

TECHNIQUES FOR OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

Procrastination is defined as the delay or postponement of our tasks or responsibilities until the last moment, or even beyond their deadline. There are various reasons why we procrastinate – some of these include anxiety, the difficulty of a task, insufficient information about what we are asked to accomplish, lack of motivation, fear of failure, distractibility, perfectionism, and more.

In order to manage procrastination, experts suggest several cognitive, emotional, and behavioral techniques. Below are some **behavioral techniques for overcoming procrastination**:

- **Knock Out Technique**
The more difficult or boring your task is, the better it is to do it immediately. Start with the hardest part.
- **Bits and Pieces Approach**
Break your task or goal into smaller parts or sub-goals. Start with the first small goal, and gradually complete more until the task no longer seems impossible.
- **Five-Minute Plan**
Work on your task for just five minutes at a time. Once you've worked for five minutes, allow yourself another five, and then another five.
- **Cost-Benefit Reflection**
Make a list of all the positive outcomes that happen when you complete your task, and another list of all the negative outcomes that occur when you don't. Review these lists regularly.
- **Premack Principle** (*named after the scientist who discovered it*)
Choose an activity you really enjoy. Do not allow yourself to engage in it until you've completed your task.
- **Set a Specific Start Time**
Schedule a specific time to begin your work and set an alarm to remind you.
- **Isolation**
Close your door. Put your phone on flight mode, and let others know that you'll be offline for a while so you won't be disturbed.

Source: Bernard, M. E. (2008). *You Can Do It! Education. Program Achieve: A Social & Emotional Curriculum (Grades 11–12)*.