

as a virtue<sup>87</sup>. Indeed<sup>88</sup>, it is, but it can also be a vice<sup>89</sup> that delays us from signing a job off<sup>90</sup> while we spend a disproportionate<sup>91</sup> amount of<sup>92</sup> time polishing<sup>93</sup> a presentation way beyond that which is necessary.

## Serious but not Hopeless<sup>94</sup>

Luckily<sup>95</sup>, we don't have to resign ourselves to a life of procrastination and there are steps we can take to vanquish<sup>96</sup> it.

1) Be more self-aware<sup>97</sup>. Call it mindfulness<sup>98</sup> or anything you like but take a timeout<sup>99</sup> to reflect on<sup>100</sup> your behaviours. Are there certain tasks you tend to avoid? Are there times when you are more likely to procrastinate and what activities do you replace them with<sup>101</sup>? For example, before starting work, do you spend 15 minutes chatting<sup>102</sup> in the kitchen, then check the sports news, celebrity gossip<sup>103</sup> or the latest Instagram, TikTok or YouTube post? Look for patterns<sup>104</sup> and associated triggers<sup>105</sup> or actions. Then seek consciously<sup>106</sup>, to break<sup>107</sup> those connections.

2) Work on goal setting<sup>108</sup>. List your daily, weekly and monthly tasks and for each, identify or set a deadline<sup>109</sup>. Then move them forward; if a deadline is Friday lunchtime, aim to complete it by the end of business (EOB) on Thursday. Break larger tasks into bite-sized<sup>110</sup> chunks<sup>111</sup>, each with its own 'micro' deadline. Be aware of<sup>112</sup> smaller units of time throughout the day, constantly<sup>113</sup> asking yourself, "what do I need to achieve in the next half hour." However, without getting side-tracked<sup>114</sup>, it is a good idea to take short, but frequent breaks<sup>115</sup> from your computer and desk during the day. Have a stretch<sup>116</sup>, go for a five-minute walk and you will be more productive, and stay hydrated<sup>117</sup>. Afternoon tiredness might kick in<sup>118</sup> just because you are thirsty.

## Prioritise and just Do It

There are many books and life hacks<sup>119</sup> on prioritisation, and it is best to choose one that you will comfortably adopt and

stick with<sup>120</sup>. Typically, techniques focus on identifying<sup>121</sup> urgency<sup>122</sup> and importance. You should mop up<sup>123</sup> simple but urgent tasks quickly to get them out of the way but do some work on important more distant<sup>124</sup> goals so that you don't leave them until they become both urgent and important – the point at which they become most stressful. That is when you will be hit with other sudden unexpected urgent demands competing for<sup>125</sup> your time.

A less-publicised technique but one that is a great antidote to procrastination is prioritisation based on dislike<sup>126</sup>. It sounds counter-intuitive<sup>127</sup> but do tasks in the order of<sup>128</sup> discomfort. The monthly figures report that is a real drudge<sup>129</sup> or a phone call to a difficult customer you know will be angry about the delay you have to inform them about – get them out of the way<sup>130</sup> and then you won't spend the day stewing over<sup>131</sup> them or have them pop into your head<sup>132</sup> every hour causing your stomach to churn<sup>133</sup>.

Follow the advice<sup>134</sup> of psychologist and bestselling author Susan Jeffers in her book, *Feel the fear and do it anyway*. If worry about consequences is what is causing you to put things off, that anxiety won't go away<sup>135</sup> through<sup>136</sup> avoidance<sup>137</sup>. It may not even go by doing something, so you might as well do it anyway. Chances are it won't be as bad as you think and you will be surprised by what you can achieve<sup>138</sup>. ■

<sup>87</sup> virtue 'vɜːtʃuː zaleta, cnota

<sup>88</sup> indeed 'ɪndɪd w rzeczy samej

<sup>89</sup> vice vaɪs tu: zły nawyk, wada

<sup>90</sup> to sign sth off tə saɪn 'sʌmθɪŋ of zakończyć coś

<sup>91</sup> disproportionate 'dɪsprə'pɔːʃənət

nieproporcjonalny

<sup>92</sup> amount of sth ə'maʊnt əv 'sʌmθɪŋ ilość czegoś

<sup>93</sup> to polish sth tə 'pɒlɪʃ 'sʌmθɪŋ dopracowywać,

szlifować, ulepszać coś

<sup>94</sup> hopeless 'həʊpləs beznadziejny

<sup>95</sup> luckily 'lʌkɪli na szczęście

<sup>96</sup> to vanquish sth tə 'væŋkwɪʃ 'sʌmθɪŋ pokonać coś

<sup>97</sup> self-aware 'self ə'weə(r) samokrytyczny,

samoświadomy

<sup>98</sup> mindfulness 'maɪndfʊlnəs uważność

<sup>99</sup> timeout 'taɪmaʊt tu: krótki odpoczynek

<sup>100</sup> to reflect on sth tə rɪ'flekt ɒn 'sʌmθɪŋ zastanowić

się nad czymś

<sup>101</sup> to replace sth with sth tə rɪ'pleɪs 'sʌmθɪŋ włożyć

'sʌmθɪŋ zastąpić coś czymś

<sup>102</sup> to chat tə tʃæt gawędzić

<sup>103</sup> celebrity gossip sə'lebrəti 'gɒsɪp plotki na temat celebrytów

<sup>104</sup> pattern 'pætn wzór, wzorzec

<sup>105</sup> trigger 'trɪɡə(r) czynnik wyzwalający

<sup>106</sup> consciously 'kɒnʃəsli świadomie

<sup>107</sup> to break sth tə breɪk 'sʌmθɪŋ tu: przełamać coś

<sup>108</sup> goal setting ɡoʊl 'setɪŋ ustalenie celu

<sup>109</sup> to set a deadline tə set ə 'dedlaɪn wyznaczać ostateczny termin

<sup>110</sup> bite-sized 'baɪt saɪzd tu: bardzo mały

<sup>111</sup> chunk tʃʌŋk kawalek

<sup>112</sup> to be aware of sth tə bi ə'weə(r) əv 'sʌmθɪŋ być świadomym czegoś

<sup>113</sup> constantly 'kɒnstəntli stale, ciągle

<sup>114</sup> to get side-tracked tə get saɪd treɪkt być rozpraszany

<sup>115</sup> break breɪk przerwa

<sup>116</sup> to have a stretch tə hæv ə streɪt rozciągnąć się

<sup>117</sup> to stay hydrated tə steɪ 'haɪdreɪtəd pozostawać nawodnionym

<sup>118</sup> to kick in tə kɪk ɪn tu: zacząć być

odczuwalnym

<sup>119</sup> life hack laɪf hæk trik, sztuczka ułatwiająca życie

<sup>120</sup> to stick with sth tə stɪk wɪð 'sʌmθɪŋ trzymać się czegoś

<sup>121</sup> to identify sth tu aɪ'dentɪfaɪ 'sʌmθɪŋ

zidentyfikować, ustalić coś

<sup>122</sup> urgency 'ɜːdʒənsɪ pilność, nagłość

<sup>123</sup> to mop sth up tə mɒp 'sʌmθɪŋ ʌp pozbyć się czegoś

<sup>124</sup> distant 'dɪstənt odległy

<sup>125</sup> to compete for sth tə kəm'pi:t fɔ(r) 'sʌmθɪŋ współzawodniczyć, konkurować o coś

<sup>126</sup> dislike dɪs'laɪk niechęć

<sup>127</sup> counterintuitive 'kaʊntərɪn'tjuːtɪv sprzeczny z intuicją

<sup>128</sup> in the order of sth ɪn ðə 'ɔːdə(r) əv 'sʌmθɪŋ

w kolejności czegoś

<sup>129</sup> drudge drɒdʒ harówka, nieprzyjemny obowiązek

<sup>130</sup> to get sth out of the way tə get 'sʌmθɪŋ aʊt əv ðə weɪ wyeliminować, usunąć coś

<sup>131</sup> to stew over sth tə stjuː ə'ʊvə(r) 'sʌmθɪŋ

denerwować się czymś

<sup>132</sup> to pop into one's head tə pɒp 'ɪntə wʌnz hed

przychodzić na myśl

<sup>133</sup> to churn tə tʃɜːn tu: boleć

<sup>134</sup> advice əd'vaɪs po/rada

<sup>135</sup> to go away tə ɡəʊ ə'weɪ zniknąć

<sup>136</sup> through sth θruː 'sʌmθɪŋ poprzez coś

<sup>137</sup> avoidance ə'vɔɪdəns unikanie

<sup>138</sup> to achieve sth tu ə'tʃɪv 'sʌmθɪŋ osiągnąć coś