

Positive Self-Talk for Procrastination Management

Set Priorities.

Not: I don't know where to begin, so I can't begin at all.

Not: I have to do EVERYTHING! Nothing less will do.

Instead: The most important step is to pick one project to focus on.

Break the Task Down into Little Pieces

Not: There's so much to do, and it's so complicated. I'm overwhelmed by my English term paper.

Instead: I don't have to do the whole project at once. There are separate small steps I can take one at a time to begin researching and drafting my paper.

Set Up Small, Specific Goals.

Not: I have to write my thesis within two months.

Instead: If I write 2 pages per day, Monday-Friday, I can finish a 1st draft in 1 month. I'll have a revised final draft in 2 months.

Take One Small Step at a Time.

Not: It's too much. I'll never get it all done

Instead: What is the one next step on my list? I'll concentrate on that step for right now

Reward Yourself Right Away When You Accomplish a Small Goal.

Not: I can't take any time out until I'm completely finished.

Instead: I spent an hour working. Now I'll call a friend.

Use a Time Schedule.

Not: I must devote the whole week to this project

Instead: I can use these times this week to work on my project: Monday 7-8; Tuesday 7-9; Saturday 10-12.

Learn How to Tell Time.

Not: Sorting through these papers and reorganizing my file cabinet will be a snap. It won't take me more than an hour, so I can do it any time.

Instead: Sorting papers always takes longer than I expect, so I'll start tonight. I'll spend 1hour filing 1 stack of papers.

Optimize Your Chances for Success.

Not: I'll do my writing this weekend at home.

Instead: I'll write during the week in a library. (Choose whatever conditions are optimal for you to get work done.)

Delegate, if Possible.

Not: I am the only person in the world who can do this.

Instead: I don't have to do this all by myself. I can ask someone else to do part of the job and still feel a sense of accomplishment.

Just Get Started.

Not: I can't write this speech until inspiration hits.

Instead: I'll write what first comes to mind, then improve it later.

Look at What You Have Accomplished.

Not: I have hardly made a dent in all there is to do.

Instead: I have reviewed my lecture notes and read 3 chapters. That won't guarantee me an "A", but it's more than I did yesterday.

Be Realistic!

Not: I should be able to work full-time, take 4 classes, be president of the Student Association, spend more time with friends, and play college sports or hours a day with no trouble at all.

Instead: I have limits. I can take on fewer responsibilities and still like myself.

Need help with beating procrastination? Contact your academic strategist for support!

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