

TIPS

The procrastination loop

Have you ever wondered why something that should only take you ten minutes is left undone even after two months? Whether its clearing out drawer space, or organising your kitchen utensils, one tends to put off mundane tasks until they are entirely impossible to avoid. Call it a case of bad prioritisation or just casual procrastination, the bottom line remains that tending to simple household chores are often much harder than you think.

To understand why this behaviour is so common, one needs to realise that the underlying cause is a complex case of both emotional and psychological dynamics. Humans are more prone to prioritise tasks that give them instant gratification over those that are long term. Household chores such as ironing or taking out the trash are hardly as rewarding as watching a movie. However, if you think long term, they definitely contribute to the overall cleanliness and maintenance of the house.

If you notice, you'll see a pattern for otherwise productive people when it comes to mundane chores- a tendency to avoid tasks, and yet continually stress over them for days. While task delaying is a common phenomenon among most people, this behaviour can become worrying if it shows up in every aspect of your life. "A lifestyle of avoidance" can eventually have a negative impact on one's health and relationships.

The average procrastinator is usually lulled into delaying because of the time the chores occur, which is often towards the end of the day. Thanks to the stressful

nature of jobs, people tend to suffer from a phenomenon called "decision fatigue." The countless decisions at work can wear the brain out and make it difficult for a person to exert self-control by the end of the day. So, after a long day of work, when you don't feel like doing the dishes, you genuinely just don't have any energy left to force yourself to do them.

The dilemma hardly ends there. Soon enough, you're constantly thinking of all the times you could have done the stuff instead of putting it off for later. And if you are somewhat of a productive person in general, the guilt and shame will eat at you constantly. What worsens the situation is when one begins to consider their bad habits as a sign of their own moral failings. And that is when these bad habits become a stronger reflection of a person than just another problem that need to be solved.

Now that you know why you tend to procrastinate, how about a few tricks to ward off procrastination? For starters, recognise what you don't enjoy doing. Then, try to think of it in a more positive context to make the task more fun. Turn on the music while cleaning your closet or vacuuming your carpet if it helps to keep things interesting. Being conscious of your habits definitely makes a difference. But what makes a bigger difference is your attitude towards the task. If you're convinced that you would be too exhausted to do the dishes by the end of the day, no amount of music can change your mind!

By Adiba Mahbub Proma



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