Hi all,

My name is Amy and I’m the Deputy Head Student of Wellbeing at the College. This week, I wanted to share tips surrounding a topic that I am very much familiar with and I’m sure many of you are too: procrastination. This is something I struggle with and you would think after years of being in school and further education I would have tackled this problem, but no! I’m six months away from starting university and I’m still a persistent procrastinator which has only gotten worse with today’s circumstances that I am sure we are all ready to be done with.

I wanted to dig a little deeper into the topic of procrastination and share some helpful tips on how to overcome and have a better understanding of it.

The term procrastination is derived from the Latin verb ‘procrastinare’ which means to put off until tomorrow. In reality, it is an irrational way of thinking. Procrastination is actually a problem of emotional regulation rather than time management, as we often put off a task due to the negative emotion we associate with it - low self-esteem, insecurities and self-doubt. By putting off a task, we gain a momentary relief from it, which can be seen as a reward for procrastination. Any psychologists will be familiar with behaviourism, in particular operant conditioning where we learn a certain behaviour through its consequences. As putting off a task is a positive consequence, it becomes a learnt behaviour and we are more likely to repeat it, resulting in a never-ending cycle.

**So how do we break this cycle?**

There are four main types of procrastinators, all of which have their own problem and solution: The Performer, The Self-Deprecator, The Over- Booker and the Novelty Seeker.

The Performer forces themselves to focus by limiting the time they have to finish a task. This can be related to perfectionism and ‘working well under pressure’. The biggest challenge is getting started; the solution to this could be setting a strict start date, focusing on when you’re going to start the task, not finish it.

The Self-Deprecator is rundown but instead of admitting/realising this, they blame putting off tasks on laziness/ stubbornness and are much harder on themselves than they need to be. The biggest challenge is knowing when to take a break. The solution to this is to take time to recharge and have a clear headspace to replenish energy.

The Over- Booker gives themselves so many tasks that they become overwhelmed and use the excuse of ‘I’m too busy’ to put off tasks. This is usually more avoidance than actually being too busy. The biggest challenge is creating a problem for themselves to avoid what needs to be done. The solution for this could be taking time to reflect on what needs to be done and why you are avoiding it.

The Novelty Seeker is the procrastinator who comes up with many new tasks that they want to take on, which they start but end up getting bored, so put off completing the task. The biggest challenge is completing a task fully. The solution could be only starting one task at a time and sticking to it until they it’s complete before taking on something new.

I am a Performer Procrastinator; I am always leaving things to the last minute.

The last method I have to help break procrastination is a general solution which can help anyone. If you can’t bring yourself to do a task, force yourself to do it for five minutes. After those five minutes, if you have had enough then stop. You’re five minutes ahead of where you were to begin with; small progress is still progress. However, once you have started it becomes a lot easier to carry on, as starting is usually the hardest part.

I hope this has been helpful and you can take something away from this. I have put the links below to the articles I found if you are interested in finding out more 😊

<https://www.businessinsider.com/main-types-of-procrastinators-how-to-avoid-accountability-coaches?r=US&IR=T>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/25/smarter-living/why-you-procrastinate-it-has-nothing-to-do-with-self-control.html>

See you back at College,

Amy