
BREAKING

THE BONDS

OF

PROCRASTINATION

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AN INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

There is no escape from procrastination. We all will, at some point, put off something we have to do in favor of doing something more enjoyable or less important. Some kinds of procrastination are unavoidable, however, and not all are detrimental to our success. By understanding why we procrastinate, we can learn to manage our time more productively, and therefore more abundantly, in our daily lives

In this book, I will share with you some of my insights concerning procrastination. I explore reasons why we procrastinate, different types of procrastination, and methods of how to “procrastinate well” in order to bring more abundance and prosperity into our lives.

I've learned these lessons and techniques during my own transformational journey, and am pleased to be able to share them with you now. So get started today to have the life of freedom you dream of!

In abundance,



Liz Wolfe is a skilled and energetic motivational speaker, coach and trainer. For over 20 years she has empowered hundreds of people to achieve their dreams with her unique system of coaching: “A Clear Vision + Purposeful Action - Hidden Barriers = Breakthrough Results.” She has reached thousands more through her online abundance meditation and videos and has published dozens of articles on self-development, transformation, and prosperity.

As a corporate trainer and executive coach, she creates customized curriculum designed to increase both personal and organizational effectiveness.

Married for 20 years, Liz and her husband live in New York City where they have two wonderful children, ages 13 and 16. She plays the ukulele and sings in a bluegrass band called the West-side Irregulars.

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THE LIFE OF A **PRODUCTIVE** PROCRASTINATOR

It starts innocently enough. I "just" want to go on to Facebook to check one thing. When I finally emerge from my Facebook haze, 20 minutes have gone by. "Not a problem," I think. "I still have enough time to get that report done for this afternoon." I open my email inbox to find the report that I'm supposed to be working on when I notice an urgent email.

"This will just take a minute," I think again. "Let me respond now before this turns into a bigger problem." Only, it turns into a bigger problem anyway.

After another hour has gone by, and my deadline approaches, I kick in to full gear. "I work better under pressure," I tell myself. Originally, I had envisioned the report to be a full-color bound manuscript, which was why I put it off until I had enough time to work on it, but now I'm lucky if I can get it done and printed out on the printer in my office before the meeting starts. It's not the perfect manuscript I originally envisioned, but it's presentable.

"Sheesh!" I think as I run down the hall to the conference room, stapler in hand. "I do this to myself all the time!

Why am I so lazy

when I know I should be starting my projects way ahead of time! I really have to get my act together!"

**"I WORK BETTER
UNDER PRESSURE"**

Ah, another day in the life of a productive procrastinator.

I'm full of ambition, I know I have talent, I've actually accomplished quite a few things in my life, but I also know that sometimes I put things off, can't make timely decisions, and dread doing certain tasks until I have people breathing down my neck to get them done (the IRS, for instance.) I also have big dreams but I'm so busy putting out fires I can't seem to make any headway on them.

Perhaps you can relate.

I Googled the word "procrastination" and was inundated with sites - almost 900,000 of them! Many of them purport to fix procrastination by simply following a few straightforward steps. But that many different approaches can be a bit daunting. Oh that it were as simple as changing your work habits, increasing your



motivation, or becoming more disciplined in your day-to-day life. Kind of like how we know that the key to a healthy lifestyle is eating a low fat diet, drinking in moderation, reducing stress and exercising regularly. Sounds simple enough. So then why is obesity one of the world's biggest health problems?

As the saying goes, "If it were that easy, everyone would be doing it." I assume that if you're reading this guide, procrastination is at least somewhat of an issue for you as a roadblock to accomplishing your goals. You're not alone. Studies have shown that 64% of people struggle with procrastination. Where to begin?

**THE KEY IS NOT TO AVOID
PROCRASTINATION, BUT TO
PROCRASTINATE WELL**

Start by accepting that there's no way to eliminate procrastination.

Paul Graham, a successful businessman, writer and investor (www.paulgraham.com), presents a fresh take on procrastination:

"Most people who write about procrastination write about how to cure it. But this is, strictly speaking, impossible. There are an infinite number of things you could be doing. No matter what you work on, you're not working on everything else. So the question is not how to avoid procrastination, but how to procrastinate well.

There are three variants of procrastination, depending on what you do instead of working on something: you could work on ...

- (a) Nothing
- (b) Something less important
- (c) Something more important

That last type, I'd argue, is good procrastination."

There you have it. There is no escape from procrastination. So, how to do it well?

Understanding why we procrastinate

I have observed that people think negatively about themselves when they are procrastinating, generally interpreting their behavior as being "lazy." However, I'll assert that there is NO SUCH THING AS LAZY! Yes, watching TV for two hours when you know perfectly well that you need to get your taxes done is a big old waste of time.

But are you doing it because you are lazy? I say no.

Lazy is a label that we use to describe ourselves when we don't understand why we don't just get up and do something useful, and often times the voice telling us that we're lazy is really just echoing someone else's voice (our parents, our teacher, our old boss...)

OK, so if it's not laziness, what is it? It's a much deeper, more powerful, and invisible force: **resistance**.

Instead of beating yourself up for being lazy, start by asking yourself, "What am I resisting?" It's a powerful way to take the focus off of what's wrong with you and instead take a look at what's not working. You'll be surprised at how effective this is.

It turns out that procrastination proliferates for different reasons. I group them into four distinct areas:

FOUR TYPES OF PROCRASTINATION

1. Avoiding

Avoiding goes hand in hand with resistance. Whatever it is, we just don't want to face it. So we stall. And delay. And hem. And haw. The ironic part is that most of what we are avoiding is fantasy.

For instance, we may have a fear of failure (FEAR = Fantasy Evidence Appearing Real.) However, if I never try it, am I not pretty much guaranteeing I will fail?

The task may be distasteful or boring. Who among us likes to do our taxes? Do I have a choice? No. Will I get a refund? Probably. Did I just spend 2 hours checking email instead of calling my accountant? Yes. Will I still have to do it? Yes.

Since I no longer have the excuse of being lazy, I recognize that I'm resisting, and give myself permission to get it done now so that I can get it off my chest.

Another way we avoid is by being productive.

Yep, I can actually procrastinate by getting other things done. For instance, I might cross off many of the smaller items on my to-do list before tackling the big things. You know, items such as cleaning the bathtub.

On his excellent site www.structuredprocrastination.com John Perry writes: "Procrastinators seldom do absolutely nothing; they do margin-



ally useful things, like gardening or sharpening pencils or making a diagram of how they reorganize their files when they get around to it."

PROCRASTINATORS SELDOM DO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING

And let's not forget the old fear-of-success avoidance technique. If I do it well once, won't people expect me to do it again, and just as well the second time around? Who needs that kind of pressure?

2. Thrill-seeking

All those college years proved it: I'm most creative at 5:00 AM after pulling an all-nighter preparing a paper for my 9:00 AM class. Suddenly all my ideas come in to sharp focus and the words just seem to flow. The euphoric rush of getting it all done and printed by 8:30 AM is actually, it turns out, almost fun.

And why wait until midnight to start typing? Because I am a "time optimist."

I always think it's going to take less time to do something than it actually does. Does it work out some of the time? Maybe 5% of the time. Those are the times that reinforce my behavior the other 95% of the time.

3. Indecisiveness

By being resistant to making a decision, things often get decided for me, and then, I don't have to take responsibility for the decision. (Oddly, whichever option I choose, I'll later find out some information that leads me to believe I should have chosen differently.)

4. Perfectionism

There will never, ever, ever be enough time available for me to do the perfect job I was hoping to do.

John Perry writes: "Procrastinating is a way of giving myself permission to do a less than perfect job on a task that didn't require a perfect job. But when the deadline is near, or even a bit in the past, there is no longer time to do a perfect job. I have to just sit down and do an imperfect, but adequate job. The fantasies of perfection are replaced by the fantasies of utter failure. If only I had been able to give myself permission to do an imperfect job right at the outset."



ARE YOU A TIME OPTIMIST?

Learning to “procrastinate well.”

So where to go from here? Is there anything specific you can do to improve your productivity?

Here are some ideas worth emphasizing:

1. Realize you are procrastinating and determine why.

Awareness is the first step. By being aware that you are procrastinating, you are now in a position to take action. Say to yourself, “Here I go again, procrastinating. I wonder what I am resisting right now?”

You can use the four types of procrastination outlined above as a guideline to learn why you are procrastinating. This may change according to the particular situation.

2. Commit only to the first step.

Being overwhelmed plays a big part in why we don't start or finish projects. If your goal is a hefty one and too far out in the future, break it down into smaller, more manageable tasks. Then ask yourself, what is the very next thing that I can do toward my goal? Commit to spending just 10 minutes on that task. I've found that once I get started, I go beyond the original 10 minutes I had committed to. The ensuing experience of accomplishment inspires me to continue what I've started.

3. Realize that perfectionism is an unobtainable fantasy.

Again, Perry's words ring true: “You have to get in the habit of forcing yourself to analyze, at the time you accept a task, to consider the costs and benefits of doing a less than perfect job. You need to ask the questions: how useful would a perfect job be here? How much more useful than a merely adequate job? Or even a half-assed job? ... And the answer, in an enormous number of cases, will be that a less than perfect job will do just fine, and moreover it's all I am ever going to do anyway. So I give myself permission to do a less than perfect job, rather than waiting until it is overdue. I may as well do it now.”

That is, give yourself permission to do what you're going to do anyway, an imperfect job. Instead of focusing on perfection, focus on having whatever you're doing be an authentic expression of your perception of excellence.



PERFECTION IS UNOBTAINABLE

4. Don't do it at all.

Sometimes things just work themselves out and you don't have to do them.

I know this seems counter to all that I've been writing about, but it's entirely likely that many of the items slowing you down are in Graham's unacknowledged (type B) "something less important" category and letting them go will get you closer to (type A) "something more important."

**DELEGATE, AUTOMATE, SIMPLIFY,
OR ELIMINATE THE TASK**

Examine the reasons you're procrastinating, and make a choice about whether this task is worth prioritizing or if you can delegate, automate, simplify, or eliminate it.

5. Get connected with your vision.

Psychologists tell us that one reason we procrastinate is because we think of our future selves as strangers. We don't have a current experience of what our lives will be like in the future. Thus our level of motivation is lower, as we are disconnected from our vision.

As comedian Jerry Seinfeld said in one of his stand up routines, "I never get enough sleep. I stay up late at night, because I'm Night Guy. Night Guy wants to stay up late. What about getting up after five hours sleep? Oh, that's Morning Guy's problem. That's not my problem. I'm Night Guy. I stay up as late as I want. So you get up in the morning and you're exhausted and groggy and say, 'I hate that Night Guy!' See, Night Guy always screws Morning Guy. There's nothing Morning Guy can do. The only thing Morning Guy can do is oversleep often enough so that Day Guy loses his job, and Night Guy has no money to go out anymore."

Place yourself in the future and see your life from the perspective of having already accomplished whatever you are putting off. Revel in the satisfaction of having gotten it done, and then bring that experience to the present. That will put you in the frame of mind to get started.

6. Make a meaningful promise with a deadline, and declare it publicly.

As Confucius once said, "If your words are not humble, it will be difficult to put them into action." By declaring your promise publicly (and social media makes doing this very easy) you will gain the benefit of support from others combined with some self-made pressure to get moving (as we time optimists know works so well.)

Dream big, promise big, and deliver big. **What are you waiting for?**

LEARN MORE TODAY

Liz Wolfe Coaching

Have you been doing all the "right" things but continue to be frustrated because you're not getting the results you want? Do you think if you were more "disciplined", had more time, worked harder, or got that big break you'd finally get those results?

It's no surprise that you're frustrated. You've been given the wrong information!

Do any of these sound familiar?

- You're certified and have been trained up the wazoo but are still perceived as if you weren't
- You've gone to endless networking events but the connections you made don't develop into anything meaningful
- You feel like you're stuck in the same pattern of incremental progress that never really takes off
- You've read countless books and articles on how to stay motivated and stop procrastinating - but there has not been any increase in your productivity.

We've all heard the saying: insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. That's why having more time, more favorable circumstances or more discipline isn't going to get you where you want to go.

Get personal about achieving your goals with private coaching sessions with Liz. Using a combination of accountability and discovery, Liz will work with you to create a clear vision, take purposeful action, and uncover the hidden barriers that hold you back.

Sign up for a free one-on-one 30 minute coaching session with Liz. Email her at liz@abundance-prosperity.com and she will contact you to set up a time to speak.

To learn more about all the resources Liz Wolfe Coaching offers to aid you in creating the abundance you desire visit lizwolfecoaching.com.

Other ways to connect to Liz Wolfe Coaching

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