Domorrow: Understanding and Overcoming Procrastination

Presented By:
Kenneth W. Phelps, Ph.D., LMFT
Associate Professor of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Science
Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Neurology Division
University of South Carolina School of Medicine and Prisma Health
Tourette Association of America

- Faculty, BTI
- Speaker’s Bureau
- Honorarium
Domorrow

[Do-o-mawr-oh] noun · English

The utilisation of procrastination. Where today’s responsibility and productivity become tomorrow’s problem endeavour.

Example: Nah, I’m not doing that today. It’s a domorrow kind of thing.
OBJECTIVES

1. Define procrastination, reviewing the negative consequences of consistently engaging in this behavior

2. Explore the role of executive functioning and emotional regulation in procrastination

3. Discuss strategies for individuals, families, and healthcare practitioners (ACTING)
“A common self-regulation problem involving the unnecessary and voluntary delay in the start of completion of important intended tasks despite the recognition that this delay may have negative consequences.”
1. I often find myself performing tasks that I had intended to do days before.
2. Even with jobs that require little else except sitting down and doing them, I find they seldom get done for days.
3. I generally delay before starting work I have to do.
4. In preparing for some deadlines, I often waste time by doing other things.
5. I usually buy even an essential item at the last minute.
6. I continually say, “I’ll do it tomorrow.”
CONSEQUENCES OF PROCRASTINATION

• Poorer scholastic performance and academic misconduct
• Lost productivity due to underworking or cyberslacking/loafing ($)
• Mental and physical health
  ✓ Anxiety, depression, and rumination
  ✓ Guilt, shame, regret, and self-criticism
  ✓ Delay of medical or mental health visits
  ✓ Headaches, GI, poor sleep, weaker immune system
• Breach of social norms impacts relationships ("not dependable")
• Lower income or unstable employment

Myrick, 2015; Sirois & Pychyl, 2013; Sirois & Pychyl, 2016; Sirois, 2022; Stead et al., 2010
Task is seen as aversive:
• Frustrating
• Difficult
• Challenging
• Not meaningful
• Boring
• Stressful
• Worsens anxiety

Blunt & Pychyl, 2000; Sirois & Pychyl, 2016; Sirois, 2022
THE TEMPORAL TRADE-OFF:

PRIORITIZE SHORT TERM MOOD REPAIR OVER LONG-TERM PURSUIT OF GOALS

Sirois & Pychyl, 2016; Sirois, 2022
“I don’t know what it will be like.”

“It will take forever.”

“I don’t know how to do that.”

“It will be miserable.”

“I will find it so boring.”

”It is pointless and a waste of time.”

“I don’t really think I’ll even finish.”
ACTING
ACTING: REPLACE THE CRITIC WITH SELF-COMPASSION

1. Kind, friendly stance (distancing)

2. Recognize common humanity

3. Approach yourself and the task with openness and curiosity (nonjudgmental stance)

   Self-compassion on the front-end.
   Self-forgiveness on the back-end.

Neff, 2011; Sirois & Pychyl, 2016; Sirois, 2022; Wohl et al., 2008
For executive dysfunction or overwhelm...

Organizational Skills Training (OST)
• Daily task list (MyTasks)
• Chunking and prioritization
• Monthly calendar (Outlook)
• Accordion folder or centralized place
• Track time estimation vs completion

Gallagher, Abikoff, & Spira, 2014
Fortune Telling: Intensity Bias and Durability Bias

Find your Future Self:

- Mental Imagery
- Letter to Myself (and Back)
### List of VALUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Ethics</th>
<th>Kindness</th>
<th>Self-respect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Excellence</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Serenity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Simplicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Financial stability</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>Sportmanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Stewardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Making a difference</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being the best</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Thrift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>Future generations</td>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Giving back</td>
<td>Order</td>
<td>Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>Patriotism</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Uniqueness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Perseverance</td>
<td>Usefulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contentment</td>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Humor</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Wholesomeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>Resourcefulness</td>
<td>Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Write your own:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dignity</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Intuition</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>Self-discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Self-expression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES
