Have you ever decided to watch TV rather than do homework or a school report? Have you ever decided to surf the Internet or read a book rather than do chores, **run errands**, or take care of bills? If you answered "yes," then you have procrastinated.

You aren't alone as everyone everywhere puts off unpleasant or boring activities with the intention to do the work eventually... just not at that particular moment. It's an impulse, much like when you **act on a sudden desire to** have a second bowl of ice cream or an extra-large slice of cake for dessert**. It goes without saying** that too many sweets can be terribly unhealthy, and procrastination often proves just as **detrimental**. Over time, it can result in a poorer and unhappier quality of life. It can **adversely** affect careers, as well as relationships with family and friends. For some even, there is an accompanying physical feeling, much like an anxiety attack or a tightness around the shoulders. Some substitute unimportant **busywork**, such as house cleaning or laundry, and argue that they don't procrastinate. But as this delays another, more unpleasant activity, it gets classified as procrastination, too.

Research indicates that there are two types of procrastinators. The first type views responsibility in a negative light, and so often directs energy into other activities. This person may just feel a need to avoid unpleasantness, which thus affects even people typically considered quite efficient. The second type often feels overwhelmed by pressure. This person may decide that it's better to start the task later, arguing that it will go smoother with a fresh mind and a fresh perspective tomorrow. Unfortunately, when tomorrow comes around, the excuse gets repeated, and repeated, and repeated every day. Guilt and **apprehension** eventually reach monumental proportions, forcing the person to simply **throw in the towel**. Some others will rush to complete the task at the **eleventh hour**, which greatly **exacerbates** the feeling of stress.

A handful of psychologists argue that modern society deserves the blame because there are too many distractions and sources of instant entertainment and gratification. Yet others argue that procrastination, in one guise of another, has always been part and parcel with the human psyche. Even the great Leonardo da Vinci procrastinated!

If you would like to free yourself of the habit, there's only bad news to be had. It's unfortunately impossible to completely stop your bad habit, and it's just a matter of how much you put things off. In this respect, a routine goes a long way to reduce the problem because you can build on the reliability a set schedule **imparts**. What's more, it also reduces stress and makes life more manageable. Experts suggest setting small goals and then making small improvements step by step. For example, if you procrastinate five times a week, then try to reduce it to four times, then three. Just remember: If you want to change how much you procrastinate, start today not tomorrow.