybe you need to set up a babysitting co-op, a meal swap or another activity to free up a little time for yourself. Look for ways to make your life easier, so you'll have the time to achieve your goals. Don't be afraid to raise the “Help Me” sign now and again, either. You'll be amazed at how many people are looking for an opportunity to serve others, and want a chance to help.

SECRET #11: THEY DON'T FEAR FAILURE

When I decided homeschooling wasn't fitting our family there was a feeling like, “I've failed. I've done this all wrong.” And yes, it was very humbling. I had to reframe and think about the fact that my goal was still “providing the best education for my children.” So, with that outcome in mind, I wasn't failing but rather choosing a different path. I wasn't giving up on the goal of seeing my kids' education through, but I realized I needed different resources and a new plan.

There will be failures along the way and that's just part of achievement. So many of us hold ourselves back because we're afraid we'll fail, look “stupid,” or feel foolish. It's about overcoming that self-doubt. So you might fail or you might have to go at something from a different angle. That's okay! No one will remember most of the things we find embarrassing anyway.

Almost all of us have a mortifying childhood story—a time when we wet our pants or fell down in front of everyone... and you know what? Everyone has one of those stories and no one remembers anybody else's. What does that tell us? We will be remembered for our achievements, not for the times we failed. So pick yourself up and keep going!

SECRET #12: THEY UNDERSTAND THEIR MOTIVATIONS

What drives you? Is it the desire for financial success? Is it a goal to be the best at something? To win? Understanding your motivations, harnessing them and using them to shape your focus is a powerful way to stay true to your goals.

Many of us have many motivations. We're driven by our desire to protect and provide for our families. We're driven by our faith and values. We're propelled by our feelings for our spouse and our desire to make them happy. We can also be motivated by internal factors like our drive to prove ourselves, to grow and become more intelligent, to put a title of “Dr.” in front of our name, or to bring home a bigger paycheck and afford the things we want.

Sometimes we might feel guilty about motivators. It sounds selfish to think, “I want to be the best” or “I want to be well off.” But underneath those seemingly selfish goals there’s often the desire to provide for and help those around us. There’s a desire to be an example to others and to reflect our purpose.

For me, it’s knowing and believing with all my heart that I am living the life I was called to lead. Over the years I have realized that my own struggles in different areas of my life have led me to look for solutions, and I am passionate about sharing those solutions with others—ultimately it is that call that has me jumping out of bed each day!

If you haven’t quite found your motivation yet, I encourage you to keep looking. Start implementing some of these secrets into your own life, and you might just be surprised by how the motivation starts to flow!

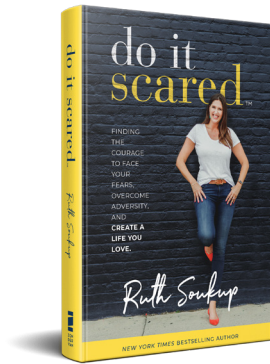


The background is a solid red color. It is decorated with white line art. There are several stylized leaves with parallel veins, some pointing towards the corners. There are also stylized flowers or clover-like shapes made of three loops. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

THE BEST WAY TO
GET SOMETHING DONE
IS TO

Begin

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



DO IT SCARED | CHAPTER 1 BY RUTH SOUKUP
AVAILABLE ON AMAZON AND DOITSCARED.COM

Equal parts inspiration and tough love, *Do it Scared* combines practical, easy-to-implement strategies for overcoming fear and resistance in your life, along with the motivation and encouragement to actually start making real changes that lead to big results. From identifying your unique Fear Archetype™ to adopting the Principles of Courage, and then, most importantly, learning how to take focused action in the right direction, it is the the book designed to help you not only face your fears head on, but create a concrete action plan that will help you move forward, so that you can finally start creating the life you've always dreamed of—a life you love.

FOREST APP:

AVAILABLE FOM THE APPLE STORE AND GOOGLE PLAY STORE

If you want to temporarily put down your phone and focus on what's more important in real life, you can plant a seed in Forest. As time goes by, this seed will gradually grow into a tree. However, if you cannot resist the temptation of using your phone and leave the app, your tree will wither. The sense of achievement and responsibility will encourage you to stay away from your phone, and will help you make better use of your time. Stop getting distracted by your phone, make you self-motivated and get more things done.



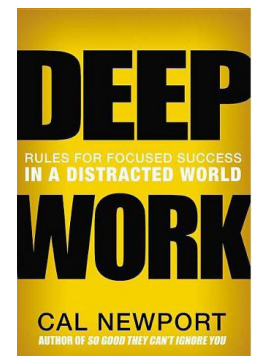
EPISODE 2 ON THE DO IT SCARED® PODCAST:
LISTEN TO THE PODCAST AT DOITSCARED.COM

In this episode, I'll talk with author, journalist, and side-hustler extraordinaire Susie Moore about not letting the bad things that happen to you stand in your way. She has moved halfway across the world twice, and had the courage to walk away from a high-powered job to pursue her own dreams. One of the most important takeaways from this episode is that nobody else knows what they're doing either. We all feel fear often (even daily), but when you look at someone else and think they know exactly what they're doing, they probably don't. They're just figuring it out as they go too.

DEEP WORK BY CAL NEWPORT

AVAILABLE ON AMAZON AND AT MAJOR RETAILORS

Deep work is the ability to focus without distraction on a cognitively demanding task. It's a skill that allows you to quickly master complicated information and produce better results in less time. Deep work will make you better at what you do and provide the sense of true fulfillment that comes from craftsmanship. In short, deep work is like a super power in our increasingly competitive twenty-first century economy. And yet, most people have lost the ability to go deep—spending their days instead in a frantic blur of e-mail and social media, not even realizing there's a better way.



7 SMART WAYS TO MULTITASK

MAXIMIZE YOUR TIME WORKING SMARTER, NOT HARDER!

RUTH SOUKUP

If you are anything like me, you probably multitask without a second thought. In fact, it is probably a rare occurrence that you find yourself focused on a singular task.

Like, ever.

To be perfectly honest, I have a hard time remembering the last time I managed to focus all of my attention on just one thing. There is always so much to do, and I want to do it all, and all at once. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but not always a good thing either.

While multitasking does often seem like a necessity, and as much as I tell myself I'm being efficient, psychologists (and my husband) tell us that too much multitasking isn't healthy. In fact, it may be burning us out and causing undue stress. Plus, it can actually make us less productive and less efficient, because multitasking actually increases the likelihood of critical mistakes and errors.

So what's a busy girl (or guy) to do? Is there a way to get things done and yes, even multitask sometimes, without losing our sanity? After all, there are only 24 hours in a day—sometimes doubling up on tasks is just a reality of life!

Over the years, despite my propensity for biting off more than I can chew sometimes, I have discovered a few tricks for working smarter, not harder and getting things done as efficiently as possible. These 7 smart ways to multitask might just help you too!

NUMBER 1: MAKE A LIST...FOR EVERYTHING

Don't think of your to-do list as just another extra step or a waste of time—they're absolutely critical. Trust me, writing a list streamlines your activities, helping you group tasks together and be more efficient. Plus, you have too much to remember anyway! Give your brain a break and write a quick list.

Take, for example, a simple grocery store list. While it may seem silly to write down the three items you need to buy, how many of us have returned home and said, "Shoot! I forgot the _____!" And how often did you forget the most important item? Or maybe you returned with two items, but forgot the other one...?

The average person can only remember four items at once (seriously), so trying to remember more than that is just asking for a forgetful moment. Taking 30 seconds to write a short list before jumping into a task can ensure you hit all your critical objectives (even if those objectives are simply milk, bread and eggs).

NUMBER 2: KEEP A DETAILED CALENDAR

Writing down ALL your family's activities in your calendar can really help with time management. Some people prefer an electronic calendar, while some prefer paper—the important thing is to find a calendar solution you'll actually use. Simply scheduling a 1:00-1:30pm lunch break can help you plan, prioritize and determine what additional tasks you can complete during that time.

Don't forget to give yourself some wiggle room. Things come up. Life happens. You can't plan in that flat tire or a burnt dinner, BUT you can plan a little extra time to deal with life's little surprises. Bookend each scheduled task with fifteen- to thirty-minute catch-up periods, to avoid stress overload.

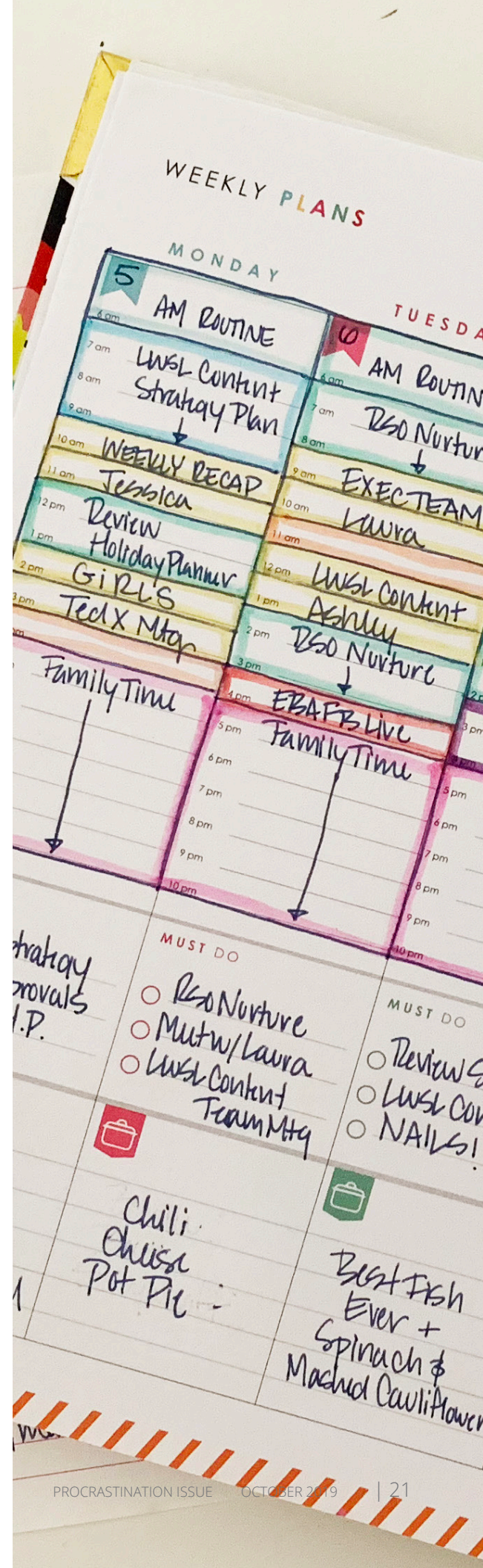
I like to keep a list of "whenever" quick-tasks (calls I need to make, correspondence, etc.), so when I do have a little extra wiggle room, I can tackle a few quick items so they don't end up indefinitely on the back burner.

Bonus tip: Plan a Freezer cooking day to take care of all your meals for the entire week.

NUMBER 3: STICK TO MULTITASKING-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

There are times when multitasking is most efficient. For example, try ironing while you catch up on phone calls, or practice your balance by standing on one foot while you brush your teeth, or cook dinner while doing the laundry.

You don't always need to be fully engaged in every activity. Watching television is a perfect example. Catching up on a craft project, photo sorting or organizing a dresser drawer can be a great use of time while you're watching a favorite show.





NUMBER 4: DON'T OVEREXTEND YOURSELF

It's far better to take on one or two items and do them completely, thoroughly and well with your full concentration, than it is to try to do five things at once and fail at all of them. If you've planned ahead and mapped out your day on the calendar, and you can see a convenient moment to throw in a load of laundry or whip up a batch of brownies—go for it, then continue about your work.

However, if you have a batch of brownies in the oven and a load of laundry in, you're late for two carpool pickups, but you need to make a phone call first, the television is on, and you're trying to finish a church festival flyer—well, that's when brownies get burned, washers flood (or clothes get forgotten and get that mildew stink), phone calls and pickups get mixed up, and typos happen.

Instead, schedule two tasks that can be done simultaneously but still deliberately and without requiring full concentration. Consult your to-do list, and schedule each item on your calendar. Taking a few minutes to make those critical planning steps can really help later on.

NUMBER 5: SET A TIMER

If you still find yourself distracted or feeling frazzled, try setting a timer. It may sound counter-intuitive to add the pressure of time to an already stressful activity, but by setting aside a measurable and specific time frame, you can allow yourself to fully engage and block out distractions with the promise that there will be a time to visit them later.

Give yourself an allotment of time to really focus on a task, whether it's writing, work, paying bills or something else, and focus fully on the given task at hand. When you get the urge to open up an internet browser and Google something, or to switch to a different task, add it to your to-do list and go back to concentrating on the task at hand, knowing you will address it when the timer dings.

NUMBER 6: GET PAST PROCRASTINATION

Tasks we put off again and again often give us more stress than necessary. If you focus for just 20 minutes right at the start of the day, you can make a lot of headway on even the most

undesirable task. I like to tell myself that anyone can do something for just 20 minutes.

After you've made it through, move on. Give yourself the reward of putting away the difficult task and scheduling another place for it on your schedule. After one or two tackles, you might find that it's not so bad. Often the procrastination of a task takes more time than the actual completion. Don't let yourself get bogged down by ruminating on how much you despise the task at hand and don't want to do it. Whether it's plumbing, or cleaning the garage, or taxes—tackle it in small chunks and get it over with.


Oftentimes, we procrastinate on back-burner tasks until they absolutely HAVE to be done. At that point, we're time-crunched, tired and facing late nights of misery. By addressing these no-fun items first and using the 20-minute approach, you can avoid the three hours of last-minute, forced multitasking frazzle.

NUMBER 7: RELAX...SERIOUSLY!

I'll be the first to admit that it is really hard to relax when it seems like there is so much to do, but occasionally, we need to stop, reflect, and nurture ourselves a little. As women, and particularly as moms, we often put ourselves last and try frantically to get everything done for everyone else. Not only does this cheat us out of happiness and enjoyment, but it cheats our husbands and children out of having a relaxed, happy and fun mom and spouse.

Allow yourself to disconnect from your phone, your computer, and all the to-do lists, and find time for those things that nurture you and bring you peace and happiness. Relax and do it without guilt. If exercise is very important to you and it helps you feel good every day, then get it on your calendar and keep your appointment to yourself. Maybe you're a baker and you love decorating cookies every week, or maybe you're a reader and you love to get lost in a good book. You need "you time" so you can be your best self every day for your family.

Multitasking done right can be an incredible way to get more done in less time. By approaching your to-do list in an organized and deliberate way, you'll find that you can multitask and get things done efficiently and accurately, yet still have time for the important things. The key is prioritizing and organization. Just be sure to make yourself a priority as well—it will help you put your most efficient self forward.



Allow yourself to disconnect from your phone, your computer, and all the to-do lists, and find time for those things that nurture you and bring you peace and happiness. Relax and do it without guilt.



The funny thing about procrastination is that it never really looks like “procrastination”.



Yvonne Timerson

do^{ing} it scared

story of the month

I am the resident expert on procrastination.

The funny thing about procrastination is that it never really looks like “procrastination”. I used to believe that procrastination was a term reserved for the lazy or those that are always waiting until the last hour to complete something.

Now I know better, now I know the truth.

If you ask anyone that has known me for more than 17 seconds, they would tell you that I am a consummate perfectionist. And for many, many years, I wore that label with pride. It sounded good right? That meant that I gave and expected nothing but the best! What I didn’t realize is that the same perfectionism was nothing more than procrastination hiding in plain sight.

I was always waiting—waiting for the perfect moment to do this or complete that. My life was in a constant waiting pattern. Ironically, while sitting on the sidelines waiting for the perfect moments to jump in, I actually missed opportunity after opportunity.

I procrastinated on reaching out to friends and family because the house wasn’t perfect, I procrastinated on creating special memories with my children because mommy was busy and it wasn’t the right time, I procrastinated on launching my business because everything had to be JUST right. It tinged every area of my life.

I was allowing my perfectionism to steal moments of joy and opportunities for growth. I wasn’t living, I wasn’t growing, and I was not even close to reaching my full potential. And although I knew something was amiss, it hadn’t dawned on me that perfectionism was at the root of it all.

It wasn’t until I attended Elite Blog Academy’s live conference, Activate, in 2018 that I began to understand that my “perfectionist” tendencies were holding me back in so many ways. Towards the end of the conference, attendees were given the opportunity to read excerpts from the, Do It Scared, book by the author and event founder, Ruth Soukup. As part of this, the Do It Scared Fear Assessment was made available to us. This is where my life absolutely changed.

The very first part of the book talked about how fear impacts our lives and gave 7 Fear Archetypes that people typically fall into. As I read about the first archetype, The Procrastinator, I got more and more uncomfortable... it was literally like someone had projected my thoughts, worries, deepest insecurities, and secret behaviors right onto the paper...this was me! And taking the Fear Assessment only confirmed what the book had already told me.

I went through a range of emotions in the immediate days following my “enlightenment”. From self-righteous anger, how dare anyone point out flaws I had even convinced myself were not flaws. To sadness and despair, as I reflected on how I had allowed procrastination to take so much from me. Then finally to hopeful as I realized that I had the tools AND support in my hands to conquer this, for good!

I’m not gonna lie, it hasn’t been easy to say the least! I find myself fighting my natural tendency to go for unrealistic perfection almost every single day. But I refuse to rob myself, my loved ones, or my future of one more moment by allowing my perfectionism to cause me to not take action. I use the tools I learned to set myself up for success, such as having accountability partners and eliminating the unessential tasks that don’t push me closer to my goals.

I promise this is no infomercial and this may sound a bit woo woo, but the Do It Scared movement literally launched a change so dramatic in my life that I would hunt down every single one of my fellow procrastinators and BEG them to heed its advice.

Now, when I feel that familiar feeling of anxiousness or hesitation, I lean into it and push back. Instead of hiding from it and shoving it down, I run headlong into whatever it is. These feelings have now become an indicator that whatever I’m about to get into...it’s gonna be good, so just do it scared.

Since the conference, I have made significant progress towards my goals, including launching a new business, deepening relationships with my loved ones, and joyfully expecting a new baby!

Today, I know I am no longer sitting on the sidelines of my life watching life happen TO me. I’m an active participant and I shape my own destiny by making the conscious decision to show up everyday, “prepared” or not, “perfect” or not.

In the wise words of Winston Churchill, “Success is not final, failure is not fatal, it is only the courage to continue that matters.”

Do you have a Doing It Scared story to share? We would love to hear and possibly feature it! If you would like to share your Doing It Scared story, please reach out and send it to maggie@ruthsoukup.com

YVONNE'S PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT: AND.NIXON PHOTOGRAPHY & MARGARET SOSS PHOTOGRAPHY



Create **more joy and less stress** around the holidays with our annual Living Well Spending Less® **Holiday Planner!**

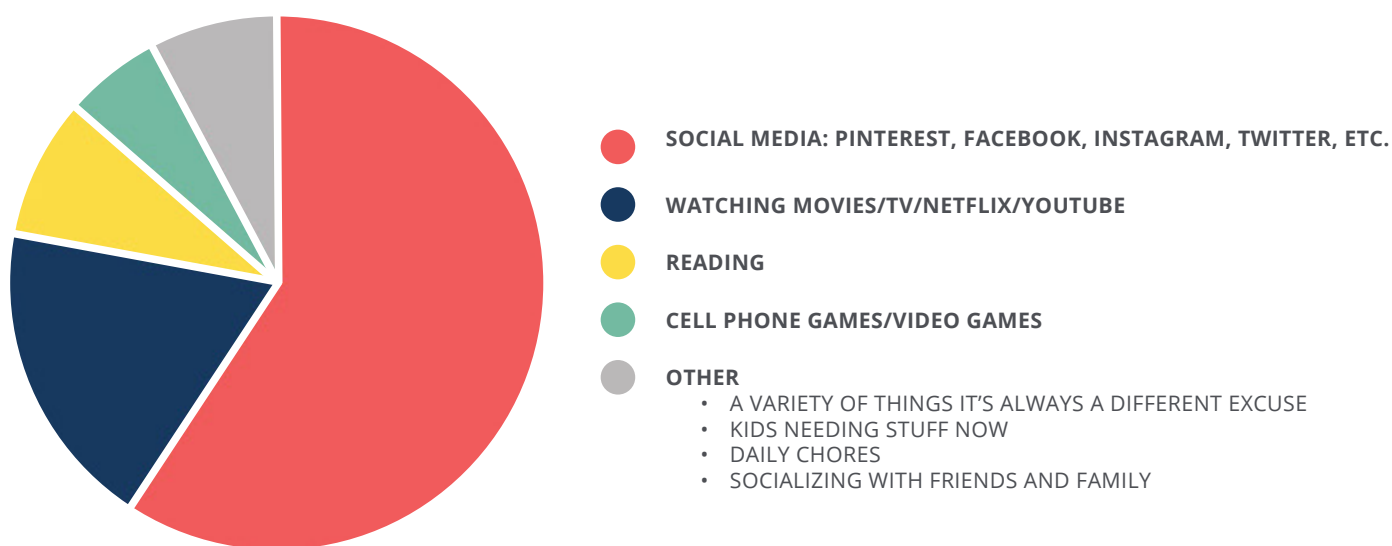
This **FREE** and simple tool is designed to help you **prioritize** your time, **manage** your holiday budget, **plan** your meals, **tackle** your gift list, and make the most of your holiday season!

DOWNLOAD NOW!

visit: <http://www.livingwellspendingless.com/holidayplanner>

WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

WHAT'S THE MAIN THING YOU LET YOURSELF GET PROCRASTINATED WITH?



HOW DO YOU COMBAT PROCRASTINATION?

Procrastination can be so hard to combat! See the tips our readers shared to get some procrastination busting inspiration!

Alicia: I'm trying to combat it by not identifying with that label anymore. I've been a procrastinator my whole life and I don't want to be anymore so, I figure first step is not identifying as such. I try not to call myself one, even when I AM being one and that ugly judgey internal voice starts going. I also think it's helpful like Ruth says to make appointments with yourself in your planner and honor them like you would any other appointment. I'm trying to show up for myself more



Bonnie: I deleted Facebook from my phone. That was my biggest default when I was procrastinating. I would scroll the newsfeed and interact in groups, telling myself I was being productive. But I wasn't doing the things I need to do to reach my goals.



Elaine: Time blocking, daily intentions and accountability can knock procrastination out!



Cara: I'm a work in progress on this. I listened to the first lesson of Tame Your Time yesterday (finally). Spent time last night snoozing and unfollowing things on Facebook. I gave myself a swift kick as that's turned into a time suck. Today I pushed out one blog post and started building a few Pinterest boards. Can't reach my goals if I don't put the effort in :)



Tanya: I am a lifelong procrastinator. I committed myself to a BIG project that is due tomorrow. The ONLY way I was able to get almost done (at this point) is by setting a timer to work in 30 minute increments. Any longer than 30 minutes and I would find myself tempted to surf the web and do nonsense things. I hammer down for 30 minutes, then spend time doing other things, ranging from bathroom break to washing dishes. I write a list of other things that HAVE to be done that day and work on those during my work break. Some of those breaks are short, some are long, but after I'm finished (usually 5 - 30 minutes), my head is cleared enough to hammer down for another 30 minutes. I've been doing this technique for 3 days now and it has been very successful for me.



Amanda: I am a lifelong procrastinator. I committed myself to a BIG project that is due tomorrow. The ONLY way I was able to get almost done (at this point) is by setting a timer to work in 30 minute increments. Any longer than 30 minutes and I would find myself tempted to surf the web and do nonsense things. I hammer down for 30 minutes, then spend time doing other things, ranging from bathroom break to washing dishes. I write a list of other things that HAVE to be done that day and work on those during my work break. Some of those breaks are short, some are long, but after I'm finished (usually 5 - 30 minutes), my head is cleared enough to hammer down for another 30 minutes. I've been doing this technique for 3 days now and it has been very successful for me.

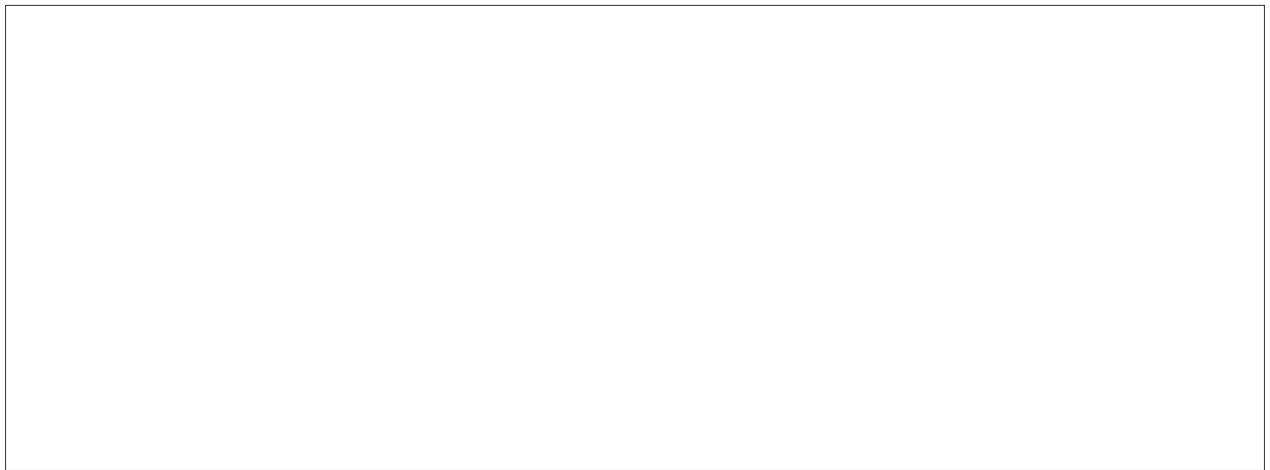


Brynn: I started telling myself that whatever I wanted to be working on was just what I do. For example: I work on my blog during quiet time in the afternoons. I have about 2 hours usually, so at that time when I want to watch TV instead of work on my goals, I tell myself that's what I do. That's helped me develop the habit of working on my business. I also find if I switch up where I work, I can be more productive. For example TV is my vice, so if I go to a coffee house or even just a different place in my house, it helps distract me from my procrastination.



PRACTICAL APPLICATION

How does **procrastination** affect your life?



These are the **things** I let myself get **procrastinated** with

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

WHY are you procrastinating ?(going deeper)

What is procrastinating **holding you back** from?

How procrastination holds you back. (Check all that apply)

- ☐ You may worry so much about planning far in advance that you neglect to take advantage of the immediate opportunities right in front of you.
- ☐ You might say no too often.
- ☐ You feel paralyzed by the thought of making a mistake—so much so that prevents you from taking any kind of action whatsoever.
- ☐ You never feel quite ready to begin, and so you don't.
- ☐ You may spend so much time researching, planning, and organizing that you never actually get started.
- ☐ You can have trouble committing to deadlines.
- ☐ You feel like you can never meet your own high expectations and rarely feel satisfied with the work that you've done.
- ☐ You can have trouble finishing important projects because you feel like there is always more tweaking and perfecting that could be done.
- ☐ You often struggle with giving yourself grace, or giving yourself the freedom to try new things and make mistakes.
- ☐ You experience anxiety and fear when you aren't able to give yourself an ample amount of time for research and planning.

Do these procrastination habits & behaviors apply to you? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Likes to plan ahead in order to allow as much time as possible
- ☐ Will often plan vacations and major projects months, or even years in advance
- ☐ Tends to be detail oriented
- ☐ Will sometimes postpone or avoid things they don't feel competent in.
- ☐ Naturally drawn to order and organization.
- ☐ Often checks and double-checks to make sure things are perfect
- ☐ Never feels like things are "ready"
- ☐ Loves research; feels like there is always more to learn about a topic
- ☐ Can be extremely self-critical
- ☐ Gets depressed or extremely upset when they make a mistake
- ☐ Are schedule oriented and often acutely aware of deadlines

PROCRASTINATION PROCLAMATION

FROM THIS MOMENT FORWARD...

I will stop **procrastinating** my big goals and dreams.

I will set **time aside** to: _____

I will not allow these **distractions** to interfere with achieving my goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

I give myself permission to **aim for progress**, not perfection.

I **refuse to give up**. I will keep going, even when things are hard and I
don't feel motivated.

And so, I will choose to **re-commit to my goals** and not let
procrastination get in my way!

CREATE A STOP DOING LIST

CHEAT SHEET

There are only 24 hours in the day, which means that in order to excel in one area of our life, another area will almost inevitably suffer, at least a little bit. And that's okay. Balance doesn't mean doing everything perfectly, it means giving yourself the grace to not be perfect. And so I'm proposing that there are a few things we can and should stop doing immediately.

1 OVER-**APOLOGIZING**

Seriously: we need to stop apologizing for everything! Not only is it perfectly inoffensive that we have real biological reactions like sneezing and having to go to the bathroom, but also, "sorry" becomes a habit, so we say it when we don't actually mean it. At least "excuse me" or "pardon me" aren't quite the tick that "sorry" becomes.

2 COMPARING YOURSELF TO **OTHERS**

Sometimes it's okay to step away from social media for a while, particularly if it's making you feel bad about yourself. Take a break to live in the real world where we're all imperfect.

3 BUYING "**GOOD DEALS**"

The next time you get a hankering to walk to the back of the clearance aisle at the store, ask yourself if there's anything you need on your list that might actually be on that aisle. If it's not on your list, don't go there. (Yes, even if it's 70% off and you have a coupon!)

4 FEELING GUILTY FOR **SELF-CARE**

Self-care gives us a chance to keep ourselves feeling energized and refreshed. It helps us look and feel our best. You know how wonderful you feel when you're dressed up, looking good and feeling fantastic? I don't know about you, but I feel like I'm ready to tackle the world.

5 BEATING YOURSELF UP OVER YOUR **DIET**

If you eat something not-so-healthy, enjoy it! Tell yourself how amazing it was—and move on. Rest assured you can have cheesecake or pizza or whatever it is again, but just not all the time. Enjoy food and learn to love healthy vegetables and fruits, whole grains and lean proteins. Base your meals around these healthy things and allow yourself some treats along the way.

6 SAYING, "**IT'S OKAY**" WHEN IT'S NOT

If there's something you've done wrong, take ownership of it and apologize. Tell your friend you're sorry for what you did that hurt their feelings or upset them, and work to make amends. Just ignoring problems or saying "it's okay" all the time won't make them go away.

7 DOING IT ALL **ON YOUR OWN**

Think of how great you feel when you can help someone out who truly needs a hand. Yet, when we need a hand, we feel embarrassed or ashamed to ask for some assistance. It can be as simple as asking a neighbor to help you exchange a babysitting day or a meal swap.

8 GIVING ALL YOUR **TIME** AWAY

Learn how to decline some events and to maintain a balance when it comes to keeping up with activities. It's okay to not do every single lesson, every activity and every invitation. You can pick and choose and spend some time at home with your family.

9 WORRYING ABOUT **CLEANING**

While being organized helps us to be more efficient and gives us a sense of calm and order, we don't need to have every single thing perfectly in place. It takes time to get everything in order, and most of us hit roadblocks and have good weeks and bad weeks.

10 GETTING TO THE END OF YOUR **LIST**

It's not easy to admit—to ourselves or anyone else—that we can't always do it all. But the reality is that balance in life is found from taking things off our plate, not putting on more pressure to be all things to all people. Get clear about what matters to YOU most of all, then give yourself permission to let a few things slide. It will be okay—I promise.

MY STOP DOING LIST

CHEAT SHEET

Now that you have read our suggestions and gave it some thought, take the time to write down what your own version of the stop doing list might look like. Feel free to use some of our ideas or create your own. There is no right or wrong answer!

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

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15