Suggestions for Overcoming Procrastination

1. While it may be normal to experience negative feelings about a particular task or project, work to reframe the situation by focusing on the process, not the project.

2. Set yourself up for success by first finding an environment free from distractions. For example, you may prefer a noisy coffee shop or you may need a quiet library space. If needed, use noise cancelling headphones.

3. Develop simple habits that enable you to engage in a process of steps that leads to completion of a task or project.

4. Make sure that you are confident in the skills you need to complete a particular task or project. If not, seek out advice from a Program Director, peer, mentor, etc. as needed as you progress through your process.

5. To enhance your likelihood of success, when thinking about your process, include the following:
   a. Develop a specific plan of action for the process you will utilize.
   b. Cues (schedule a reminder using your phone or set out specific resources to remind you to work on a particular part of your process)
   c. Routine (based on our conversation, before you go home, visit the coffee shop to work on a task for short bursts of time, for example. Set yourself up for success by creating automatic routines that limit decision making only to the task at hand, thus reducing temptations that take you away from your process.)
   d. Reward (find ways to reward yourself for progress)
   e. Belief (begin to reframe and change your underlying beliefs about a task or project. For example, reframe the task to something that is going to lead to your future success as a leader or will enable you to provide better patient care.)

6. Avoid focusing on the larger task or project. (This may trigger “pain,” that may lead to procrastination.)

7. Put forth your best efforts in short periods of time by utilizing the Pomodoro Technique. For example, spend 25 minutes intensely working on one component of a scholarly project or documentation. At the end of 25 minutes, take a 5 minute break (organize your papers, walk around the block, check sports scores or weather, etc.), then repeat the process for two or three more iterations until you need to take a longer break. *(Note: You can find Pomodoro apps for smart phones.)*

Additional Resources/Research:

- Procrastination, University of Nevada School of Medicine: [http://medicine.nevada.edu/student-affairs/academic-learning-center/procrastination](http://medicine.nevada.edu/student-affairs/academic-learning-center/procrastination)
- Blog Summary of Research-based Recommendations: Overcome Procrastination: [http://www.academiccoachingandwriting.org/academic-writing/academic-writing-blog/iii-overcome-procrastination](http://www.academiccoachingandwriting.org/academic-writing/academic-writing-blog/iii-overcome-procrastination) (This blog summarizes tips from Robert Boice’s book, “Procrastination and Blocking,” and offers strategies to overcome blocking when working on writing or scholarly projects.
- The Power of Habit: [https://www.amazon.com/Power-Habit-What-Life-Business/dp/081298160X?ie=UTF8&*Version*=1&*entries*=0](https://www.amazon.com/Power-Habit-What-Life-Business/dp/081298160X?ie=UTF8&*Version*=1&*entries*=0) (This book is recommended for developing a habit or routine to help tackle procrastination.)
- Links to additional resources from Psychology Today: The Procrastination Equation: [https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-procrastination-equation](https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-procrastination-equation)

Apps

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- **Toodledo** *(Lists, track habits, collaborate)*
- **LifeTick** *(Set goals, monitor progress, track habits)*
- **21Habit** *(Make or break habit)*
- **Remember the Milk** *(To do list, manage tasks)*
- **Joe’s Goals** *(Habit tracker)*
- **Stickk** *(Set and achieve goals with)*