

# Put Off Procrastinating!! Workbook

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## Procrastination Tasks & Goals Table

<b>Work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meeting deadlines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Making phone calls</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attending meetings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starting or finishing projects</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Being assertive with colleagues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paperwork</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Job applications</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research or reading</li> </ul>	<b>Household</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Daily chores (dishes, tidying, cooking, etc)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bigger chores (vacuuming, washing, ironing, etc)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spring cleaning the house</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Household projects</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance and fixing things</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grocery shopping</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gardening</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Running errands</li> </ul>
<b>Study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meeting deadlines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attending classes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Homework</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Studying for exams</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research or reading</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Asking questions or requesting help</li> </ul>	<b>Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Making medical appointments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attending medical appointments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Changing diet</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starting an exercise routine</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Losing weight</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quitting smoking/alcohol/drugs</li> </ul>
<b>Financial</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Opening mail</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paying the bills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Book keeping</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tax return</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paying back debts</li> </ul>	<b>Social, Family &amp; Relationships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Making phone calls</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Replying to invitations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spending time with others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arranging get togethers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attending get togethers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Discussing problems</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starting a course you always wanted to do</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Starting a hobby</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Getting involved in something spiritual</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation</li> </ul>	<b>Decision Making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Making plans</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Committing to something new</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choosing between options</li> </ul>
<b>Others</b>	

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## Procrastination Activities Table

<b>Pleasurable Tasks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Movies, TV, DVDs</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Reading Books, Magazines, Newspapers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Computer games</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Surfing the Net</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Music</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shopping</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Beach</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies (art, craft, etc)</li></ul>	<b>Lower Priority Tasks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Exercising</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Paperwork</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sorting things</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Tidying</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Other less important projects</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Checking emails</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Researching a topic of interest</li></ul>
<b>Socialising</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Seeing friends, family, partner</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Phoning friends, family, partner</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Going out</li></ul>	<b>Daydreaming</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Thinking about the past or future</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Imagining the task/goal is already finished</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Imagining a better life</li></ul>
<b>Distractions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Eating</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Smoking</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Drinking</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Drugs</li></ul>	<b>Others</b>

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## Procrastination Excuses Checklist

- ☐ "I'm too tired, I'll do it tomorrow"
- ☐ "I don't have everything I need, I can't start it now"
- ☐ "I don't have enough time to do it all, so I will wait until I do"
- ☐ "It is too late to start it now"
- ☐ "I won't get much done, so I'll just leave it for now"
- ☐ "It is better to do it when I am in the mood or feeling inspired"
- ☐ "I will miss out on the fun happening now, I can do it another time"
- ☐ "It is too nice a day to spend on this"
- ☐ "I will do it once this other thing is finished"
- ☐ "I've got to organise my desk/kitchen/laundry, etc first"
- ☐ "I've got to exercise first"
- ☐ "I am too busy to do it now"
- ☐ "I have plenty of time, so I can do it later"
- ☐ "I work better when I am stressed, so I will leave it to the last minute"
- ☐ "It might not be good enough, so why bother doing it"
- ☐ "Working on it today won't make any difference"
- ☐ Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Put Off Procrastinating!! Workbook

## Unhelpful Rules & Assumptions Quiz

<b>Need To Be In Charge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I must be in charge at all times</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Things should be done my way</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I shouldn't have to do things that I don't want to</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I shouldn't have to do things because someone else says so</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I am not 100% in charge of what I do, then I am weak</li></ul>	<b>Pleasure Seeking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Life is too short to be doing things that are boring or hard</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Fun should always come first</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Life should be fun at all times</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pleasure here &amp; now should be all that matters</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I forgo fun, then I will become a boring lifeless drone</li></ul>
<b>Fear Of Failure Or Disapproval</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I must do things perfectly</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I must not fail</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I can't have others think poorly of me</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I try, then I will only fail</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I put my work out there, then others will think badly of me</li></ul>	<b>Fear Of Uncertainty Or Catastrophe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I must be certain of what will happen</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I should be prepared for the worst</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I can't stand not knowing the outcome</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I take action, then something bad will happen</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I am better off not doing anything, than risk it going bad</li></ul>
<b>Low Self-Confidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I can't do things because I am incapable</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I'm too inadequate so I can't get things done</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I try things, then my inadequacies will show through</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I shouldn't try things when I know I'm no good</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I know I won't be able to do something, then I shouldn't bother</li></ul>	<b>Depleted Energy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> I can't do things when I am stressed/ fatigued/ unmotivated/ depressed</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I must rest when my energy is low</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> I must be energised to be able to do things</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I do things when I am stressed/ fatigued/ unmotivated/ depressed, I will make things worse</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> If I do things when I am not energised, then it won't work out</li></ul>

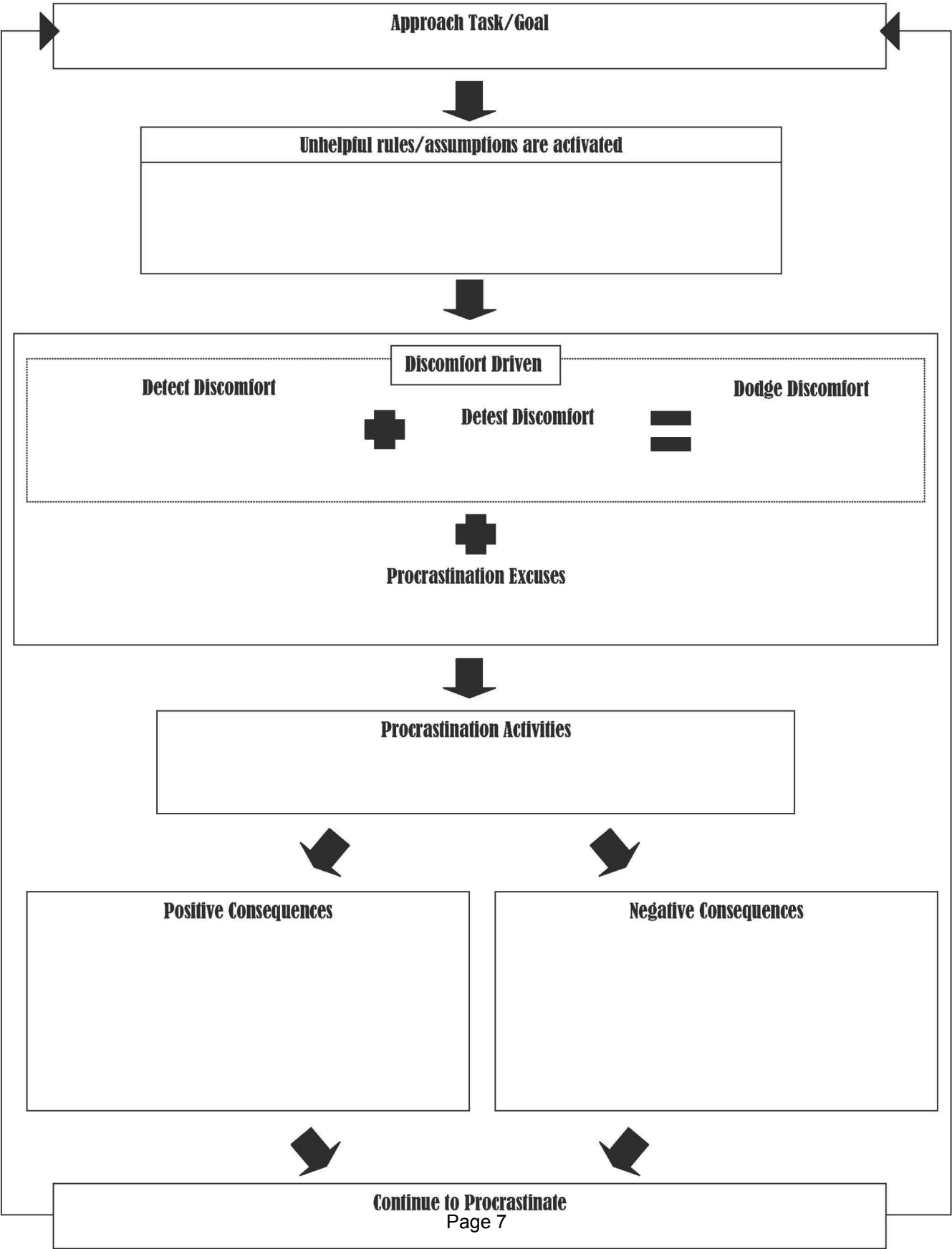
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Consequences Table

Positive Consequences	Negative Consequences
How Do These Keep Me Procrastinating?	How Do These Keep Me Procrastinating?

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## Make Your Own Procrastination Cycle






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## Do I want to Change? Table

Being a procrastinator...	
How does it hurt me?	How does it help me?
If I change and no longer procrastinate...	
What will be good?	What will be bad?

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Roadblocks Table

 Roadblocks	 Self-talk	 Actions
<i>Example: Changing my procrastination habit will mean people will expect more from me, there will be more pressure and responsibility on me to do things</i>	<i>Example: I can choose what things I want to commit to and what things I don't. I can build up gradually to doing more things. People aren't going to change their expectations of me overnight.</i>	<i>Example: Keep going with doing, rather than putting off. If someone puts pressure on me to commit to something I am not ready for yet, talk to them about it.</i>
<i>Example: By following through on tasks I will now have to deal with my work being criticised.</i>	<i>Example: Not every bit of feedback I get will be a criticism. Constructive criticism is important, and is the only way to improve at something. Other people handle it - so can I.</i>	<i>Example: Tell a friend I am working on overcoming my procrastination so they can help me. When I do get some criticism, talk it over with the friend to help me put it in perspective.</i>

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Procrastination Excuse	
<b>The Truth</b> <i>I am really tired</i>	<b>Old Unhelpful Conclusion</b> <i>I am better off doing it after I have rested</i>
<b>Answers to Disputation Questions</b> <i>It is true I am tired right now and things will be more of an effort.</i> <i>But, times before when I have done things even though I am tired, I have felt better for having gotten started and accomplished something, and usually I end up having more energy rather than less.</i> <i>If I delay this, it will just play on my mind, I will just feel worse in the long run, and things will be harder to get done.</i> <i>I guess I could make a small start, maybe just 30 minutes on it.</i> <i>I don't know that I will feel any better after resting, it may be the same story tomorrow.</i> <i>If I make a small start I know I will feel better, and may feel like doing more.</i>	
End Result	
<b>The Truth</b> <i>I am really tired</i>	<b>New Helpful Conclusion</b> <i>But I can still make a small start right now and then rest</i>

Procrastination Excuse	
<b>The Truth</b>	<b>Old Unhelpful Conclusion</b>
<b>Answers to Disputation Questions</b>	
End Result	
<b>The Truth</b>	<b>New Helpful Conclusion</b>

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Procrastination Excuse	
The Truth	Old Unhelpful Conclusion
Answers to Disputation Questions	
End Result	
The Truth	New Helpful Conclusion

Procrastination Excuse	
The Truth	Old Unhelpful Conclusion
Answers to Disputation Questions	
End Result	
The Truth	New Helpful Conclusion

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## Self-Talk Table

Self-Critical Self-Talk	Motivational Self-Talk
I have to get this done. Suck it up and get going loser!	I choose to work on this task. I know I can get it done if I just focus on one thing at a time.
I should be finished by now. If I can't even do this I must be a real idiot!	I would prefer to be finished by now. But let's focus on what I can do to get closer to the finish line.
I must finish this. Come on stupid...think!	I will finish this. It is just going to take a bit more time. Let's plan how to get it done.
I can't believe I haven't started yet. I must be so lazy!	Just focus on getting started. Just because I haven't started, doesn't mean anything bad about me.
Common on! Others can get it done faster than this – I must be a complete moron!	What others do is of no concern. Focusing on what I am doing and my task is more helpful.

My Self-Critical Self-Talk	My Motivational Self-Talk



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## Schedule Example

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6am	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast		
7am	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus		
8am	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	↓	↓
9am	Appointment	Meeting	Paperwork/phone calls	Revise Module 1	Format Module 1	Wake/Breakfast/Shower	Wake/Shower
10am	Appointment	Meeting	Module 7 outline	Revise Module 2	Format Module 2	Yoga Class	Relax
11am	Appointment	Write Module 6	Write Module 7	Revise Module 3	Format Module 3	Ring family member	Get ready
12pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	BBQ
1pm	Paperwork	Write Module 6	Write Module 7	Revise Module 4	Format Module 4	Shops	
2pm	Complete Module 5	Write Module 6	Write Module 7	Revise Module 5	Format Module 5	Shops	
3pm	Complete Module 5	Write Module 6	Write Module 7	Revise Module 6	Format Module 6	House chores	
4pm	Module 6 outline	Write Module 6	Write Module 7	Revise Module 7	Format Module 7	House chores	↓
5pm	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Get ready	Read
6pm	Change/15min walk	Find gas bill/ring/ pay	Change/15min walk	Haircut	Change/15min walk	Go out with friends	Read
7pm	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Grocery Shopping	Get ready		Dinner
8pm	TV	Movie	Tidy Spare Room	Dinner	Restaurant		TV
9pm	Read	↓	Read	Read	↓		TV
10pm	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	↓	↓	Sleep
11pm	↓	↓	↓	↓	Sleep	Sleep	↓
12am	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

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## Un-Schedule Example

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6am	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast	Wake/Breakfast		
7am	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus	Shower/Dress/Bus		
8am	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	↓	↓
9am	Appointment	Meeting	Paperwork/phone calls			Wake/Breakfast/Shower	Wake/Shower
10am	Appointment	Meeting				Yoga Class	Relax
11am	Appointment						Get ready
12pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	BBQ
1pm	Paperwork					Shops	
2pm						Shops	
3pm						House chores	
4pm						House chores	↓
5pm	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Bus/Home	Get ready	Read
6pm				Haircut		Go out with friends	Read
7pm	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Grocery Shopping	Get ready		Dinner
8pm	TV	Movie		Dinner	Restaurant		TV
9pm	Read	↓	Read	Read	↓		TV
10pm	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	↓	↓	Sleep
11pm	↓	↓	↓	↓	Sleep	Sleep	↓
12am	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

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## Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6am							
7am							
8am							
9am							
10am							
11am							
12pm							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm							
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							
11pm							
12am							

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## Adjusting Unhelpful Rules & Assumptions

Below are some examples of how to go through the steps to adjust each unhelpful rule and assumption identified ... as most common to procrastination.

### Needing To Be In Charge

#### **What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?**

It may be something like:

- I must be in charge at all times
- Things should be done my way
- I shouldn't have to do things that I don't want to
- I shouldn't have to do things because someone else says so
- If I am not 100% in charge of what I do, then I am weak

#### **Where did this rule or assumption come from?**

Possibly:

- Messages or sayings I received growing up from either family, others around me, or society (e.g., "you need to be top dog to get any respect in this world" or "it's my way or the highway").
- Past experiences of being dominated by others, and vowing never to be in that same position again.
- Seeing the benefits that people in positions of power received.

#### **In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?**

To get along in society you are going to need to follow someone else's orders at some point. No matter how high up you are, there is always going to be someone higher. Give and take is necessary for society to function. We all have to do things we don't particularly like doing at certain times, it is a part of life. It is simply not possible to be in control and hold the power at all times.

#### **What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?**

I alienate others, it creates conflict with people around me, I get aggressive, I don't get promoted because I don't get along with others or follow their instructions.

#### **What is an alternative more helpful rule or assumption?**

It may be something like:

- I can tolerate doing things I don't want to
- It is ok to follow other people at times
- Doing things that don't suit me doesn't make me weak, but a normal functioning member of society
- Things don't have to always be my way

#### **What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?**

Follow someone else's orders. Do things I don't want to. Give some power and control over to someone else for a change. Don't be independent and in charge all the time, but instead ask for help at times.

### Pleasure Seeking

#### **What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?**

It may be something like:

- Life is too short to be doing things that are boring or hard
- Fun should always come first
- Life should be fun at all times
- Pleasure here and now should be all that matters
- If I forgo fun, then I will become a boring lifeless drone

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## Where did this rule or assumption come from?

Possibly:

- Messages I received growing up that fun was a priority (e.g., “don’t be a party pooper”).
- Past experiences of being deprived of fun and pressured to work hard, and as such vowing never to live life like that again.
- Observing in others the negative consequences of being a workaholic, and rebelling against that lifestyle.
- My achievements not being valued by others or not seeing others around me striving to achieve.

## In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?

To get anywhere in life is going to involve some hard work, achievement or sacrifice at certain points. If life is only about fun, we get stuck and don’t get to where we want to be in life. We all have to put up with some boredom at times, it is a part of life.

## What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?

Things don’t get done, I don’t move forward, I stay stuck whilst watching others around me progress, I feel left behind and dissatisfied with my life achievements.

## What is an alternative more helpful rule or assumption?

It may be something like:

- I can tolerate short term boredom for long term gain
- Pleasurable times are often more enjoyable after I have achieved something
- Fun and achievement are equally important

## What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?

Plan fun things after I have achieved something. Practice forgoing fun temporarily to get a task achieved. Practice doing mundane or boring tasks for increasing periods of time to build tolerance and patience. Plan a balance between the proportion of fun and achievement activities in my week.

## Fear Of Failure Or Disapproval

### What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?

It may be something like:

- I must do things perfectly
- I must not fail
- I can’t have others think poorly of me
- If I try, then I will only fail
- If I put my work out there, then others will think badly of me

## Where did this rule or assumption come from?

Possibly:

- Messages and sayings growing up from the people around me (e.g., “unless you are first, you are last”, “perfection is a virtue”, “you have to give 110%”).
- Being criticised when I didn’t do well at something.
- Only ever being praised when I did exceptionally well.
- Past experiences of not doing well or failing at something.

## In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?

Perfection is unattainable, as imperfection is inevitable. It is more realistic to expect to do well at certain things, mediocre at others things, and not so well at some things – it all evens out in the end. It isn’t so black and white that things are either a success or failure. People generally aren’t out to judge everything we do, they are often more wrapped up in themselves. Constructive criticism is a part of learning.

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## **What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?**

I feel afraid about doing things, I predict failure and disapproval constantly, I don't get things done or I waste time trying to get things perfect, I don't try, I don't put myself 'out there'.

## **What is an alternative more helpful rule or assumption?**

It may be something like:

- Imperfection is part of being human
- Doing things imperfectly doesn't always lead to failure or disapproval
- On the whole I do things well and don't fail or get judged poorly
- I can tolerate not doing well or receiving some criticism

## **What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?**

Plan to do things imperfectly (e.g., purposely make a mistake and see what happens) Aim for a 'good enough' job, rather than perfection, and see if I can be OK with this. Purposely try to generate some form of criticism from others, and practice being able to tolerate it.

## **Fear Of Uncertainty Or Catastrophe**

### **What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?**

It may be something like:

- I must be certain of what will happen
- I should be prepared for the worst
- I can't stand not knowing the outcome
- If I take action, then something bad will happen
- I am better off not doing anything, than risk it going bad

### **Where did this rule or assumption come from?**

Possibly:

- Messages growing up (e.g., "a good scout is always prepared")
- Having an unstable and unpredictable life growing up, and vowing that life will never be like that again.
- Past experiences of having suffered some catastrophe or trauma in my life.

### **In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?**

It is impossible to be certain about everything. Some degree of uncertainty is a part of life we all have to tolerate. Not taking action or worrying about things, doesn't make anything more certain and doesn't prevent a catastrophe.

## **What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?**

I feel afraid about doing things, I predict catastrophe constantly, I worry, I don't take action, I avoid, I stay within my 'comfort zone'.

## **What is an alternative more helpful rule or assumption?**

It may be something like:

- Uncertainty is a part of life that everyone has to tolerate
- Catastrophes are unlikely events
- I can take action and cope with any consequences that arise
- I can cope if bad things happen, and worrying about it doesn't prevent it

## **What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?**

Take action or make decisions, and see what happens. If something doesn't go well, use it as an opportunity to practice being able to cope with that.

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## Low Self-Confidence

### What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?

It may be something like:

- I can't do things because I am incapable
- I'm too inadequate so I can't get things done
- If I try things, then my inadequacies will show through
- I shouldn't try things when I know I'm no good
- If I know I won't be able to do something, then I shouldn't bother

### Where did this rule or assumption come from?

Possibly:

- Criticism from others growing up or later in life (e.g., "you are no good", "you will never amount to anything")
- Lack of praise or recognition from others for my abilities.
- Past experiences of attempting things and them not turning out well.

### In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?

I don't take into account both my strengths and weaknesses, but am biased and unfair towards myself by just focusing on my weaknesses. I just assume I can't do things, rather than finding out for real.

### What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?

I don't try or attempt things, I give up easily, I feel down about myself, I criticise myself.

### What is an alternative more helpful rule or assumption?

It may be something like:

- I can do more than I give myself credit for
- I have strengths and weakness just like anyone
- I am capable and adequate in most things

### What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?

Don't back away from challenges. Try new things. Give things a go and see how I do. Pay attention to my strengths and achievements (e.g., write them down each day).

## Depleted Energy

### What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?

It may be something like:

- I can't do things when I am stressed/ fatigued/ unmotivated/ depressed
- I must rest when my energy is low
- I must be energised to be able to do things
- If I do things when I am stressed/ fatigued/ unmotivated/ depressed,
- I will make things worse
- If I do things when I am not energised, then it won't work out

### Where did this rule or assumption come from?

Possibly:

- Past experiences of people in my life not challenging or pushing me during tough times, but telling me to "take it easy" and treating me as fragile.
- Past experiences of people pushing me too much when my energy was low, and vowing never to do that to myself again.
- Seeing others manage stress, fatigue, poor motivation and depression by taking it easy.
- Having overdone things at some point in my life, which led to a negative outcome (e.g., nervous breakdown).

# Put Off Procrastinating!! Workbook

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## **In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?**

I never test myself in different situations to see I can manage and get some things done at certain times.  
We are often not going to be in the right frame of mind to do things, and if we wait for the right frame of mind it may never come, and we will never get anything done.

## **What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?**

I don't get things done, I view myself as fragile, I can't live a normal routine, I can't take on a variety of commitments, I feel restricted in what I can do.

## **What is an alternative more helpful rule or assumption?**

It may be something like:

I can do more than I think when my energy is low

Energy, stress, motivation and mood often improve if I tackle things step by step, rather than rest

Rest often de-energises me

Rest is not always the answer, often taking action is

## **What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?**

Try taking action rather than resting when I feel stressed/fatigued/unmotivated/depressed, and see what happens. Break tasks into steps and start with just one step when my energy is low, and see where it leads.



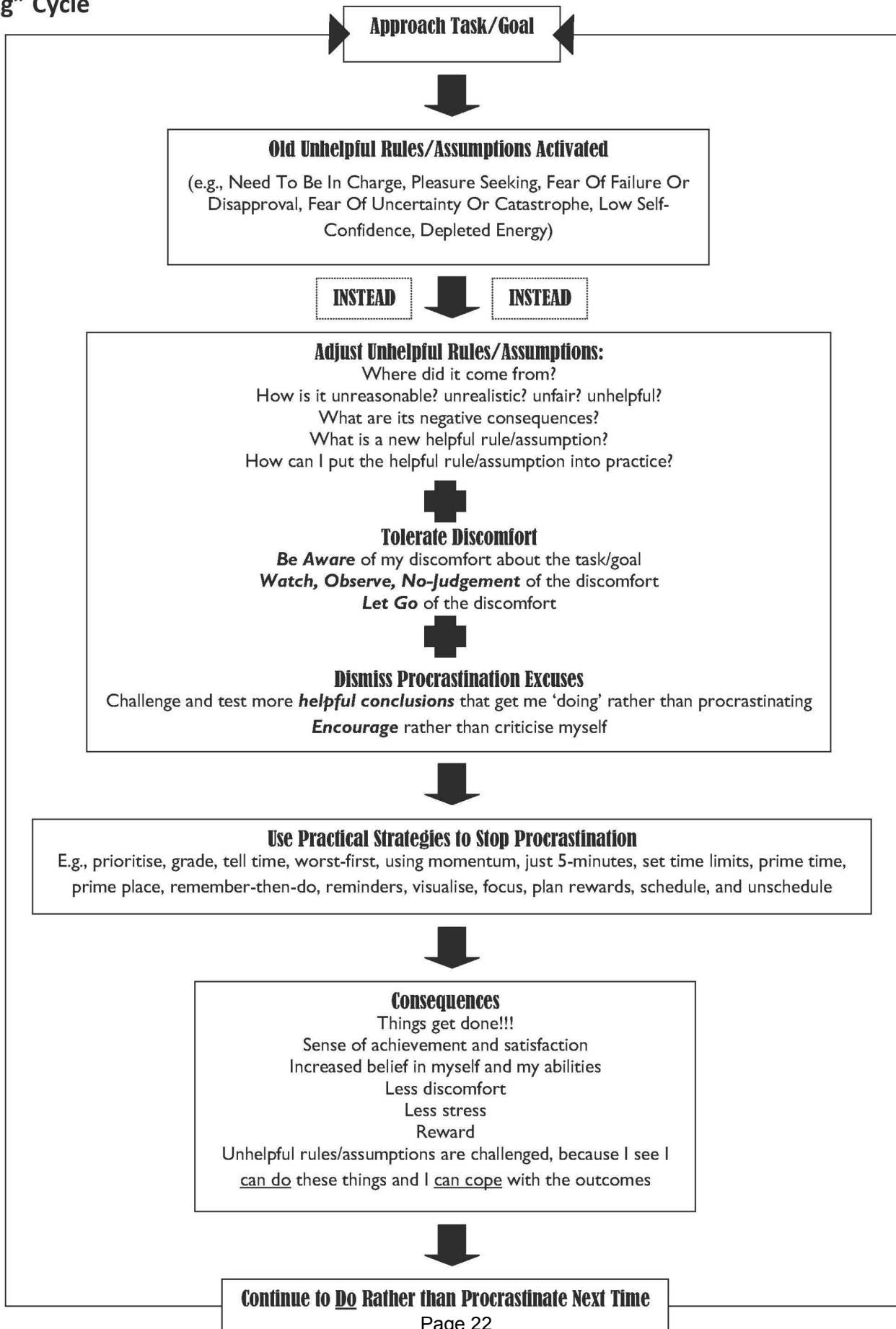
# Put Off Procrastinating!! Workbook

## Adjusting Unhelpful Rules & Assumptions Worksheet

What is the unhelpful rule or assumption I would like to adjust?
Where did this rule or assumption come from?
In what ways is this rule or assumption unreasonable? unrealistic? unfair? unhelpful?
What are the negative consequences of having this rule or assumption?
What is an alternative more helpful (i.e., balanced, flexible, realistic) rule or assumption?
What can I do to put this rule or assumption into practice on a daily basis?

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## "Doing" Cycle



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## Example Procrastination Action Plan

**Task or Goal:** Write the 'Put off Procrastinating' Modules

### Step 1. Being Aware & Non-Blaming

Ahh...the urge to procrastinate is here...no need to beat myself up about it, that won't do any good...I choose not to let this get the better of me, but to focus on what I can do about it.

### Step 2 (Optional). Adjust Unhelpful Rules & Assumptions

Unhelpful rule/assumption 1: I can't tolerate boredom, I need pleasure and interest.

This comes from having a lot of freedom growing up, and so no one made me persist with things that weren't of interest to me. This is unreasonable because to get anywhere in life, you are going to have to do things that are boring at times, and not everything is going to be pleasurable and interesting. A more helpful rule/assumption is: **I can do things that are boring and pleasure can be a reward.** To put this new helpful rule/assumption into practice would mean using the task at hand to practice tolerating boredom.

Unhelpful rule/assumption 2: I can't do a good job when I am unmotivated.

This comes from not doing well at things I didn't put effort into growing up. This is unreasonable because often in life you aren't going to be motivated to do something, so to wait to do things only when you feel motivated, will mean that nothing ever gets done. A more helpful rule/assumption is: **I can make progress on things even when I am unmotivated.** To put this new helpful rule/assumption into practice would mean starting one small part of the task at hand, and then seeing how well I really do and if my motivation improves.

### Step 3 (Optional). Practice Tolerating Discomfort

Discomfort Intolerant: "I hate feeling frustrated, bored, and exhausted!"

Discomfort Tolerant: Just be aware of the frustration, boredom and exhaustion I am experiencing right now. Just watch and observe these feelings and sensations. Ahh there is the feeling of frustration... there is the sensation of exhaustion... there is the feeling of boredom. The thought "I hate this feeling" is just a thought, I don't need to listen to the thought, just note it. Breathe into the frustration, boredom and exhaustion wherever I feel it in my body (e.g., stomach, hands, jaw)...make space for it...allow it to be...then allow it to go with each exhalation when it is ready. Stay with it, practice tolerating it, imagine it as a wave, knowing it is only temporary and will subside.

### Step 4. Dismiss Procrastination Excuses & Encourage

Old Unhelpful Conclusion: "I will just do my other paperwork first, because it doesn't take much time and is easier to do. Getting those other things out of the way will free me up to think clearer and write better."

New Helpful Conclusion: "This other paperwork is easier, but it is not as important. It is unlikely that doing these other things first will make me write any better. My writing capabilities won't really change between now and later. I know I can do it now".

### Step 5. Carry Out Practical Strategies

Grade the task of writing the 'Put Off Procrastinating' Modules, estimating the time each step will take. Do an 'unschedule', so I can see my current routine and where I have available time to work on the task. When available time pops up, work on the first step and mark off every 30 minutes I am able to work on the task. Plan small rewards and pleasure after I have completed each step. If I get stuck, visualise completing the task or do a focusing exercise using my breathing. If I am really struggling to get started, tell myself I just have to work on it 5 minutes, and then see if I can do more.

### Step 6. Reflect & Revise

It is working pretty well. I am getting more done than before which feels great! I have noticed that I tend to get more written in the morning than later in the day, so maybe I need to do up a schedule where I allocate specific time in the morning to the task.

# Put Off Procrastinating!! Workbook

## Procrastination Action Plan

<b>Task or Goal:</b>
<b>Step 1. Being Aware &amp; Non-Blaming</b>
<b>Step 2 (Optional). Adjust Unhelpful Rules &amp; Assumptions</b>
<b>Step 3 (Optional). Practice Tolerating Discomfort</b>
<b>Step 4. Dismiss Procrastination Excuses &amp; Encourage</b>
<b>Step 5. Carry Out Practical Strategies</b>
<b>Step 6. Reflect &amp; Revise</b>

# Put Off Procrastinating!! Workbook

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## Maintaining Your Gains Table

What Positive Changes Have I Made?	How Is My Life Better?