Procrastination Stoppers

We all procrastinate at different times for different reasons. Avoid those distracting thoughts by asking yourself why you are procrastinating and what is it doing to you.

‘It's too big. I don't know where to start!’

- Do anything related to the task just to get it started
- List all the steps you need to complete the task and concentrate on one step at a time
- Work on a large task for a minimum of 10 minutes per day
- Do warm-up tasks to get started e.g. brainstorming, re-reading notes, organising your material

‘It's too boring!’

- If you can’t get out of it, get it out of the way so you can focus on more interesting tasks
- List the advantages of getting the task done and the disadvantages of not getting on with it
‘I’m frightened of failing’

- Fears are more manageable if you do something about them. Write them out, talk them out
- Visualise yourself successfully carrying out your task and enjoying the benefits
- Consciously change your language patterns to become more positive about yourself and your abilities

‘I’ve always put things off and managed to get by’

- Procrastination is a habit that you can break if you are prepared to work on it, but you need to find your own reasons to change
- University study is very intense and the stress of cramming does not always produce good results and can be damaging to your health

Clarify the critical point at which procrastination becomes a real problem and work out how you will get past it. An example would be the point of time when a decision has to be made e.g. starting that essay or handing in an assignment which you have thoroughly reviewed and ‘know’ is ready.

Adapted from “Uni is Easier When You Know How” by Vivekananda, K. & Shores, P., 1996, Hale & Iremonger

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