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Professional Growth Articles



- Tackling - PROCRASTINATION

February 2021

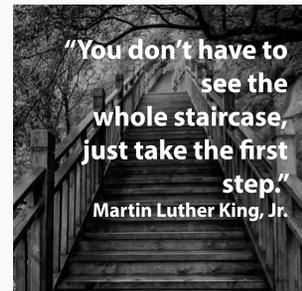


We all have those projects

that can cause us to find infinite ways to avoid doing them or even getting started. So what causes YOU to procrastinate? Do you know? If the answer is, "Because I don't want to," that's not really helpful. 😊

Do any of these reasons ring true? Read further. I have some simple solutions.

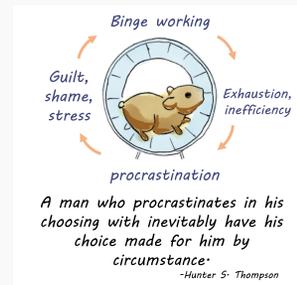
1. You don't know where to start
2. It feels overwhelming
3. You're not good at that task
4. You started, but you're stuck
5. The outcome isn't motivating



STRESS LEVEL



"Procrastination is like a credit card:
It's a lot of fun
until you get the bill."



So here are some solutions I've learned for each of these procrastination excuses:

How to get started: Getting started is often the hardest part of any job.

- a. **Make a list of what you need** – info, tools, etc.
- b. **Gather together what you need** – you don't have to start, just get it all gathered up – sometimes that hardest part of starting is doing that first simple step. Think about breaking it into pieces and decide what piece needs to come first and then tackle just that piece.

Overcome Overwhelm: Oftentimes, projects ARE overwhelming.

- a. **Break it into smaller pieces or tasks.** What categories can you create or in what order do things need to be done?
- b. **Delegate.** How can you best organize it and prepare it for the person to whom it will be delegated. Don't hand them a mess, or it may not get done!
- c. **Do a brain dump.** To give yourself a head start when you get into the heart of the project, just start jotting notes for the different sections – whatever ideas come rolling off the top of your head. Just let it flow. If you can categorize it as you go, all the better. It will give you momentum.

Reach out for help: We can't all be good at everything. Not being good at something isn't a terrible thing.

- a. **Figure out who is good at it.** Can they help you or give you some tips? Can you figure out what part of the task trips you up and find a tutorial online or get help from an expert you work with? What can you do to improve your skill in this area?



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b. **Trade tasks you are good at with the person who is the expert at this task.** Can you trade tasks? A lot of folks don't think about doing that because it's "supposed to be part of your job". Well, I have a little different take on team effectiveness. I often tell teams I'm working with about one of the things that made the best team I was ever part of so high performing. It's that we traded tasks all the time! Sometimes it was because someone had time at that moment that someone else didn't have. Sometimes it was because one of us just plain didn't like a task that someone else did and we traded tasks. Other times, it was that one of us was really good at something and enjoyed it and the other person wasn't good at it but they were good at something else and enjoyed that task so we traded. But, it was a team agreement and was not done without the acknowledgement of our leader. There are some things you can get better at and some things you may just never be good at. If you look at that as a whole team, then the whole team can be more efficient and higher performing if you get the right people doing the right tasks.

Get Unstuck: It happens to all of us.

- a. My husband told me years ago that he paid (back then) \$40,000 for his master's degree and the most important thing he learned was this. Are you ready? **"When you don't know what to do, you don't have enough information!"** We laugh about that all the time. As consultants, we too often get stuck. When we do, one of us usually looks at the other and says, "When you don't know what to do, you don't have enough information!" From there, we set about figuring out what it is we don't know or need more information about. When we get it, things usually fall right into place.
- b. **Who can help you?**



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- c. Where can you get the information you need?
- d. Who can be a sounding board to help you figure out what information you're missing?

Finding ways to stay motivated: OK, let's face it. Not everything is glorious.

Taking out the garbage, doing chores, doing those monthly reports – it's often neither fun, nor rewarding in much of any way.

- a. So to that I say, **do the least-liked task first** and that way it won't be hanging over your head all day.
- b. **Just do it!** Get it over with so you can do work you really do enjoy.
- c. **Build in a reward.** Tell yourself when it's done you can _____ fill in the blank! What's a reward for you that fits the size of the task? It can be anything from an ice-cream cone to a trip to Europe! (after the pandemic.)

My newest motivator:

There's one more thing I'll share that doesn't necessarily fit any particular category above. It's my newest motivator. I heard it from a colleague in a cohort I belong to. Ready, here it is:

I CAN DO HARD THINGS!

Yessiree, this is my new go-to motivating motto. ***I CAN do hard things*** and sometimes I just need to tell myself that in order to kick myself in the behind and get going. And while I'm doing it, I feel really good about myself knowing I'm tackling something difficult and I'm up to the challenge. I can do it and it will be good. So far I've used that five times since the New Year started and I'm on a roll!

Good luck to all of you!!! ***You can do it!*** I know you can and when you're done, you'll be proud of yourself. And if it's one of those yucky chores, get

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it over with and get on to some invigoratingly fun stuff!



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Joy is a conference speaker, team and leadership development consultant, customized trainer and facilitator and a Certified Professional Coach with expertise in personal career coaching, job offer and salary negotiations and executive coaching.

As an Insights Discovery® licensed practitioner, Joy provides clients the added value of the Discovery® Portfolio of tools when working with individuals, teams, leaders and organizations to create inspiring visions for collaborative, cohesive teams to produce superior results.

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