



Tip Sheet

Tackling Procrastination – And not putting it off for later!

- **How does procrastination impact emotional health?** Procrastination can take a toll on a student's mental health and well-being - it can make you feel more stressed, less confident in your abilities, more confused, and more fearful of failure. In one 2007 study, FSU psychologists examined procrastination among students in a health psychology class. They found that early in the semester, procrastinators reported lower stress and less illness than non-procrastinators, but that late in the term, procrastinators reported higher stress and more illness.

- **Why do you procrastinate?** Try to find the reasons why you procrastinate, then figure out how to change that. Start small, don't try to change your whole routine at once.
 - Do tasks seem too daunting or difficult?
 - Are you afraid you will fail or that your work will not be perfect?
 - Are you having a hard time making decisions?
 - Do you have a hard time speaking up when something upsets you?
 - Are you having a hard time distinguishing obligations from options?
 - Are you bored, or having a hard time focusing?
 - Are you too connected? (always on computer, phone, Facebook)
 - Are you emotionally or physically (or both!) exhausted?
 - Are you not taking care of yourself emotionally, physically, and spiritually?

- **What are some tips to avoid procrastination?**
 - Make weekly and daily lists that help you to identify your priorities. Make sure you find at least one thing you can accomplish within 24 hours.
 - Take inventory of all the activities you do - eliminate anything that is not necessary or essential.
 - Learn how to say "no" appropriately. You are not expected to take everything on! There will be many opportunities to participate in different activities and experiences.
 - Take care of yourself emotionally - are you doing things to please others only, or are you doing things that bring you happiness?
 - Schedule self care time.
 - Shut off the communication for a little bit. Take a break from the computer, phone, and constant communication. 5 to 10 minutes daily breaks are a great way to start - try for longer breaks if possible.
 - Reward your successes no matter how small, this positive reinforcement will make you more excited to keep practicing your new habit.
 - Sometimes negative thoughts or anxiety can lead to procrastination - if you feel distressed or anxious, talk to someone!