



IMMEDIATE ACTION



A 7-DAY PLAN TO OVERCOME PROCRASTINATION AND
REGAIN YOUR MOTIVATION

THIBAUT MEURISSE

IMMEDIATE ACTION

**A 7-DAY PLAN TO OVERCOME PROCRASTINATION AND
REGAIN YOUR MOTIVATION**

THIBAUT MEURISSE

CONTENTS

[Who is this book for?](#)

[Your Free Step-by-Step Workbook](#)

[Your Productivity Series](#)

[Introduction](#)

[What is procrastination?](#)

[Day 1—Declutter your mind](#)

[Day 2—Identify the reason you procrastinate](#)

[Day 3—Deepen your understanding of procrastination](#)

[Day 4—Gain clarity](#)

[Day 5—Develop laser-sharp focus](#)

[Day 6—Release your fear](#)

[Day 7—Implement a daily routine and build consistency](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Other Books By The Authors:](#)

[About the Author](#)

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

Do you keep putting things off to a tomorrow that never comes? Do you tackle unimportant tasks first to avoid working on your most challenging jobs?

If so, this book is for you.

Even the most productive people on this planet procrastinate. We all do it, but if you find yourself procrastinating more than is good for you, it might be time to do something about it.

More specifically, you'll find this book useful if you want to:

- Reduce your tendency to procrastinate and actually complete your most important work tasks,
- Achieve ambitious goals or big dreams that require you to reach a higher level of productivity,
- Stop feeling ashamed of yourself for not completing the tasks you know you should be doing, and
- Learn more about your own mind and develop deeper self-awareness.

If you can relate to any of the above, read on.

In this practical guide, you'll discover how to deal with procrastination more effectively—and in just seven days!

Each day you'll be provided with simple exercises to help you understand procrastination better and overcome it. At the end of the seven days, you'll be equipped with a simple yet effective system to help you complete your most important work.

So, are you ready to let go of procrastination and finally move toward your goals?

Your Free Step-By-Step Workbook

To help overcome procrastination I've created a workbook as a companion guide to this book. Make sure you download it at the following URL:

<https://whatisperpersonaldevelopment.org/immediate-action>

If you have any difficulties downloading the workbook contact me at:

thibaut.meurisse@gmail.com

and I will send it to you as soon as possible.

INTRODUCTION

“ Neither a wise nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.

— DWIGHT. D. EISENHOWER, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

How many diseases have yet to be cured, how many inventions are still to be discovered and how many dreams have not been realized due to procrastination?

The cost of procrastination is astronomical. It has undoubtedly destroyed more dreams than anything else on this planet. Procrastination is the insidious feeling that leads us to shy away from what we know we should be doing. Yet, it is precisely our ability to do what we should do, when we should do it, and whether or not we like it, that determines most of what we are able to accomplish in our lifetime.

So why are we letting procrastination steal our future and destroy our potential? Why are we allowing it to stand between us and our dreams? Perhaps, it is because we're afraid of what we're truly capable of achieving. As the author Marianne Williamson wrote, *“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’*

Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world.”

The fear of discovering what we’re truly capable of achieving may lead us to put a brake on developing our skills, abilities, and talents. It may lead us to play a role, trying to convince each other we are powerless creatures with no real talent or special abilities.

But is this truly the case?

What about you? Are you letting the invisible force, procrastination, prevent you from leaving your mark on the world?

If so, perhaps it is time you did something about it and took action now, instead of waiting until a mythical “tomorrow”.

In “Immediate Action”, we’ll discover together how to deal with procrastination in a healthy way. I have intentionally kept this book short. Reading yet another 300-page book is unlikely to help you overcome procrastination anyway.

In this book, I’ll provide you with daily exercises that will move you toward one simple goal:

In just seven days, you will improve your understanding of procrastination and learn to overcome it—or at least to deal with it more effectively.

Here is what we’ll go over together.

On Day 1—Declutter your mind, you’ll discover how to declutter your mind to help you build momentum and move toward your goals. If you currently feel stuck, you’ll find Day 1 particularly useful.

On Day 2—Identify the reason you procrastinate, we’ll look at the specific reasons you procrastinate and begin to create a simple plan to overcome your tendency to put things off.

On Day 3—Deepen your understanding of procrastination, we’ll explain how procrastination works and explore what you can do to boost your motivation and complete your key tasks.

On **Day 4—Gain clarity**, you'll learn why clarity is key. As you gain more clarity regarding your tasks, you'll reduce your tendency to procrastinate.

On **Day 5—Develop laser-sharp focus**, you'll discover that one of the biggest reasons you end up procrastinating over your most important tasks is due to overstimulation. We'll see in detail how to develop deeper focus which will help you can tackle your tasks with greater ease.

On **Day 6—Release your fear**, we'll discuss the biggest fears that lead you to procrastinate, and we'll reveal a few simple tips to help you lessen those fears.

Finally, on **Day 7—Implement a daily routine and build consistency**, you'll create a daily routine that will boost your productivity dramatically, while reducing the odds of you procrastinating. I'll challenge you to stick to this routine for the next thirty days.

Sounds good?

If so, let's not procrastinate any further and get started, shall we?

WHAT IS PROCRASTINATION?

In this section, we're going to have a brief look at what procrastination is. Later, we'll discuss all the reasons you procrastinate to help you overcome this disempowering habit.

Put simply, procrastination is knowing there is a task you should be undertaking but finding yourself unable to do it. This isn't something to feel ashamed of since procrastination is a phenomenon experienced by everyone, including the most successful people on the planet. As such, the goal is not to try to eradicate it—which would be impossible—but to tame it.

Another way to look at procrastination is as a signal your brain sends you. It is likely telling you the following:

“It seems as though you either don't want to or can't work on this particular task. Perhaps you should look at the underlying reasons for feeling this way.”

From a biological perspective, our brain is largely designed to ensure that we survive and reproduce. It hates wasting energy or taking risks unless it is absolutely necessary. When you feel the need to put things off, it's often because your brain perceives the task as either a waste of energy or a risky move.

In other words, procrastination can be seen as a protection mechanism created by your mind to increase your chances of surviving and

reproducing.

However, nowadays, we live in a vastly different world than our ancestors. Most of us don't face life and death situations on a daily basis. As such, procrastination has largely become an obsolete protection mechanism. And, if we aren't careful, this mechanism will prevent us from reaching our true potential.

We can also see procrastination as the price we pay for being human. As opposed to other living beings, we've been granted the ability to make choices and shape our future. But together with this blessing comes a curse—we must continuously decide whether to act or not and when to overcome our fears or run from them.

Now, before we learn how to deal with procrastination, let's go over a simple exercise to help you build the motivation to act.

DAY 1—DECLUTTER YOUR MIND

Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task.

— WILLIAM JAMES, PHILOSOPHER.

Do you feel overwhelmed? Do you struggle to complete the tasks you know you should be working on?

If so, don't worry. Today, we'll help you get unstuck.

The truth is that our mind doesn't like thinking of too many things at once. Yet, many of us ask it to do a whole heap of processing work. What our mind hates above all are open loops. Open loops consist of all the unfinished tasks it must think about in the background, such as:

- Unanswered emails,
- Unpaid taxes,
- Incomplete projects,
- Unfinished conversations,
- Chores,
- Unresolved issues, and so on.

When you keep accumulating unfinished business, you create multiple open loops that take up mental space. Feeling overwhelmed, your mind's

natural reaction is to shut down. As a result, you find yourself stuck.

Sound familiar?

Fortunately, there are ways to unstick yourself. Today, let's declutter your mind so that you gain more clarity and build enough momentum to beat procrastination. To do so, I invite you to complete one out of the following two exercises:

Exercise 1—Complete your major task

- Select a major task you've been procrastinating on for a while. Major doesn't mean it will take a lot of time; it simply means a task you've struggled to complete. It could be something as simple as cleaning your apartment, or it could be a bigger task, such as finishing an important project at work.
- Then, tackle this task today and work until it is one hundred percent complete. If you need more time, commit to finishing it this week.

As soon as you've completed the major task you've been putting off for so long, you'll experience a surge of motivation and will likely want to keep going. If so, keep the momentum going by tackling more tasks.

Exercise 2—Declutter your mind

- Using your action guide, list all your unfinished tasks. Write down all the things you know you should have completed but haven't. It could be replying to an email, paying your taxes, making an appointment, or cleaning your home.
- Next, schedule time today to complete as many of these tasks as possible. See how many you can get done.

This exercise will help you free energy and eliminate the feeling of being stuck. As a result, you'll feel motivated to complete more and more tasks.

Today, all you have to do is complete at least one of these two exercises. Still here? What are you waiting for? Go on, get on with it, complete these

tasks!

Tomorrow, we'll discuss in greater detail the reason you procrastinate.

* * *

Action step

- Select the biggest task you're procrastinating on and tackle it now until it is finished, or
- Write down all the tasks you know you need to complete. Then, go complete as many of them as possible.

DAY 2—IDENTIFY THE REASON YOU PROCRASTINATE

It's the job that's never started as takes longest to finish.

— J.R.R. TOLKIEN, AUTHOR.

Do you know the specific reasons you procrastinate? If not, don't worry, we're going to discuss this today.

In truth, we procrastinate for a variety of reasons which are often related to the protection mechanism we mentioned earlier. In short, we're reluctant to expend energy on a task or we see the task as a risk to our survival or the survival of our ego.

Below are some specific reasons that may lead us to procrastinate:

- **A lack of clarity.** Being unsure of what we have to do, the way we should do it, or the reason it matters, we postpone working on that task.
- **Insufficient awareness.** Without a proper understanding of what procrastination is and how it works, we find ourselves putting off things more often than we'd like to.
- **Poor focus.** Being in a constant state of overstimulation, we find ourselves unable to focus on tasks we perceive as challenging, unpleasant, or boring.

- **Fear.** By feeling as though we aren't good enough or being afraid of what others will think of us, we put off our dreams to a future that never arrives.
- **Lack of urgency.** Having no real sense of urgency, we tell ourselves we can always work on our task tomorrow, next week, or next month.
- **Lack of effective routines.** Having no consistent daily routine to help us immerse ourselves in our most important tasks, we become distracted by the most irrelevant things, e.g., emails, social media, YouTube, and so on.
- **Unnecessary friction.** Failing to create a frictionless environment, we struggle to tackle our most important tasks.
- **Mental overload.** Having too many unfinished tasks or chores, we become overwhelmed.

What about you? Do you know why you procrastinate? Do you lack clarity? Are you afraid of not doing a good enough job? Is your environment sub-optimal? Does it create resistance?

Today, I invite you to reflect on all the reasons you procrastinate. To do so, complete the exercises below, using your action guide.

* * *

Action step

1. Using your action guide, rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being false, 10 being true) for each statement below:

- I lack clarity regarding what I need to do or how to do it.
- I wait for motivation.
- I'm distracted, unable to complete difficult tasks.
- I'm afraid of not doing a good enough job.
- I have no clear deadline or sense of urgency.
- I have no daily routine to help me start work.
- My environment encourages unproductive or toxic behaviors.

- I have too many things to do, and I feel stuck.

2. Using your action guide, reflect on all the reasons you procrastinate:

a. Write down three tasks you have procrastinated on in the past month/year.

b. Now, write down all the reasons you believe you procrastinated. Be honest with yourself. Is it the fear of not doing a good enough job? Is it because you weren't motivated enough? Is it because you didn't know exactly how to approach the task?

c. Then, brainstorm. Think of everything you could do to stop procrastinating or at least reduce your tendency to do so.

DAY 3—DEEPEN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF PROCRASTINATION

It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.

— SENECA, ROMAN STOIC PHILOSOPHER.

While our tendency to procrastinate can be strong, it isn't an insurmountable issue. We can do many things to overcome procrastination or, at least, deal with it more effectively. It starts by understanding how motivation works and by changing our perception of procrastination.

How motivation works

To overcome procrastination, you must understand how motivation works. Many of us believe we need more motivation to help us act on our goals. While it certainly helps, it's impossible to feel motivated one hundred percent of the time. Some days, we'll be excited to work on our tasks, while other days, we'll feel like doing everything but these tasks.

Consequently, the key is to realize that motivation doesn't lead to action, but action leads to motivation. In other words, getting started actually generates motivation. You've probably have experienced it yourself before. After struggling to work on a task, you finally managed to get started. A few minutes in, you began to feel more motivated and worked on it far longer than you'd planned or expected. This shows that, often, action creates motivation, rather than the other way around.

The famous writer, Stephen King, doesn't wait for motivation to arrive. Every morning, he sits at his desk and writes. And as he begins to write, the inspiration comes. In other words, he doesn't wait for his muse to appear, he demands its presence.

The point is, you don't need to feel motivated to do anything. This is an inaccurate way of thinking called “emotional reasoning”. It is the idea that because we feel a certain way, it must be true.

- Because you feel unmotivated, it must be true that you can't complete your task today.
- Because you feel scared, it must be true that you can't possibly ask that person out on a date.
- Because you feel tired, it must be true you can't possibly work on your side hustle today.

As a result of such thinking, you end up procrastinating. As I wrote in my book, *Master Your Time*, what people called “being disciplined” can be reframed as aligning ourselves with reality—the reality that we don't necessarily need to feel like it to work on our most important task. Or, as the writer and artist Elbert Hubbard put it, “*Self-discipline is the ability to make yourself do what you should do when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not.*”

What about you? How often are you the victim of “emotional reasoning”?

Getting rid of inaccurate models

Another thing to understand about procrastination is that some mental models make things worse. This is why it's important to understand what these negative mental models are and to replace them with more empowering ones.

Let's have a look at a couple of them.

1. Present vs. future self

One mental model that leads us to procrastinate is the idea that our future self is a real entity who exists out there somewhere. Now, why is this a

problem? Because we lie to ourselves, pretending that our future self will do the work for us tomorrow, next week, or next year. It gets even worse when we perceive our future self in a completely unrealistic way. We see our future selves as better, stronger, and wiser than we currently are.

However, this is utterly illogical. Our future self is nothing more than the result of the actions we take in the present. If we're not working on becoming better, stronger and wiser today, there is no reason to believe that our future self will possess all the wonderful qualities we attribute them.

Overcoming procrastination entails realizing there is no future self on which you can unload the burden of your current tasks. Tomorrow, your future self will become your present self and will face the very same issues.

2. Surviving vs. thriving

As we've seen before, your mind is designed to ensure your survival. But it isn't designed to help you thrive. Many people allow their old brain to dictate their actions (or lack thereof). They accept that if they don't feel like doing something, they shouldn't do it. These people merely survive. They avoid facing their fears and fail to make extra effort to achieve their goals. If you want to thrive, you must understand that your brain is, in many respects, obsolete. You must overcome your fear of rejection, lack of motivation, and the other issues that stem from the way your old brain operates.

The business philosopher, Jim Rohn, said, *"As a human being, you've been given the dignity of choice. While other living beings rely on their instincts, you have the power to overrule your basic instincts and negative feelings so as to grow and become more. In a way, procrastination is the ever-present tension we experience between our animal instincts and our higher purpose. It is the cost of being human."*

At any time, you can decide whether you want to survive or thrive. The choice is yours.

* * *

Action step

1. Using your action guide, rate yourself from 1 to 10 (where 1 is low and 10 is high) on the following elements:

- I know exactly why I procrastinate.
- I understand exactly how motivation works.
- I understand that procrastination comes from flawed thinking.

2. Based on what you learned today, write down two specific things you will implement today to avoid procrastinating on your most important tasks or things you know you should be doing.

3. Write down what the long-term consequences will be if you keep procrastinating. Think of the worst-case scenarios. What dreams will remain unfulfilled? What goals will you fail to achieve? What will happen to your health? Visualize in detail the real cost of procrastination in your life. Make it painful

DAY 4—GAIN CLARITY

Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle.

— ABRAHAM LINCOLN, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Oftentimes, there is one simple reason why we procrastinate – a lack of clarity. Today, we’re going to discuss why a lack of clarity is detrimental to your productivity and what you can do to gain more of it.

Usually, you procrastinate for the following reasons:

- You don’t have a reason to complete the task in front of you (why).
- You don’t know exactly what the end result should look like (what).
- You don’t know how to approach the task (how).

1. You don’t have a reason to complete the task in front of you (why)

Imagine if I ask you to spend time on your favorite hobby. Would you procrastinate? No, of course not.

Often, we procrastinate on a task when we don’t know why it should be done (and/or we don’t enjoy it). If we had a clear and compelling enough

reason to work on it, we would. Therefore, whenever you find yourself procrastinating, ask yourself why this task matters. Why is it important? Sometimes, the answer will be obvious. Sometimes, it won't be. You might even realize that you shouldn't work on the task or you should delegate it.

If you can't find a convincing answer, try the following:

- Develop specific reasons to do it (strengthen your why). You can write down your answers to help you do this.
- Ask yourself what will happen long term if you don't complete the task. What are the negative consequences?
- Visualize how good you'll feel about yourself once you've completed the task.
- Just get started, while reminding yourself that the task will probably be easier than you feared.

2. You don't know exactly what the end result should look like (what)

You also procrastinate when you're unsure what the final product should look like. If you find yourself in this situation, make sure you know the exact target you want to reach. Try picturing what the final output should be.

To help you clarify your task, ask yourself:

- Do I know exactly what I'm trying to accomplish?
- Can I picture the end results?

If not, try the following:

- Take a sheet of paper and write down exactly what you're trying to achieve.
- Try to come up with a specific measurable target.
- Ask your supervisors to give you more detail and clarify what is expected of you.

The more clarity you have regarding what needs to be done, the easier it will be to start.

3. You don't know how to approach the task (how)

Have you ever completed a similar task before? If not, you likely lack proper understanding of the way to tackle it. If so, spend time identifying the most effective way to approach it. Otherwise, you'll not only experience resistance but will probably end up wasting time and energy.

When you're in this situation, try the following:

- Write down a specific plan to achieve the task.
- Ask someone who already accomplished a similar task to help you define the best approach.
- Search online for hints on how to approach the task as effectively as possible.

As you can see, often you don't procrastinate because you're lazy, but because you lack clarity.

To conclude, whenever you find yourself procrastinating over a specific task make sure you know the why, the what and the how.

* * *

Action step

Using your action guide, complete the exercises below:

Select one of the three examples you mentioned on Day 1.

Now, using your new understanding of how procrastination works, answer the following questions:

- Exactly why do I need to complete this task or project? Why does it matter? And how could I make it more important and urgent to me?

- Do I know exactly what the end result must look like? If not, what specific steps will I take to figure it out?
- Do I know the best way to approach the task? If not, what concrete steps could I take to figure it out?
- Whenever relevant, take action to address your lack of clarity (why, what, or how).

DAY 5—DEVELOP LASER-SHARP FOCUS

Lack of direction, not lack of time, is the problem. We all have twenty-four-hour days.

— ZIG ZIGLAR, MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER.

Do you keep jumping from one distraction to the next? For some reason, there always seems to be a need to grab another coffee, watch another video or have another quick peek at your social media, right?

But why are you experiencing so much resistance when the time comes to sit down and get serious work done?

One of the answers to this question is that you're in a state of overstimulation. The more you run away from your tasks and distract yourself, the more you feel a compelling need to distract yourself.

The problem is, when you're overstimulated, tackling your most important task becomes difficult, if not impossible. Your mind is just not ready to calm itself and focus on any challenging task.

To make it easier for you to do challenging, unpleasant, and/or boring tasks, you must first lower your level of stimulation. An effective way to do this is to eliminate as many distractions as possible and work on your most important tasks before engaging in any stimulating activities.

Here are some examples of highly stimulating activities:

- Checking stats (stock price, sales number, views on your latest video),
- Reading your emails,
- Looking at your phone,
- Going on social media,
- Playing video games,
- Watching videos on YouTube, and so on.

The internet is probably the biggest source of distraction. Therefore, a good idea might be to avoid using the internet in the morning and work with the Wi-Fi turned off.

To sum up, one of the most effective ways to overcome procrastination is to work on your most important task first thing, while avoiding distractions at all costs.

For instance, when I write first thing in the morning, I find it relatively easy to focus. On the other hand, if I make the mistake of checking my emails, going on YouTube, or scrolling down my Facebook newsfeed, I might end up not writing for the whole day. Being overstimulated, I'll find myself unable to concentrate on my writing.

Now, note that when you're overstimulated, your mind will play all sorts of tricks on you to prevent you from starting or going back to work. Some of these tricks are:

- Trick #1—going back to work is easy. Your mind will tell you that you can go back to work whenever you want. But, in reality, you'll find it almost impossible to do so.
- Trick #2—you can do it later. Your mind will lie, telling you that you can always do it later today, or maybe it can wait until tomorrow. But, you will have other tasks to do "tomorrow" and the cycle will continue.
- Trick #3—excitement is the same thing as fulfillment. Your mind will convince you that you need excitement, but excitement will never bring you any lasting sense of fulfillment.

In the first book in this series, *48-hour Dopamine Detox*, I explain in detail how to lower your level of stimulation so that you can stay focused on your most important tasks and reach your goals. If overstimulation is an issue for you, I encourage you to check it out.

* * *

Action step

Today, complete the following exercises in your action guide:

- What could you do specifically to reduce the level of stimulation you're exposed to during your day? Come up with at least three ideas.
- What one thing will you do today to reduce distraction and stimulation, and make it easier to work on your most important task?

DAY 6—RELEASE YOUR FEAR

Someday is not a day of the week.

— — JANET DAILEY, NOVELIST.

One of the main reasons you procrastinate may be due to some underlying fears. You might be afraid of not doing a good enough job. You might be afraid that who you are and what you do isn't enough. This is a common fear that most (if not all) of us suffer.

The fear of not being good enough has led many people to operate far below their potential, never sharing their gifts with the world nor pursuing their dreams. When it comes to the fear of not being good enough, I like to cite the following quotes, since I believe they're eye-opening:

“When I won the Oscar, I thought it was a fluke. I thought everybody would find out, and they'd take it back. They'd come to my house, knocking on the door, ‘Excuse me, we meant to give that to someone else. That was going to Meryl Streep.’” — Jodie Foster, actor.

“You think, ‘Why would anyone want to see me again in a movie? And I don't know how to act anyway, so why am I doing this?’” — Meryl Streep, actor.

The point is, even the most successful people can experience the feeling of not being good enough. In fact, for many high-achievers, I suspect it's

precisely this fear that drives them to improve and accomplish greater feats.

Now, the difference between high-achievers and other people is that the high-achievers use their feelings of inadequacy to improve themselves. They face their fears and overcome them to get things done.

What about you? What, if anything, are you afraid of? Why aren't you working on the things you know you should be working on? If you're afraid of not doing a good enough job, realize that you only have two choices in life. You can either:

1. Experience feelings of inadequacy and let them control your life,
or
2. Experience feelings of inadequacy and act despite these feelings.

The choice you make will determine for a large part what your future will look like. If you keep procrastinating, you'll be selling yourself short over and over again. On top of which, feelings of inadequacy may worsen over time. Conversely, if you accept the fact that you may feel somewhat inadequate for the rest of your life and take action anyway, you'll be able to accomplish many of your goals. Ironically, as you do so, your confidence will grow, and your sense of inadequacy may recede. So, which option will you choose?

Fortunately, there are several things you can do to alleviate feelings of inadequacy. Let's review some of them.

Accept your feelings

The first step is to realize you're not alone. As we've mentioned before, some of the most successful people on this planet feel like a fraud. They spend their entire career living in fear—the fear that others will discover that they are imposters.

Do you feel that way too? If so, that's okay. Accept these feelings. That's the first step to changing them.

Embrace your feelings

Have you ever thought that your fears of inadequacy could be a good thing? We spend so much time criticizing ourselves and beating ourselves up that we often overlook the reason we're experiencing "negative" emotions in the first place.

What if such fears are here to help you? One key role of our emotions is to guide us. They tell us if we're on the right track. They reveal our deepest nature and encourage us to make changes to improve our lives.

If you experience the fear of not being good enough or of being unable to do a good enough job, it probably means you have high standards for yourself. You know you can do better—and you're right. As you grow and develop your skills, you can and will improve in many areas of your life.

The point is this. You value yourself enough to recognize your potential. You sincerely care about the impact your actions have on the world around you. And that's a wonderful thing. Also, you're humble enough to acknowledge you have a lot of room to grow, and you still have so much to learn.

Therefore, why not reconsider the way you perceive your fears? Why not see them for what they are?

- A sign that you want the best for yourself, and
- A tool to grow and become an even better person in the future.

Practice self-compassion

Like any other human being, you always do the best you can with what you have available. If you knew any better, you would act differently. Whenever you notice feelings of inadequacy creeping up, acknowledge them. Then, remind yourself you're doing okay. Beating yourself up won't get you anywhere but encouraging yourself and remembering you're merely human will dramatically increase your emotional resilience and help you achieve great things—more than you ever dreamed possible.

Now, you might have a somewhat negative image of self-compassion. If so, it's probably because you buy into one or several of a number of long-held myths. Let's debunk a few of them right now.

1. I need to beat myself up to get things done. Many people fear that if they aren't harsh with themselves, they will become complacent, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Such belief comes from a lack of faith and trust in oneself. As you practice self-compassion and learn to trust yourself, you'll discover that your motivation will increase, leading you to accomplish more. Try it for yourself.

2. Self-compassion is selfish. For some people, self-compassion may appear selfish, but it isn't the case. In truth, if you cannot take care of yourself, you'll have little mental energy left to take care of the people around you. The more self-compassionate you become, the better you'll feel and the better you'll treat people.

3. Self-compassion is for weak people. Men shouldn't practice self-compassion, and they shouldn't cry either, right? This is nonsense. Self-compassion is the ultimate tool for emotional resilience. It is the safety net for your emotional well-being. When you practice it, you will become like a reed. You'll bend with the wind but never break. No matter what happens, you'll be able to pick yourself up and keep going. This is why, self-compassion will make you stronger, not weaker. This is also where so-called self-esteem is often nothing more than the lie we tell ourselves—the mask we wear. Self-compassion is the profound recognition that we are imperfect human beings trying our best. This recognition alone makes us more self-accepting, improves our well-being, and paradoxically, helps us achieve more.

See yourself as a lifelong learner

You're right. You're not good enough—yet. The important word here is “yet”. Adding that single word can make all the difference in the world.

What I am getting at here is the idea that you should see yourself as a lifelong learner. When your identity and self-confidence is based on your desire to learn and improve, things will become easier. Suddenly, you'll become excited about learning new things, and you'll evaluate yourself based on the progress you're making. You'll experience joy from learning new skills or completing challenging tasks. You'll stop feeling inadequate because you understand there will be no point where you'll finally be good enough, no destination to reach. Instead, there is a beautiful journey in

which you enjoy every tiny improvement you make and every new insight you discover about yourself and the world.

Therefore, I encourage you to use the following prompts to help you reframe the way you perceive yourself:

- I might not be as good as I'd like to be yet, but I'm improving consistently and thoroughly enjoying the process.
- I love challenging myself and completing difficult tasks because I know it helps me improve.
- I'm a learner, and I take pleasure in discovering new things about myself and about the world around me.
- I'm perfectly okay where I currently am, and I can't wait to grow and learn more.

Remember, you're an unstoppable learner. You have the ability to learn almost any skill you desire. The only thing that can prevent you from doing so, is your fear of not being up to the task, your fear of not doing a good enough job. But, in truth, there is no such thing as not being good enough. This is because you always do the best you can, based on where you are now. And the more action you take, the better you become.

Stop making a big deal out of your tasks

If you struggle to complete your biggest tasks, it's often because you make a big deal out of them. This is how our mind works sometimes. It wants to prevent us from wasting our limited energy. As a result, it makes us believe that the things unnecessary for our survival are more difficult than they actually turn out to be.

In truth, most of what other people do, you can do too. For instance, many people believe they could never go on TV or create a YouTube channel because they're afraid of showing their face on camera. Or they believe they could never write a book. They see "successful" people as being out of their league, doing things they could never do. But is this so? For sure, some successful people are really bright, but in many cases, what they can achieve, you can achieve too.

In this regard, one thing I found helpful when it came to changing my beliefs and building confidence is doing the impossible. By that, I mean doing something I *thought* was impossible, doing something I didn't believe I'd ever be able to achieve. Doing so shattered my entire model of reality and made me ask, "What else can I do?". If I can do it, you can, too.

Perhaps the impossible thing for you is:

- Approaching a person you like and asking them out on a date,
- Cold calling a prospective client,
- Delivering a speech,
- Taking a cold shower or an ice bath (to help reduce negative emotions, strengthen the immune system and build discipline),
- Telling someone how you feel,
- Running a marathon,
- Skydiving,
- Writing a book, and so on.

Remember, whatever you think is impossible for you, if someone has done it before, you most likely can do it, too.

The bottom line is this. You often struggle to complete a task because of the story you tell yourself about it and how you visualize it (i.e., you make a big deal out of it). If so, the best option might be to see yourself as an unstoppable learner, excited about the journey ahead.

* * *

Action step

Complete the following exercises in your action guide:

- Completely accept your fear of not being good enough.
- Write down all the things you could accomplish in the future by doing what you need to do regardless of how you feel (instead of procrastinating).
- Chunk down your tasks into smaller ones. Make them as easy to work on as possible.
- See yourself as a lifelong learner. You can never be good enough or perfect, because life is always about the process. Learn to enjoy the process.

DAY 7—IMPLEMENT A DAILY ROUTINE AND BUILD CONSISTENCY

You will never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is found in your daily routine.

— JOHN C. MAXWELL, PASTOR AND LEADERSHIP EXPERT.

In a sense, we can say that procrastination is mostly a habit—and a bad one. Since our mind tends to shy away from challenging tasks, we need to retrain it to make it work *for* us, not *against* us. One of the most effective ways to do so is by implementing a daily routine. Once you do something consistently every day for a long enough period of time, it becomes a rock-solid habit. And just one or two rock-solid habits sustained over the long term can have a massive, positive impact on your life.

In regard to procrastination, your daily routine will help you because it will enable you to prime your mind and deepen your focus. Instead of being overstimulated, you'll be calm and focused. As a result, you'll find it easier to tackle your most important tasks. And, as you develop the habit of doing so, the odds of you procrastinating on any given day will dramatically decrease.

Sounds good? If so, let's work on creating an awesome daily routine. To do so, follow the steps below:

1. Decide when and where you'll do your daily routine

To help prime your mind, start your daily routine at the same time and in the same place each day. As you immerse yourself in your task, the inspiration and motivation will arrive, and you'll realize it wasn't that hard after all.

2. Decide exactly what you'll be doing

The next step is to determine what to include in your morning routine. Choose simple activities that help you enter a focused state. For instance, you could meditate for a few minutes, make yourself a cup of tea or carry out breathing exercises.

Make sure you avoid checking your phone, watching YouTube videos, or any other distractions. You need to avoid such stimulation as much as possible to help you stay focused.

3. Get started

Once you've completed your routine, begin work immediately. If possible, tackle your most important task first. When you complete your main task, you will experience a pleasant sense of accomplishment that will help you accomplish more tasks during the day.

If you need to go to the office, avoid checking your emails or doing anything else that could distract you before you finish your first task. If needed, arrive a little early.

4. Work without interruption

Finally, make sure that you can work free of distractions. If you can, turn off your phone or the Wi-Fi. Remove any friction to facilitate the completion of your task. Your important tasks should be as easy as possible to start while distractions should be as difficult as possible to engage in. For instance, you could limit the risk of becoming distracted by:

- Turning off your phone,
- Turning off the Wi-Fi, and by
- Using software to block specific websites, like social media.

You could also make it easier to tackle your key tasks by:

- Making the files you're using easy to access, and
- Avoiding using the internet before you begin work on your task.

The bottom line is you can reduce your tendency to procrastinate by getting into the habit of working on your key tasks in the morning, and you can make it easier to do so by putting yourself in a relaxed state of mind. As you practice doing this every day, you'll procrastinate significantly less and achieve significantly more.

Create your daily routine using your action guide:

- Decide when you will do your daily routine (first thing in the morning is preferable).
- Decide exactly what you will be doing. Make it simple so that you can sustain it over a long period of time. (Consistency is far more important than intensity.)
- Get started today.

Download the *Procrastination Cure* worksheets and have a look at them from time to time.

CONCLUSION

Procrastination is our attempt to place the burden of today onto the shoulders of a future self that doesn't exist. It doesn't work.

Fortunately, you don't need to do this. Once you understand what procrastination is and how it works, you can dramatically reduce the likelihood that you will procrastinate on any given day.

I hope that during these past seven days, you've been able to overcome some of your mental barriers and have replaced your obsolete mental models with more effective ones.

Now, you'll still procrastinate from time to time. We all do. But when this happens, make sure you show yourself some compassion and refocus on your work gently. Recommit to your daily routines and just get started. As long as you keep moving forward and continuously improve yourself during the process, you'll go on to accomplish great things.

Whenever you feel stuck, revisit the exercises outlined in this book.

You might not be as good as you'd like to be yet. You might not be as productive as you want, but as you keep going, you'll inevitably improve.

There is nothing more enjoyable than seeing ourselves learning new things, gathering new insights, and making progress toward our dreams.

I'll leave you with these words:

Go back to work.

Warm regards,
Thibaut