

SPOTTING THE

EARLY

Warning!

SIGNS OF

PROCRASTINATION

BOOK 1

A personal story

A business friend and colleague asked to meet with me to discuss a problem that he really needed to sort out. As I do with most clients I asked him to tell me his story. What has brought us to this meeting?

His story:

I was always incredibly efficient, I got paid per job completed, so only ever got paid for what I actually did. I worked hard and got paid very well. Then it happened.

I thought it was time to get serious and a job in an office. I started work in a customer service centre for an online store in the UK, just to work in an office. Anything going wrong with a customer's experience would go through us.

I found tasks a little vague being run from emails with no particular ownership, so I changed the way it worked and made it more like my last job. Each task written on a little piece of paper and put on a spike!

It became a game to me, everything goes on the spike as soon as possible. I would bust through a mountain of work in just a few hours. I dried up a whole department's backlogs in less than a week. I fearlessly moved forward knocking it over one at a time. I removed every single customer complaint that had been hanging around for months. I got promoted, and promoted a lot!



They encouraged laziness!

I still maintain today the promotions were the beginning of my problems. I was encouraged to work less by management at my level. Can you believe I was making them look bad? I was just doing my job! Before you know it I picked up some bad habits and had soon landed in procrastination city.



I ended up playing the game more and working less. Some call this the dream, ridiculous when you think about it.

The office game seemed to be focused on delegating or avoiding hard tasks. I got out of the habit of writing them on little pieces of paper. My sense of purpose, direction and accomplishment got chipped away. I got by playing office games, getting promoted with relationships instead of adding value and surfing the net.

Even though I could see bad habits emerging but they were so gradual they slipped by without being noticed. It wasn't until they were completely embedded in my behaviour I realised what was happening, but I could not change the behaviour!

This was literally driving me crazy as I knew what I was doing while I was doing it, but STILL I seemed powerless to change them.

Here's what I would do

I would put off doing anything productive! Pledging, as only professional procrastinators can, that we would do something about it next week on a Monday, I would write a *WHOLE WEEK OFF!*

I pretended that I was solving the problem by putting off doing the tasks to create task lists! I became an expert at being busy, but getting nothing done.

- **Writing and rewriting task lists** on paper, web sites and apps making some headway each time but essentially adding the same undone tasks every time
- **Always trying to clear your emails** and spending the WHOLE day trying to do and then finding myself acting on another issue I found in your email!
- **I just need to...** insert what you like here! It could be - check Facebook, get a coffee, have a cigarette, get something to eat etc. I would tell myself I was just being healthy and taking a break about every 90 minutes for optimum concentration.

- ***I just gotta do...*** how many "just gotta do's" could I create in a day? Sometimes I amazed myself at how important other things were.
- ***I had no plan or direction*** – I would write lists of things that are on my mind now, but not part of a plan, then follow the lists.

I'm always behind, always under pressure you ***NEVER truly enjoy my time away from work*** because I'm ***ALWAYS*** thinking about what I should've have done today and should be doing now!

I feel like my life's opportunities to succeed, progress or move forward are literally disappearing before my very eyes!

I've called you, Richard, because I've had enough. We all have the same 24 hours, but people around me are accomplishing so much more than I ever seemed to be able to. It's driving me bonkers! I've actually tried a bunch of courses that were nothing short of useless. I've spent money on better task management, but that didn't work either. I know I have to go deeper! I figured it was time to let you into my head. I think I am ready to change me. Can you help?

What do we do now?

In one way it was good that my friend was throwing the ball back into my court, but the important thing is to get him back in control of his own life. He is the only person that can really solve his problem. My task is to facilitate his awareness of himself and assist him find and build the skills he needs to achieve what he wants for himself.

That doesn't mean that I just sit back and watch him do all the work. We need to create something new that makes a genuine change. He was asking that we do this together. This, of course, is exactly what I think personal growth is all about – engaging with others to find the best in yourself!

So we began the invention of an entirely different approach to dealing with procrastination, based on my Curiosity Approach. We have recorded this as a video training program which you can find at www.richardhill.com.au

In this booklet, I will share our insights into the **Early Warning Signs** of procrastination. That's a great place to begin!



Procrastination is a symptom of a deeper cause

Over three hours we broke the issue down and outlined a plan. He was pretty blown away that we could come with so many ideas that he had never heard before. I expect that this is because we were dealing with the person, not just the problem.

Procrastinators are not lazy!

Procrastination is more than avoidance. it affects people in many different ways. We have heard the "warts and all" account of my friend's experience with it. Some you may have experienced this yourself, but your behaviour may be caused by other reasons.

The common theme is that the really important thing that needs to get done doesn't get done because of all the other things that get done instead. Procrastinators aren't lazy. In fact, they can be some of the busiest people on the planet.

Did you know that procrastinators:

- ★ **Have more projects** in play than you can imagine
- ★ **Deal with more email** than you thought possible, especially those interesting ones where you have won millions of dollars in a Nigerian lottery you can't even remember buying a ticket for
- ★ **Are completely be up to date** with every friend on Facebook, every sport result imaginable and the plot line of every awful daytime soap
- ★ **Procrastination is also not** in everything you do.

Some things will run at a normal or even a fast pace convincing you that perhaps it's not that bad. But then there are the other things... the last few tax returns, bills due last week, that opportunity where all you had to do was return the phone call, or those out of date gift certificates on the fridge and what about that present for the birthday you are going to in an hour?

10 Warning Signs of Procrastination

Procrastination thrives in minds without goals. Daily and weekly plans with a goal in sight can be very helpful. Here are just a few of the warning signs of your own Procrastination.

How many of these sound familiar?

1. You always have to check on what everyone else is doing before you do anything yourself
2. You have a habit of reading some news, watching online videos or similar pre-work ritual
3. You've watched the same video too often and follow the links to the website where there are hundreds of videos (hours pass)
4. Is email ruling your life? Does compulsive monitoring of emails lead you into new work away from your days plan?
5. Making another cup of tea/coffee, or refreshing it before its cold? Or out again buying another coffee?
6. You find yourself fixing that thing that broke ages ago that you don't even use any more.
7. You're feeling hungry... again, it must be cake time! Worse still, the cake shop is a twenty minute round trip

8. Time for another cigarette and thank your lungs for helping you live
9. You're look for people to talk to or setting meetings with no real purpose, are people starting to avoid them?
10. You find yourself making excuses for late work and they're starting to sound too familiar or lame to yourself

Did some of these look familiar? Maybe a little too familiar?

The Secret Victim of Procrastination

What do other people think about procrastinators? If you are not reliable, or don't deliver when it's needed, it can be all too easy to find yourself in a 'nice person but essentially cannot be relied on' basket.

It doesn't matter whether you are unemployed, in a job or running a business, your reputation can make or break your potential. This is truer than ever with the online world working its over-connected magic.

Take a minute to think, who do you go to when you want something done? Who do you ask to help get something sorted, organised or to get yourself out of a procrastinating jam? Stop and really think for a moment here and actually picture someone.

Who do you think that person will go to when he/she needs some assistance on an exciting project and they are looking for someone motivated and will get the job done?'

- ★ Who does the boss or manager go to?
- ★ Who do your friends and colleagues go to?
- ★ Who does your partner go to?
- ★ Who do the kids go to?

You may find that you can solve your procrastination problem by simply clearing your plate by delegating or off-loading the work elsewhere. How does that effect your reputation and your future prospects at work, home, school or, more importantly, your relationships?

There's a difference between delegating and off loading. Delegating is an act of leadership and develops teamwork. Off-loading is an act of avoidance and the opportunity of a free ride. If you want to know which one you are doing,

just ask a busy person if they want your help. If they say, no thanks, it may be time to take a fresh look at how you do things.

Breaking out of Victim Mode

Do you feel like a victim? Does it ALWAYS happen to you?

Sometimes, being the victim creeps up on us. We never intend to do this, it just overtakes us in moments of unforeseen weakness. It can be difficult to realise that we have fallen into a procrastinating pattern, stepped into a rut, and it can be bewildering why things just aren't working out the way they should.

We can even begin to feel like 'why is this always happening to me?', 'It's not fair' and especially, 'It's not my fault'.

The pressures and demands of life in business, work, school or even home, can be so continuous that we get used to it. When it becomes the 'norm' it's surprising how easy it is to fall into feeling like a 'victim' of something.

Let us be the first to say, to some degree, fair enough!

Still, we need to get out this rut and make a positive change. That's what the course is all about. It's more than just 'getting over' procrastination, it's 'getting into' what it is and why it is in your life and making a change for something better.

There are some fantastic techniques described in the course that break this cycle - [The Dartboard](#) and [Have a Rant](#), especially - but, what about right now?

Taking Action

If you've made it this far, then it is likely that you resonate with what I am saying. You are showing that you are ready to make a difference to make a change. You need to **DO something**.

The first step in getting out of a rut is to take the blinders off and realise where you are. This report is designed to kick-start a change in

your thinking. These are some of the simple things you can do right now. These are the pokes with a pointy stick that can get you motivated for change, but it may not be easy.

You might start to think that you are in this procrastination rut or have the procrastination bug, but then your defences kick in. You might find that you start to deny it, justify it or even flatly reject it.

We have a huge fear in our society to being at fault or to blame or the worst of all, responsible!

Let's make a change right now

It's time to be responsible.

That might sound heavy, but this is because 'responsible' nowadays seems to mean that you are at fault, you are wrong and you will be punished - you have to pay - you lose.

Losers pay, winners win.

Let's dump that interpretation and get back to the true meaning of the word. Responsible simply means - to be able to respond. If you are *response-able*, then you are someone who takes action regardless of whether things are going well or not. Whatever it is, you respond - you take action. You are **response-able**

The procrastinator takes a false action or an avoiding action.

So here's a positive message: A procrastinator is a person of action, but just makes the wrong choice of action.

Even if you are a procrastinator, you are on the way to being an achiever, it's just that your energy is misdirected. If you can work out how to focus your procrastinating energy into achieving energy, then you have broken the cycle and you can leap out of the rut.

The video course will give you so much more help to make that change. Check it out. You will never see procrastination the same again. But, even if you don't choose to do the Beat Procrastination Video Program, is it possible that you are poised to make a change right now?

Find The Change You Want Now

The video program

We truly hope you have got a lot of value from this ebook. This is a fraction of what is available in the video course at [Beat Procrastination](#). We have [ten videos that](#) take you progressively through the steps that can create the change within you.

In the course you will discover over the course of [10 x On Demand Videos](#):

- ★ An overview on the course, our approach and how we set you up for success
- ★ Why you've failed over and over again to recover from your procrastination
- ★ How to stop fighting procrastination and start using it
- ★ Reframe your view of what Procrastination is so you can feel it differently and find positive meaning in it
- ★ How to discover and use procrastinations hidden message to you
- ★ How to uncover the secret stories you are not even aware you are telling yourself and rewrite them
- ★ The 4 types of procrastination and why a general approach never works for any of them
- ★ How to create habits that encourage change while discouraging conscious objection

[Beat Procrastination](#) gives you easy-to-follow steps on putting everything here into practice immediately, creating the lasting change you need.

[I Want Change Now!](#)