



Avoid “Procrastination” – *Do it Now!* By Min. Gerry Hickman

Procrastination is a stumbling block to better time management. It can lead to stress and delayed productivity. Some tasks in life can wait but there are many that could be done, without delay, to prevent the task(s) from becoming overwhelming. Completing tasks (especially large and high priority ones) can be very rewarding and provide a great sense of accomplishment.

Methods for breaking the Procrastination Habit:

There are a number of time management methods that can be used to help you break the procrastination habit. Such as:

The Salami Method – When you first look at salami it’s not that appetizing, but if you slice it into smaller, manageable pieces, it’s easier to eat. This method assumes that you break major tasks into smaller, manageable ones and finish them one task at a time. The key is to make each small task so simple and quick to complete that you may be finished in a very short time.

The Swiss Cheese Method – Swiss cheese has many holes. This method assumes that it is possible to get a task started in five minutes or less. It doesn’t really matter which instant task you select, as long as it’s easy and related to your top priority task. If it takes 20 small tasks (Swiss cheese holes) to not feel overwhelmed, that’s okay. The key is to make each small task so simple and quick to complete that you may finish in minutes.

The Balance Sheet Method – There are two sides to every balance sheet—assets and liabilities. This method assumes that you evaluate, in writing, the task you are avoiding. On the left side make a list of the reasons you are procrastinating. On the right side list all of the benefits that you will receive if you complete the task. You will find that the benefits outweigh the reason you are procrastinating.

Start Today:

Procrastination is usually caused by behavior patterns or habits such as fear or anxiety. If we change our habits or ways of thinking, we can overcome procrastination effectively.

If you struggle with procrastination:

Decide that you want/need to change – Make a decision to get started today.

Get motivated – Think of all the benefits you will receive when you beat this habit.

Take Action – Force yourself today to do one thing that you have been putting off. Focus on the unpleasant tasks on your “TO DO” List. Tackling the most unpleasant task can set the tone for your entire day.

Get Help – Don’t be afraid to ask for help if the task(s) requires assistance and someone is willing to help. Sometimes another person can help motivate you and can also offer great suggestions on how to approach the task(s) more effectively.

Personal Experience:

I have used the methods above and others throughout the years, to help me deal with procrastination. I also discovered the root causes for why I avoided unpleasant or overwhelming tasks—realizing that it was a result of my thinking patterns, habits, and circumstances that ultimately lead to fear or frustration. I prayed, meditated on scriptures, and decided to tackle important and urgent tasks immediately or as soon as possible to prevent myself from being weighed down. Finally, I learned that if I prioritize tasks, and break large tasks into more manageable ones, I would be more productive.

Some Scriptures Related to Procrastination: The book of Proverbs refers to a person who procrastinates as being a sluggard or lazy and states the consequences of procrastination. (Proverbs. 13:4; 12:24, 20:4).