

To *make a dent in the universe*, as Steve Jobs offered as the reason we're here, we need to not only come to terms with today, but also with yesterday, our emotional tie to the past AND why when we've determined we want something other than what we have, we STILL PROCRASTINATE!

What the heck?

We all know procrastination is a THING.

It makes you feel rotten. It doesn't just delay what you ultimately want to accomplish, but it goes deeper than that.

And BTW, procrastination ISN'T laziness!

Procrastination is "self-harm" according to psychologist Piers Steel, author of *How to Stop Putting Things Off and Start Getting Things Done*.

It's also irrational - we know how it makes us feel!

Apparently, we also procrastinate to COPE with boredom, anxiety, negative moods, and challenging emotions.

Tom Pynchon, another psychologist, agrees:

"Procrastination isn't a time management problem - it's an emotional regulation problem."

In other words, when we procrastinate, we're dealing with some kind of negativity that's more urgent (says the amygdala) than the task being procrastinated about!

There's an entire body of research called "Procrastinatory Cognitions" - the ruminating thoughts we procrastinators have and the emotions they're connected to.

It's a vicious cycle - especially because procrastinating makes us feel better (for the moment.)

But over time, the procrastination habit creates chronic stress, low-level dissatisfaction with life - even depression and heart disease!

Dr. Judson Brewer, Director of Brown University Mindfulness Center, says we need to give our brains a Bigger Better Offer, or BBO.

In other words, a better reward than procrastination - something that is internal, not a reward like a mani/pedi.

Here's what to do:

FORGIVE YOURSELF!

In a 2010 study, researchers found that students who forgave themselves for procrastinating for the first exam ended up procrastinating less for the second exam.

The conclusion of the study is that forgiveness facilitates the ability to move past the maladaptive behavior without the burden of past acts.

In other words - no more guilt!

Can you imagine...

Another tactic? Self-compassion.

This same study found procrastinators to have low self-compassion, so giving oneself self-compassion acts as a buffer towards the usual self-flagellation and guilt!

There are a few more things we can do so you and I can stop procrastinating over putting a dent in the universe:

1. Pay attention to how you feel - your emotions SHIFT when you procrastinate. Knowing so will bring awareness, and awareness can help you ask appropriate, curious questions of yourself.

2. Consider what's next. No, don't break it into smaller chunks. Ask yourself, "What would I do if I started this task?" That's calming - do just one thing, then allow motivation to do the next - remember motivation is the RESULT of action, not the other way around. Momentum happens from there like dominoes.

Remember, Motivation + Momentum = MAGIC!