

7 Reasons Why Procrastination Can Be Good At Times

by Lale Byquist

There are two types of procrastination – active and passive. If you postpone doing something, and you choose another duty instead, it's active procrastination. But if you stop working on your task and do nothing instead, it's passive type, and it gives you nothing but time wasting.

So, there are 7 reasons not to be afraid of active procrastination:

1. Procrastination Helps to Prevent You from Burning Out

The work environment is competitive, and it increases the risk of stress and depression. In fact, working day in and day out can give you nothing but a burnout.

To begin with, let's find out what burnout is.

Burnout is an exhaustion which can be described as an emotional and mental contrition.

If you can't understand whether you have burnout or not, pay attention to the list of its symptoms:

- a lack of motivation
- you feel tired
- no creativity
- reduced work performance

If you have a big number of tasks to do, shifting from one to another, you have a lack of energy and motivation to accomplish these duties on a good level. This is where procrastination can help.

Here comes a good way of procrastinating:

Taking a pause when needed is a way to distract from the work and, therefore, improve working performance. People who can shift work and entertainment tend to be less stressed, and they avoid burning out with ease.

2. You Can Improve Creativity

Most people would agree that multitasking is a normal thing for humans. However, it's hard for our brains to handle two or more tasks at the same time... Here comes procrastination.

But--procrastination can boost your creativity, according to studies.

Although putting things off seems to be a bad habit, some people can make the most out of it. The most creative decisions come when your brain isn't functioning as efficiently as usual. When you're tired or postpone some things, your brain starts using exhausted resources, and 'unfiltered' ideas come to your mind.

When you take a pause, you distract from the work process, and it helps to restart the brain functions. Stepping back for a while can show things from a different angle, and you can find creative solutions instead of the most obvious ones.

3. Value Your Time and Efforts

Believe it or not, procrastinating helps to value your time and efforts. It's a well-known fact that people who can allocate time can achieve success with ease, and procrastination helps to realize the exact amount of time and effort you spend.

When you postpone doing things, you understand how much time have you spent on accomplishing these duties and, therefore, start thinking about the value of your time.

How many things could you do during this period? Did you spend this time efficiently?

If you have procrastinated at least once, you realize how bad it's for your productivity, so you value time and efforts you spend while working normally. It's a good way to become more productive at work and identify whether you're procrastinating next time.

After all, knowing the value of YOUR time and efforts is a key to wise time management.

4. Complete The Task on a Better Level

The truth is simple: you can improve the quality of the task by not acting in a rush.

All people start multitasking from time to time, and it decreases the quality of your work as you give less attention to each task. Moreover, once you realize you can't complete the task on a proper level, it makes you feel sad and unmotivated to improve the quality of it.

Working on the same task without breaks, you have nothing to draw inspiration from. Thus, procrastinate for a while is a good choice if you want to finish your task on a better level. The quality of a given task is improving when you give it time, and it's not a secret that delayed work doesn't get the same level of quality.

Refresh your thoughts and come back to the task, once you're in the mood for it. Plus, you will have extra time to make up more creative and unusual ideas, see more alternative ways to finish the task.

Giving something a time is a good way to enhance quality, and it's absolutely important for people who want to achieve business success.

5. Give You Time to Getting Feedback

Sometimes we're pressed for time at work, and we can't stop working on a particular task. However, it can be the sacrifice of quality as you don't have time to get feedback from colleagues.

The truth is that feedback helps you learn a lot and, therefore, grow professionally. If you can receive productive feedback, you can avoid making the same mistakes in the future. Plus, waiting for feedback, you give yourself time to think about your work and find out what you have done well.

It's not a secret that it costs a lot to analyze the quality of your work as it's hard to stay objective when it comes to reading your work. Thus, getting a constructive feedback is a must, and while procrastinating, your colleagues have time to suggest some changes and improvements. It means increasing the quality of the work.

6. It Helps to Get More Things Done

If you know how to use your procrastination the right way, you won't spend time on chronophages (time eaters that give you nothing but a lack of time). You can distract from the task you're not in the mood for, and focus on completing other things that are still important.

For instance, being a freelancer, you can do housekeeping tasks to spend your time procrastinating well. Plus, you can move back to the unfinished task you've left previously. Thus, postponing tasks can be a way to complete already-existing duties.

The main idea is to make your procrastination active which means using free time to accomplish other duties. What is more, when you work on absolutely another idea, you might be surprised at the creativity boost you get as you distract from a difficult task, give yourself time, and get more things done in a good way.

7. You Feel Better and Happier

All people need a break sometimes. It's important to have some time to breathe a sigh of relief, get rid of pressure, and dedicate some time to your thoughts and life.

That is how procrastination may help you feel better and happier.

Although you don't have to procrastinate on every task you have, there is nothing bad if it comes from time to time. Don't be to blame for it, simply give yourself time.

Obviously, if you don't waste this time but use it wise to accomplish other things, you will be astonished at your productivity. It's still possible to stay productive while postponing doing other important tasks. In addition, it's a way to relax and boost inspiration.

Once you're well-rested, you have more desire to complete the task. The good idea of procrastination is that it makes you feel better and happier as you don't put pressure on yourself.

How Does Procrastination Affect Your Health And Well-being

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Procrastinating can affect your health in two ways – one involves stress, the other involves behaviors that have a poor impact on health. Putting off important tasks can result in greater stress as you rush to meet (or miss) a deadline. Stress, in turn, is linked to various health issues. People who procrastinate are more likely to sleep poorly, have higher levels of anxiety and depression and lower immunity. Research even shows that people who have cardiovascular disease or hypertension tend to procrastinate more.

You know you should be working on that presentation but can't seem to resist checking the score for the game one last time. Or wait, maybe you can get down to it after you get a cup of coffee. We've all done it – putting off chores, dawdling away a whole working day, or leaving important tasks too late and then rushing last minute to complete them. And it sure has an effect on performance, whether it's at work or school. But did you also know you could be putting your health at risk by procrastinating?

The Procrastination–Health Connect

There seem to be essentially two paths through which procrastinating can affect health – one involves stress while the other involves behaviors that have a poor impact on health. Procrastination also seems to have a role to play in anxiety and depression.

The Impact Of Stress

Many studies have shown a link between procrastination and stress. Putting off important tasks can result in stress as you rush to meet a deadline at work or miss paying bills. Stress, in turn, is related to various illnesses ranging from headaches, flu, backaches, and even a sore throat to conditions like heart disease and high blood pressure. Procrastinators also tend to have a poor self-image and are harder on themselves (poor self-compassion), and these too contribute to elevated stress levels. There are higher chances of procrastinators resorting to drugs, smoking, and alcohol as coping tools to deal with stress and disengage from reality.

Stress also happens to be a common thread in many of the other health issues procrastinators face.

Sleep Quality

People who procrastinate regularly have been found to sleep poorly. They sleep fewer hours at night, find it tougher to stay awake during the day, and might need to use medicines to sleep well. This is because they tend to experience more stress and restlessness, which in turn affects their sleep quality.

Cardiovascular Health And Hypertension

Studies show that procrastination may be one of the factors that increase vulnerability to cardiovascular diseases and hypertension. Procrastinators tend to cope badly with these conditions and to manage them poorly. They may also not deal well with stress, an important factor in cardiovascular health, using dysfunctional ways to cope which, unfortunately, lead back to elevated stress levels. For instance, procrastinators are more likely to engage in negative and critical thinking and blame themselves. They may also shy away from taking action to deal with whatever is causing the problem.

Health And Immunity Hazards

When compared to non-procrastinators, procrastinators have been found to have low immunity and tend to fall sick more often. This can be linked to poor wellness behaviors such as a reluctance to eat right, exercise regularly, or sleep on time. Health maintenance is also neglected, as they fail to attend to their medical needs, say getting dental care or shots, routine checkups, or hospital visits for illnesses in time.

Stress plays a part here too. The inclination to put off important responsibilities tend to build up stress as the deadline for the task approaches. For instance, a student who has been putting off working on a term paper will feel more pressure as the deadline for submitting it draws closer. The stress and cortisol hormone buildup wreak havoc on the immune system, exposing the body to illnesses. As one study showed, toward the end of the semester, with deadlines and exams fast approaching, students who procrastinated not only showed greater stress but fell ill and visited the doctor more often.

Mental health takes a beating too. Poor self-esteem, anxiety attacks, and even depression are common among procrastinators, with one issue feeding off the other.

Why Do We Procrastinate?

There are many theories – some of us may be seeking the rush of excitement that comes with finishing something off at the last minute, while others put off things due to a fear of failure. Strangely enough, some people might even fear success. Then there are people who procrastinate because they simply don't want to take a decision. We also tend to put off doing things when we have poor self-discipline or are impulsive.

We're also more likely to delay things that we find disagreeable or if the rewards for our action aren't immediate and will only materialize in the future.

What Can We Do About It?

An interesting way to psyche yourself into getting things done is by making the future seem more immediate. Studies show that you tend to view the future as closer while using a smaller unit of time to measure it. For instance, thinking of a deadline in terms of days rather than months can make it seem closer – it looms closer if you think of it as thirty days away rather than a whole month away.

Tactics like being accountable to someone else may also help. For example, committing to a friend that you'll finish that report before the weekend may get you down to work. If something seems too daunting, breaking it up into smaller parts can also be useful.

In any case, if you've been procrastinating, the important thing to remember is that beating yourself up about it will not help. A study found that students who forgave themselves for putting off preparing for an exam were less likely to delay preparing for the next exam than those who felt bad about themselves. So cut yourself some slack, but do it right away!