

Procrastination Survey

Directions:

Answer "yes" or "no" to each of the following questions based on what is generally true for you.

- Yes No 1. Do you sometimes ask "what's the point of doing a task?"
- Yes No 2. Do you often put things off you don't value or aren't interested in?
- Yes No 3. Do you often think you work best "under pressure"?
- Yes No 4. Do you like to do exciting and/or risky activities fairly often?
- Yes No 5. Do you sometimes give up before you start a task because you don't know where to start?
- Yes No 6. Do you often try to do several things at once, not completing many?
- Yes No 7. Do you sometimes settle for mediocre results when you could do better?
- Yes No 8. Do you often put things off you're not good at?
- Yes No 9. Do you often give up on a task when it gets difficult?
- Yes No 10. Do you often lose motivation in the middle of a task?

Procrastination Survey Answer Key

A "yes" for any of the questions can be interpreted as a possible cause of procrastination. Only YOU can determine if it is a real problem for you.

1. You may be unclear about your long-term goals or may have difficulty seeing the necessary steps to reach them. Often the task you may be avoiding can be related to a long-term goal. It is essential that you see how your immediate goals are attached to short-term goals and, ultimately, long-term goals.

EXAMPLE:

PROJECT ----- COURSE GRADE ----- GRADUATION -----JOB ----- HOUSE....

2. Before you put effort into a task, you often need to accept the values of the system or person who asked you to do the task. Universities and professors value learning and knowledge for its own sake. Possibly, the problem is lack of interest. We often don't value things we aren't interested in. You may need to complete a task to reach your goals or find a way to connect it to something you are interested in.

3. You may think you work best "under pressure" but may have never examined the quality of your work while NOT under pressure. You might assume you work better this way because it's comfortable and has become a habit. You may like the idea of being known as someone who can "pull it off at the last minute". Procrastination may be part of your identity.

4. Research has shown that people who lead high-risk lives tend to procrastinate more than people who do not. Procrastination may be part of your personality. Be careful to prevent your natural tendencies from interfering with your productivity.

5. You may put off tasks because you are overwhelmed by the size or difficulty of them. It is better to risk starting at the wrong place than not to start at all.

6. Avoiding unpleasant tasks by doing other tasks might make you feel productive; however, the tasks you complete are probably of lower priority than the ones you are putting off.

7. You may procrastinate to "set yourself up" to do poorly. You may not want to meet the rising expectations associated with success. Or you may be prioritizing other activities and not putting energy into doing your best.

8. The opposite of "fear of success" is "fear of failure." In this case, you ensure that your failure is based on forces other than your own competence, so that your abilities cannot be questioned.

EXAMPLE:

A student who never hands in his math homework because he's afraid he will do it wrong. (The failure then becomes based on the missing assignments, not the student's competence.)

9. You may put off tasks hoping they will magically become easier or more interesting. The fact is, few things become clearer the more you avoid them, and often you've squandered your opportunities and time for getting assistance.

10. It is common to lose your drive in the middle of a task, especially if it's a long or tedious one. It's easier to be motivated at the beginning and end of a large project. The best way to avoid this problem is to break the task into smaller chunks so there are more "beginnings" and "endings."