Experimenting with a Procrastination Log

Your situation:
Your Procrastination Activity Log

Your Three-Step Self-Mastery Experiment

When you examine your procrastination log, what do you find? Record your findings here.

Write down your action plan ideas and changes you can and will make to build self-mastery skills by substituting productive actions for procrastination distractions.

Record what happened when you executed your plan.

Four Positive Actions: The Language of Choice, Commitment, Challenge, and Change

Choice, commitment, challenge, and change are the four C's for positive actions.

Language of Choice

A choice means you have two or more options.

Pick an upcoming assignment that you would normally put off. Write it in the box below.

What does your procrastination choice sound like? What does your productive choice sound like?

Procrastination Choice	Productive Choice

Language of Commitment

A *commitment* is a pledge, promise, or expressed intent. For example, if you tell yourself, "I'll start reading the history chapter at 3:00 p.m. today and continue until I finish," that commitment shows intent.

What do you tell yourself when you delay? What's your commitment to yourself? Fill in the blanks in the chart that follows and see.

Procrastination Language	Commitment Language

Language of Challenge

How you talk to yourself about a challenging situation will influence how you feel and what you'll do. Threat thinking can propel procrastination.

The language of challenge is the mirror opposite of threat thinking. For example, you may or may not like an assignment. Nevertheless, you can convincingly talk to yourself as if you believe that it is within your power to meet challenges.

What do you tell yourself when you feel threatened by a challenging situation? What can you tell yourself to challenge yourself? Fill in the blanks and see.

Threat Language	Challenge Language

Languages of choice, commitment, and challenge set the stage for action, or change.

Language of Change

Change language is a series of self-instructions that outlines the steps that you will take to pursue a chosen course of action, for example, "I'll do this first. I'll do this second." You use these self-instructions to guide what you do.

Using your chosen task as your reference, give yourself action instructions. Carry them out and record your results in the table below.

Change Language Instructions	Change Language Outcome

Your Ranked To-Do List

To-Do List	Priority

Your Sequenced To-Do List

Sequenced To-Do List	Priority

Check-Off Sheet To-Do List

Sequence of Steps: _____	Check When Completed

PURRRRS: A Tool for Short-Circuiting Procrastination

Start with what you are putting off and write it here:

_____

PURRRRS	Actions Taken
Pause: Tune into what is happening.	
Use resources to resist impulses.	
Reflect: Figure out what is going on.	
Reason and plan it out.	
Respond by putting your plan into action.	
Review and revise: Make adjustments to improve results. When warranted, try another way.	
Stabilize: Keep practicing and improving these skills until they are automatic.	

Contradictions Experiment

The assignment or task that you are delaying: _____

Contradictions	Responses
Cognitive challenge: *Cognitive action*:	
Emotive challenge: *Emotive action*:	
Behavioral challenge: *Behavioral action*:	

Experiment in Preparation

Self-Mastery	Plan	Results
Failure Proofing		
Mental Rehearsal		
Pace Training		

Experiment in Behavioral Procrastination

If you behaviorally procrastinate, what's your six-week experiment to break this habit?

Question	Result	Action Plan	Six-Week Result
What happens just before I start behaviorally procrastinating?			
What did I tell myself when I started behaviorally procrastinating?			
What do I do when I behaviorally procrastinate?			

Combatting Procrastination Challenges

Procrastination Barriers	Action Plan	Results of Actions Taken

Experiment in Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Self-Mastery Approach	Your Prescription
Know what you want to accomplish.	
Keep your attention on the process.	
Combat procrastination obstacles.	
Persist.	

Using Your Executive Skills Effectively

1. Set a Direction

What are your mastery and performance goals to support meeting an academic challenge? What are your goals for overcoming your procrastination obstacle(s)? Outline them below.

Mastery Goal	Performance Goal	Goal for Overcoming Procrastination Obstacles

By setting a direction and clarifying your goals, you put yourself on the executive trail. By recognizing your obstacle(s), you put yourself in a position to address them.

2. Prepare an Action Plan

Now, you'll create an action plan to get past a procrastination obstacle that you anticipate facing.

Topic	Cognitive	Emotive	Behavioral
Procrastination Plan			
Action Plan			

3. Organize for Action

Here, you'll organize to achieve your learning goal(s).

Monday Through Friday	Activity

4. Implement Your Plan

Create an executive checklist for your project and check off each phase as you finish.

Your Routine Checklist	Your Checkmark

5. Review and Revise

And now it's time to review the results of your self-regulated learning experiment.

Dimension	Goal Setting	Planning	Organizing	Implementing
Process				
Evaluation				
Adjustments				
Results				

Describe the results of your performance.

The Ordering-of-Choice Method

Target what's most pressing and important from an enlightened rider's perspective.

Top Drawer	
Middle Drawer	
Bottom Drawer	

Experiment: Put Yourself in Charge

What decision is a priority for you today that you've put off for too long? Describe it in the box below.

The chart shows both branches of the Y choice. The left column describes the rider's position, and the right describes the horse's. Under each example, fill in the blanks.

The Way of the Rider	The Way of the Horse
Define the problem by describing the rider's choices (such as waking up early to study, not going to the mall and studying instead). _____ _____ _____	Define the problem by describing the horse's choices (such as watching TV, checking social media, cleaning). _____ _____ _____
Look deeper at your choices. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of each. _____ _____ _____	Write what your horse is thinking to avoid working to solve the conflict. (Examples: *I'm too tired. I can't think about that now.*) _____ _____ _____

The Way of the Rider	The Way of the Horse
Accept areas where there are unknowns and fill in the gaps where you can: _____ _____ _____ _____	Engage in safe pursuits, such as playing video games. (List your distractions.) _____ _____ _____ _____
Make decisions based on your best estimates for a favorable outcome. Think about executing the decision and imagine taking the first step: _____ _____ _____ _____	Feel a sense of relief for temporarily avoiding what you find uncomfortable. (Describe what you gain and what you lose.) _____ _____ _____ _____
Take the first step. What happens next? _____ _____ _____ _____	Act hopeful, such as, "Perhaps I'll feel inspired later." What happens next? _____ _____ _____ _____
What are the results of continuing to improve your decision-making skills? _____ _____ _____ _____	What are the results of continuing with procrastination processes? _____ _____ _____ _____

Once you map your Y-decision paths and compare them, you are in a position to make an informed decision on taking either the rider's or the horse's path. What path do you choose? Why?

Time Estimation and Planning

It's your turn to compare procrastination and productive time estimates and to explore the differences in results.

Your assignment: _____

Procrastination Time Estimates	Productive Time Estimates
Estimate Procrastination Results	Estimate Productive Results

The Easy-to-Difficult Sequencing Experiment

Here is a template for your easy-to-difficult experiment.

Activity (Easiest First)	Time Estimation	Results

What did you learn from this experiment? Record this information below.