

Procrastinators: do not put off reading this text until later!

"Oh! I'll do it tomorrow..." Who hasn't told himself this? Although an apparently harmless tendency, it is possible to slip into a habit that can be very damaging and invasive, even debilitating. Are you concerned, but you tell yourself that you can read this article another time? That's one more reason to read it right now!

A bad habit to question

Putting things off until the next day may seem harmless. Some people will even go as far as to say that they work better under pressure, at the last minute. But making it a habit to unnecessarily put off tasks until later could result in many problems such as anxiety, guilt, pervasive thoughts outside work hours, time management difficulties or even organizational ineffectiveness.

Also called "procrastination" (from the Latin *pro* which means "for" and *crastinus* which means "postponement, day after"), this tendency to systematically put things off until later is not to be taken lightly. The first step in addressing it is to identify the rationale behind it (disinterest, discouragement, poor time planning, etc.) and the excuses that justify it ("I have time left", "I'll be in better shape tomorrow", "There's no point to it", etc.). You will then be able to notice more easily when you are procrastinating and question the excuses regarding the related issues more objectively ("Will my work be the same quality if I start it at the last minute?" "What is the point of this task?", etc.).

Adopting anti-procrastination behaviours

There are several simple habits that can be easily implemented to address procrastination.

Defining your priorities

Putting off something until the next day does not mean you are inactive. Quite the contrary! Some procrastination enthusiasts will often find something to do instead of concentrating on their task. In this case, you must identify the priorities (what is and is not related to the task) and distinguish between urgent actions and important actions.

Defining your objectives

Do not aim too high and stay realistic by refraining from setting vague objectives such as "Do my entire day's work". Dissect each task into smaller but clearly defined components. It would be preferable, for example, to clean the bathroom, kitchen, etc., one room at a time instead of being determined to clean the entire house at once.

Saying "no" to distractions

Once the task has started, the slightest excuse can throw off your concentration such as the telephone, social media, passing hunger, etc. At the outset, put yourself in an optimal environment to meet your objectives: isolate yourself as much as possible from these aspects and scrupulously stick to the schedules you set for yourself.

Knowing how to reward yourself

Remember to reward yourself from time to time when you achieve your work objectives. And allow yourself to do so once the sub-objectives are met.

Conclusion

Dealing with procrastination can sometimes be simple and amount to establishing practices like those previously mentioned. In other cases, the efforts do not seem to produce results and the person suffering from it has to consult somebody for help in resolving his problem. The Health *InSight* support services offer you additional support and active listening. Do not hesitate to ask!

Tell yourself that “delay” does not always mean “too late”!

Note: To make the text easier to read, the masculine form is also used to designate the feminine.