

Wasting time...

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are spending their time," says Walker, adding that this baseline is extremely helpful in letting students know where to begin saving time for more school work."

Kolbus says he will always be a bit of procrastinator, but since his crisis last year he has learned to manage time a bit better.

"It's just one of those things that you have to get slowly into," he says. "I think it's normal to procrastinate in university but what you learn at some point is that it is not necessary to pull an all-nighter. You don't need to abuse your body like that -- it screws up your sleeping patterns and that's far from healthy."

Kolbus says that although he still regularly seeks extensions, he manages to stay on top of his assignments and get at least some of the work done before hand. As for the tips from a master of the craft, Kolbus says that the most important thing to do if you want extensions is to develop good relationships with professors beforehand.

"Professors are usually really understand because they don't have the desire to have an extra paper to mark when they have forty that just came in. But if you know your paper is going to be late, it's best to talk to the prof before it's due -- it just shows respect to their authority."

Managing time

As for the root of his procrastination, Kolbus says that he simply doesn't see time as all that important of a factor.

"There's always more time," he says. "When other people are working away on their essays I'm out having fun doing things I enjoy. But when they're done, they go out and have fun and I'm still working on my late essay. So it balances out in the end."

"They say time is money, but I don't know of anyone who is working 24 hours a day. So why can't I make my money so to speak at a different time?"

Walker says that Kolbus's attitude towards time is common among procrastinators.

"Procrastinators say that time is to be experience, not controlled. Time managers get their real sense of mastery by controlling their lives. Procrastinators see time very differently -- they live much more in the moment so that these things that require planning just don't sink in."

She says the simplest thing most procrastinators can do to cure the worst ills of their vice is to read up on or talk to somebody about time management.

"Time management is simply a system of taking your time, figuring out where you waste it, and taking control of that time so you have it when you need it," she said. "Time is like money -- there's only so much of it. You don't think of it when you're young, but time really is a resource."

But for now, Kolbus seems pretty at ease with his relaxed approach to time and school.

"It's not as if my finger is swollen and full of blood and I keep putting off seeing the doctor. Things that are pretty important I tend not to procrastinate on. But most university course work can wait."

"Of course there are a few things I wish I could stop procrastinating on," he concludes with a smile, "I'm 21 turning 22 this spring, and I don't have my drivers license."

"It's not that I don't want to drive. I just haven't gotten around to getting it yet."

- With files from Dr. Lilly Walker and the U of M Counselling Service

Conquering Procrastination

It is rarely easier to do tomorrow what you feel like putting off today. Nevertheless, most procrastinators repeatedly get away with telling themselves exactly that. Procrastination is far from the most difficult habit to kick, but it is somewhat tricky. That is because procrastination is more than simply putting something off -- it is often a symptom of poor time-management skills, self-doubt, self-downing, discomfort doing, and irrational guilt.

The following personal analysis can guide you in developing strategies for avoiding the pitfalls of procrastination that prevent you being the success you desire.

Procrastination Types: Which One Am I? Read the descriptions of the four portraits of procrastination. Select the one that most clearly describes you.

Personal Analysis: Reflect about your pattern of procrastination. Now that you have identified your personal procrastination portrait you can more clearly assess the benefits and costs of this pattern. As you evaluate the benefits of procrastination, think about how this pattern serves you. Be honest in your assessment. Consider carefully, the costs of your procrastination including identifying some of the problems resulting from this pattern. Record these.

Pattern: In order to more fully understand the primary factors that feed your procrastination, it is useful to analyse three aspects of your identity: BET - Behaviours, Emotions, and Thinking.

Behaviour: Describe what you procrastinate about. What do you do? What don't you do? Is there a pattern?

Emotions: Determine your fears, fantasies and other typical feelings that associated with your procrastination.

Thinking: Discern the typical thinking associated with procrastination. What are your usual thoughts?

After you have identified these components in your personal pattern, you can develop small steps which can result in significant changes in your pattern. Systematically changing these components allows you greater personal control over elements of your pattern that interfere with your success.

Plans: You are ready to take the important step in putting your insights into action. Now that you are more self-aware, you are more fully prepared for this action-focused next step. Answer the following questions as a way to direct your efforts and assist you in selecting the resources which will facilitate your success in taking charge of your life.

What would you like to change?

What would you need in order to make your plan work?

What resources will help ensure you are successful?

Now What?

With your increased awareness of your personal procrastination pattern, what will you do next? There are three possible routes for unlocking the blocks preventing you from making the changes you desire and achieving the success you deserve.

Route 1: Learn more about yourself and procrastination.

* Web Sites - The counselling service has a list of procrastination resources or visit <http://www.irebt.org/essays/procrast1.html> for an in-depth article on procrastination.

* Books - *Procrastination: Why you do it, to do about it* by Jane Burka and Lenora Yuen; *Overcoming Procrastination* by Albert Ellis and William Knaus; *Getting Things Done* by Edwin Bliss; *How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life* by Alan Lakein; *Keys to Success: How to Achieve Your Goals* by Carol Carter

* Research Articles - available through the counselling service website

Route 2: Attend an information session. Check information posters for the schedule for the Brown Bag Discussion series and Procrastination Information sessions offered by the University of Manitoba Counselling Service.

Route 3: Talk to a Procrastination expert. Drop by the Counselling Service during intake times to consult with a professional who can assist you in developing a personalized plan for gaining greater control of your life.

Select your preferred route and begin today your personal plan for managing your procrastination.

This procrastination conquering plan is excerpted from an article on Procrastination by Dr. Lilly Walker. For the full article, please visit <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/counselling/success/procrast.html>