

Procrastination and creativity : psychological & practical guide

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1 : Introduction

Procrastination is not simply a lack of organization. It reflects a unique way of relating to time and desire.

It is first noticed through repeated delays, projects that drag on, and postponed decisions. But behind this commonplace behavior lies a broader question: how to get started when what we want is not yet clear or certain.

This guide is for those who recognize this gap between what they think they should do and what they manage to accomplish. It is not a productivity method or a recipe book.

The aim is to shed light on what procrastination says about how we experience desire, face the unknown, and invent a personal path.

The introduction will simply set the scene and pave the way. The following chapters will explore the preconceived ideas that fuel waiting, the role of boredom in creativity, and how to connect each task to a living goal.

This first step does not provide ready-made solutions: it prepares the ground for work that will require the articulation of reflection and concrete experience.

Procrastination is so common because it responds to an intimate paradox: we want to move forward, but we delay the moment of commitment.

This is not laziness. It marks a period of uncertainty as momentum seeks its form. Before movement occurs, an inner silence sets in. This silence is not empty. It gathers images, fragments of thought, and memories that gradually guide the next step.

Many initiatives seem to arise suddenly, when in fact they have been maturing during this interval. Recognizing this germination period allows us to avoid confusing each delay with failure.

There is a difference between delaying out of fear and allowing what needs to be said to prepare itself. The challenge is to sense this limit without turning waiting into prolonged immobility.

Living through this period of development requires a simple vigilance: not fleeing to mechanical distractions, but staying in touch with what is unfolding.

This attentive relationship changes the value of waiting: it ceases to be a hole in the schedule and becomes a space for the formation of desire.

In this suspended time, boredom plays a decisive role. Often mistaken for a lack of interest, it is in fact the moment when freedom of thought is revealed.

When there are no distractions, we are faced with what really matters. Many avoid this confrontation by engaging in activities that saturate the mind. But boredom, far from being a void to be filled, is a transitional zone where new associations are formed.

Ideas, images, and desires reorganize themselves in this silence. What seemed useless or vague can suddenly take on a clear form. Creation, whether artistic, scientific, or simply a life decision, often arises from this seemingly immobile terrain.

Embracing boredom means accepting the time required for any invention.

Procrastinating is therefore sometimes stopping too soon, before this latent work has found its outlet. Recognizing the value of boredom means giving this underground work a chance to be

accomplished and preparing for the moment when desire will translate into action.

When desire finally takes shape, it does not require prior certainty, but a first step. A tiny step can be enough to break the paralysis: opening a notebook, putting on shoes, sending a message.

It is not the size of the movement that matters, but the way it connects the idea to reality. This connection transforms an intention into an accomplished fact, however small, and sets in motion a dynamic that reflection alone cannot produce.

Every project, whether it involves creation, work, or self-care, benefits from being placed in this living relationship with desire. The useful question is no longer “Am I ready?” but “What first step expresses what I want to see happen?”

By bringing the task back to its concrete scope, we escape the double impasse of perfectionism and indefinite waiting.

These observations set the stage for exploration in the following chapters, which will address the preconceived notions that fuel avoidance and the conditions conducive to sustainable creativity.

2 : The false excuse of certainty

Many people wait until they are certain before acting.

They want guarantees about the outcome, proof that they are cut out for the task. This demand for certainty seems rational, but it quickly becomes an excuse. True action is not based on certainty: it springs from a desire that embraces the unknown.

In work, sports, or creativity, the initial impulse does not come from perfect calculation. It comes from an attraction, a curiosity, a movement that no prediction can seal.

Putting off a decision “until the right moment” often amounts to postponing that first step indefinitely. The expected certainty will never come, because it assumes that the world will confirm in advance an experience that does not yet exist.

This logic feeds procrastination. We imagine ourselves to be cautious when we are simply holding back. What seems like a time for reflection may be a way of escaping the test of reality.

For it is in contact with this reality—an attempt, a gesture, a word spoken—that desire is revealed and can be adjusted. No reasoning can replace it.

Wisdom is often praised as the pinnacle of maturity. It is seen as the quality of someone who “knows how to wait,” who “knows life” and only commits to safe ground.

But beneath this flattering name often lies resignation. We refrain from acting by invoking experience, as if every new thing had to bow to the lessons of the past.

This stance is reassuring because it gives the impression of

controlling events: “I know, I've seen this before.” In reality, it misses the point. Every situation is unique because of what it brings forth.

No previous experience can exhaust its singularity. By believing we can predict everything, we deprive ourselves of the risk that gives rise to desire.

Desire, however, is not a matter of knowledge.

It is recognized by its ability to be wrong, to shift, to reinvent itself. It requires a willingness that defensive wisdom ignores. Behind many delays lies a false prudence: a refusal to begin until we have the key, whereas creative momentum requires us to seek it as we go along.

The expectation of perfect certainty is also fueled by a misunderstanding of error. Many fear making mistakes as if there were only one right path and any deviation would negate the value of the action.

But it is precisely by trying, failing, and starting over that what matters is revealed. Mistakes are not the opposite of progress: they are the stuff of progress.

This fear of mistakes confuses knowledge and desire. Knowledge aims for consistency and repetition. Desire, on the other hand, advances through deviations, discovering as it moves along what no prediction can contain.

Demanding to know the destination before departure is tantamount to closing the road. The history of all creation shows this: discoveries arise through trial and error, detours, and unexpected turns.

Leaving behind the false excuse of certainty does not mean acting at random. Rather, it requires a lucid commitment, capable of

tolerating uncertainty as a condition of encounter.

This first step, even if imperfect, transforms procrastination into movement and opens up the space where creativity can unfold.

Giving up certainty does not mean ignoring reality. It is another kind of clarity: a lucidity that knows that complete knowledge will never come, but that experience is built step by step.

This shift changes the way we approach each project. Preparation still has its place, but it no longer serves as an excuse to delay. It becomes a springboard for experimentation, even if the framework remains incomplete.

In this relationship with time, the initial act is essential. It is not a conclusion but an exploration. Each gesture provides information that reflection alone could not provide.

Clarity is formed as we move forward. This dispels the illusion that a perfect day will come to legitimize action. That day does not exist; it is action that creates it.

Recognizing this dynamic allows us to break free from fruitless waiting. We stop asking for guarantees before moving forward, and we rediscover a readiness that nourishes both work and invention.

Procrastination then loses its *raison d'être*: desire has already begun to express itself in movement.

3 : To begin is already to create

The first step is where all the difficulty lies. We imagine that the hardest part will be sticking with it over time, but the obstacle is right there at the start. Before we begin, every detail weighs heavily on us: the fear of doing it wrong, the feeling of not being “ready,” the vertigo of the unknown.

This is where procrastination finds its foothold.

Taking action means accepting a transition with no guarantees. We leave a world that is still reversible—one where we can always postpone—for an irreversible world where something is done. This break explains the weight of the decision.

The preparation time, as precious as it is, can become a barrier to taking that leap. We accumulate information and refine plans, but the first step remains suspended.

Yet it is this step, however small, that inaugurates creative work. It opens up a space that did not exist before. To begin is already to create: we give form to desire by translating it into the world.

Nothing is finished yet, but the reality of the project has begun. Thought ceases to be an abstraction and becomes a fact.

Many say that they have no trouble getting started but struggle to continue. In reality, it is often when the real work begins that they stop.

The first attempt was still a sketch, almost a game. Then comes the moment when you have to face imperfection, the limits of your means, the confrontation with what you didn't know about yourself.

This moment is another form of beginning.

We believe that discouragement comes from a lack of talent. Rather, it comes from encountering the reality of the act. We discover that no predisposition exempts us from this passage, and that it is this passage that gives substance to the work.

This moment does not signal failure: it is the point where desire takes shape. To continue is then to start again, not to repeat. Each step is a new entry into the work, a new beginning.

The fear of not being naturally gifted weighs heavily in these successive beginnings. We compare ourselves to those who seem to progress effortlessly, we fear judgment or disappointment.

This fear distracts us from the real goal: not to prove immediate aptitude, but to bring a quest into being. A creative act does not aim for initial perfection; it opens up a field where adjustments become possible.

Accepting to take the stage with limited means changes the relationship to success. The project is no longer evaluated solely by the speed of results but by the ability to let emerge what was not initially planned.

Progress is measured by the density of what is discovered, not by adherence to a perfect plan. Thus, each failed attempt is part of the work, because it broadens the territory of experience.

This renewed relationship with the beginning also transforms the way we think about time. Instead of seeking a single grand departure, we understand that each project is a series of beginnings.

Each step, each correction, each return to the work constitutes a new birth. This vision takes the drama out of the action: the challenge is no longer to succeed at once, but to remain open to these multiple beginnings.

This openness unleashes a lasting creative force. We stop waiting for the perfect moment and multiply the small steps we take to get started.

They form a continuous movement, more powerful than the idea of a single initial impulse. To begin is already to create, and to create is to begin again in countless forms. This chapter thus proposes a way of working where each new step is an act of birth for the project itself.

4 : Boredom, an inevitable step

Boredom is often perceived as a lack of interest. We try to chase it away with activities, screens, and conversations that fill our time.

But this discomfort is much more than a void to be filled. It signals that the familiar world is no longer enough and that another form of momentum is seeking its way through.

In boredom, habits lose their appeal. Automatic gestures seize up, familiar landmarks fade away. This disinterest may seem sterile, but it opens up a new space.

In the absence of distraction, thoughts reorganize themselves, images emerge, desires that were previously hidden resurface. It is a period of settling in which the psyche prepares new combinations.

This creative function of boredom is ancient. Myths, philosophies, and the arts have always recognized it.

Vacation time precedes invention, just as fallow land prepares the soil for fertility. In an age saturated with demands, this experience has become rare and uncomfortable. It requires enduring an inner silence that many are quick to fill.

Yet it is precisely in this silence that new ideas are formed, ideas that no immediate stimulus can produce.

Boredom is therefore not simply a state of inertia. It is a transitional stage in which projects that no longer make sense are discarded and desires capable of renewing our relationship with the world are revealed.

Recognizing this changes the way we experience it: instead of

trying to abolish it, we can inhabit it, finding in it the substance of a movement that is still invisible.

To encounter boredom is to encounter one's own freedom. As long as we are busy with tasks dictated from outside, fundamental questions remain covered up.

When these occupations fall away, we find ourselves faced with something that no instruction can name. This confrontation may seem unbearable at first.

It lays bare the void in which desire must find its way.

Many flee this confrontation by multiplying stimuli. They dread the moment when nothing will come from outside to guide them. Yet it is in this emptiness that desire reveals itself.

It does not appear as a ready-made idea but as a tension, a curiosity, a barely sketched movement. Boredom then acts as a sensitive surface that captures these emerging signals.

This experience is not a waste of time. It is the underground workshop of creativity. A project, whether artistic, scientific, or personal, needs this unscheduled time to allow what no planning could foresee to emerge.

By learning to remain present in this uncertain zone, we move from a threatening void to a reservoir of possibilities.

The formative role of boredom can be seen in the simplest of actions. A walk with no destination, a prolonged gaze out of the window, a shared silence are sometimes enough for an unexpected idea to arise. This is no coincidence: the mind, freed from the tension of having to produce, becomes available for other associations. Connections are made between memories, impressions, and desires, and new paths open up without us having planned them.

However, this openness requires us to endure a period of disorientation. We may feel like we are wasting time or missing opportunities.

But it is this temporary withdrawal that makes truly chosen action possible. Without this transition, we risk multiplying activities out of simple reflex, without any of them leading to true invention.

Taking boredom seriously, therefore, does not mean giving in to inertia. It means recognizing that an essential part of creativity takes place in this unmarked time, when attention is no longer entirely captured by urgency.

Boredom should therefore not be understood as an anomaly to be eliminated, but as a regular component of creative life.

By accepting these moments of emptiness, we learn to distinguish between activities that are merely filling time and those that carry a genuine desire. This discernment refines our relationship with time: it becomes less dependent on the rhythm imposed by external demands and more attentive to internal movements.

Living with boredom transforms the way we act. Decisions no longer come from a busy schedule but from deep reflection. They respond not only to the need to do, but to the need to create meaning.

What emerges from this silence is not a simple pastime: it is a new direction, a way of reorganizing daily life according to what really matters.

Ultimately, going through boredom means discovering that the most fruitful action begins where there is no urgency to demand it. It is in this withdrawal that a form of presence is invented that can sustainably nourish desire and revive creative momentum.

5 : Rediscover desire in the goal

Procrastination often stems from a disconnect between what we do and what we really want. We start to perform tasks mechanically, or put them off, because the living connection to the goal has weakened.

We complete a workout, fill out a file, write a report, but the momentum that gave meaning to these actions has been lost along the way.

The action then becomes meaningless and motivation fades.

This chapter addresses the crucial question of purpose. What are we really trying to accomplish?

Not just the immediate result—finishing a text, lifting a load, reaching a quota—but the broader transformation we hope to bring about in our lives. Returning to this primary orientation is not an abstract operation; it is concrete work, made up of words, signs, and decisions that give direction back to the action.

Rediscovering desire in purpose means placing each task within a broader narrative. It is not a matter of dreaming up a grand, definitive plan, but of sensing what each effort prepares and nourishes.

Until this thread is picked up again, the slightest obstacle can become a reason to stop, and we then confuse momentary exhaustion with a loss of vocation.

An isolated action does not carry meaning in itself. What gives it strength is the link it maintains with a living purpose. Many confuse the means with the end: they ask themselves if they like a particular exercise, a particular job, a particular learning experience, without considering what these means open up for the future.

We end up judging each task on its immediate appeal, and the slightest constraint becomes a reason to back away.

Returning to the goal means asking the question again: where is this action leading me? Sport is not just a series of movements; it may be the condition for lasting health and availability for other commitments.

Writing a report is not just an administrative duty; it can be a step towards a larger project, a form of independence, a work in progress.

This perspective is not just a mental exercise. It acts on desire. When the link between the means and the end becomes clear, the effort regains its energy.

The action ceases to be an obligation and becomes a step in a chosen trajectory.

Rediscovering the goal is not just a matter of remembering a past intention. Desire is not a fixed object. It shifts, renews itself, and sometimes contradicts itself.

A project can change meaning as it is realized. Forcing oneself to remain faithful to an old formula often amounts to cutting the link with this living movement.

It is therefore important to revisit the goal regularly, not to make it unstable but to keep it alive. This revision is not a denial: it allows us to adjust our direction to the discoveries made along the way.

An artist may see their work evolve, an entrepreneur may change their market, a student may change direction. These shifts do not mark failure; they signal that the desire to invent continues.

Procrastination can then become a useful signal. A persistent delay often shows that the initial direction no longer quite matches what we want.

Rather than forcing execution, it is more fruitful to reexamine the goal, to give it a new form that rekindles the momentum.

Putting the action back into its purpose makes the work both freer and more tenacious. Free, because we no longer allow ourselves to be dictated to by external obligations alone. Tenacious, because the action is rooted in a meaning that transcends the moment.

We no longer seek motivation in willpower alone, but in lived coherence.

This movement can be seen even in the details of everyday life. A simple household chore or an ordinary encounter can become an opportunity to affirm a life choice, as long as we connect them to a meaningful horizon.

Conversely, seemingly grand projects lose their power as soon as they are cut off from this source.

Rediscovering desire in the goal is therefore an ongoing exercise. It is not a question of defining a supreme objective once and for all, but of cultivating the ability to connect each action to a living purpose.

It is this renewed connection that frees us from the power of procrastination and gives even the most modest gestures the power of lasting creation.

6 : From avoidance to invention

Procrastination is primarily an avoidance strategy. It allows us to postpone contact with a desire that causes anxiety because it involves real change.

But this act of withdrawal already contains the seeds of invention. What holds us back today can, if understood, become the starting point for creation.

We often believe that invention requires a clear plan. In reality, many discoveries arise from a detour, a hesitation, a resistance that is initially experienced as an obstacle.

The time spent avoiding is not necessarily wasted: it accumulates images, questions, and unexpected connections that will fuel the transition to action.

The work, therefore, is less about eliminating avoidance than interpreting it. What, in what we put off, requires another form? What conditions must be met for desire to truly take shape?

By asking these questions, we transform the energy of waiting into the power of elaboration.

This transition from avoidance to invention requires an inner shift: instead of judging ourselves for the time lost, we observe what this time has brought to fruition. Waiting may have revealed legitimate doubts about the chosen form, or brought to light a more precise desire.

Rather than denying these signs, we can gather them together and turn them into material.

Many creative projects show this path. An idea that is slow to

be written down, research that is stalling, a project that seems to be interrupted often contain the elements of a new solution.

The delay does not reflect a simple lack of energy; it marks a period when the project is searching for the form that suits it. Recognizing this latent work changes our relationship with time and restores confidence in the value of what is being built in silence.

Transforming avoidance into invention also requires changing the way we view mistakes and wasted time. The fear of doing something wrong often leads to doing nothing at all.

Yet it is through trial and error, even clumsy attempts, that the project takes shape. An unfinished sketch, an idea jotted down and then abandoned, a failed attempt are all part of the invisible work that precedes a successful creation.

Accepting this logic broadens the scope for experimentation. Every failed attempt becomes a lead, every hesitation an indication of the direction to follow or avoid. Instead of seeing failure as a dead end, we treat it as information.

This attitude transforms procrastination: it is no longer paralysis but a phase of experimentation where desire explores several forms before settling on one.

In everyday life, this perspective changes the value of many seemingly unproductive moments. A seemingly mundane conversation, a walk with no destination, an evening spent daydreaming can, in retrospect, reveal decisive ideas.

Invention feeds on these detours, as long as we are willing to welcome them instead of condemning them.

Turning avoidance into a source of invention ultimately requires a clear transition to action. It is not a matter of remaining

indefinitely in the collection of ideas. There comes a time when even a simple gesture must be made for creation to emerge from waiting.

This decision is not the result of perfect reflection, but a sign that a desire has found its provisional form.

The first step may seem modest: a paragraph written, a phone call made, a sketch begun. Yet it transforms the accumulated material into a visible reality. This gesture triggers a chain of unexpected effects: encounters, corrections, new questions.

Invention then continues in the action itself, which becomes the main place of discovery.

Thus, procrastination, understood and worked on, ceases to be a simple delay. It becomes a time of gestation followed by a surge of energy where the unexpected finds its form.

The detour, far from being a failure, reveals itself to be the condition for a creative movement that is broader than the simple execution of a plan.

7 : Concrete ideas

The above reflections are most powerful when they are translated into everyday life. Here are some simple ways to incorporate this renewed connection to desire into your daily routine.

- ****Name the living purpose****: before starting a task, take a few minutes to formulate what it makes possible beyond its immediate execution. This formulation does not need to be perfect; it is enough to connect the action to a meaningful horizon.
- ****Create a small first step****: identify the smallest action that gives substance to the project (open a document, prepare the materials, make a note). This concrete action breaks the fiction of a constantly postponed start.
- ****Set a rhythm with beginnings****: organize time not in rigid blocks but in sequences where each resumption is thought of as a beginning. This logic maintains creative momentum without requiring continuous performance.

These practices are not miracle cures. They are supports, triggers. Their effectiveness depends on how they relate to a personal search for meaning.

Boredom is not a state that can be programmed or an exercise in style. It arises on its own when entertainment is no longer enough.

The challenge is therefore not to “choose to be bored,” but to recognize this moment when it appears and not to flee from it immediately.

This face-to-face encounter with empty time reveals what our usual occupations mask: the point where a desire seeks to express itself.

Instead of filling this silence, we can simply let it unfold. This is not a technique but an attitude of openness.

In this suspended time, more radical questions arise: what is really worth starting, what is no longer necessary? This question is not resolved by a plan but by an inner decision that will sooner or later find its expression in action.

These moments of boredom act as thresholds. They open up a space where desire can be reformulated. They do not provide an immediate answer, but they prepare the moment when a new movement becomes possible.

Another way to anchor reflection is to look at how detours themselves feed creativity. A missed appointment, an evening spent daydreaming, a project put aside can become the source of an unexpected shift.

Far from being failures, these bifurcations constitute the very fabric of experience. They remind us that desire does not move in a straight line but through surprises and repetitions.

Taking note of these movements is not the same as planning or recording them. It is an inner position: admitting that the creative path includes suspensions, setbacks, and unexpected bursts. This recognition frees us from the guilt associated with delays and allows us to transform seemingly lost time into material for the future. The essential thing is not to control each step but to remain faithful to what is revealed in these moments.

These internal shifts are only worthwhile if they find a way into reality. To remain alive, desire must ultimately be expressed in a gesture, however small.

This gesture is not the end of a process but the opening of a new space where other decisions become possible.

It may involve talking about a project to someone you trust, formulating a key phrase, or performing a symbolic act. What matters is not the magnitude of the gesture, but the fact that it connects the idea to the world. It is this concrete link that distinguishes simple daydreaming from creation in progress.

These concrete ideas are not a set of instructions. They remind us that transforming avoidance into invention requires alternating between time for development and time for action. Recognizing this rhythm allows creativity to unfold without getting lost in waiting.

8 : Conclusion

Throughout this journey, procrastination has emerged not as a simple lack of discipline, but as a sign of the complex relationship between desire and action. It indicates a tension, sometimes a resistance, that is part of the creative dynamic.

Rather than fighting it with willpower, it is a matter of listening to it.

This initial act of recognition already transforms the way we act. Procrastination ceases to be a fault to be corrected; it becomes a language to be deciphered. It reveals what needs to be reoriented or reinvented in a project.

Thus, procrastination is no longer opposed to creativity: it becomes a stage in the process.

This shift in perspective allows us to rediscover the role of desire. Action is no longer evaluated solely on its effectiveness, but on the truth of the impulse that drives it.

Each chapter has shown that certainty is not a prerequisite for action, that starting is already creating, that boredom paves the way for novelty, and that goals must be regularly rekindled. These elements form a coherent path for transforming avoidance into invention.

Creativity is therefore not a talent reserved for a select few. It is an ordinary mode of psychic life. It arises as soon as a subject agrees to let something form that they cannot fully predict.

Procrastination, far from contradicting this movement, reveals its necessity.

Recognizing this logic opens up a more flexible way of experiencing time. Work and waiting are no longer opposed, but recognized as complementary. Moments of suspension, far from contradicting action, are its catalyst.

The key is to maintain a thread between these times, so that desire is not lost in mere daydreaming.

This thread is not stretched once and for all. It is woven through the repetition of beginnings, through listening to what calls for form, and through the courage to take a first step, even if it is imperfect. In this way, the work, whether artistic, professional, or personal, can unfold without being crushed by the ideal of perfection.

This journey invites us to consider every gesture, no matter how small, as the expression of a desire in motion. The challenge is not to eliminate hesitation but to follow through on it.

Creation feeds on this back-and-forth between waiting and acting. Recognizing this dynamic makes procrastination less threatening: it becomes a moment of respite in the construction of a life where desire remains the true driving force.