Avoid These Pitfalls

**BARGAINING**
“I’ll play now, and study later.”

**POSTPONING**
“I’ll think about that tomorrow.”

**BLAMING**
“I want an A, but he will never give me one, so why try?”

**RATIONALIZING**
“I didn’t need to study in high school, so I should be OK.”

I Work Best Under Pressure

If you answer **YES** to the following statements, you probably **DON’T** work best under pressure.

- As the deadline approaches I feel stressed, pressured, or frazzled.
- I feel I have 100 things to do and no time left.
- I generate stress for those around me.
- I sometimes miss a deadline.
- I get headaches, stomach aches, or other ailments as the deadline approaches.
- I am irritable, mean, or crabby under deadline pressure.

Check out the tips inside for how to handle your time better.
Why do you procrastinate?
Clarifying the reasons for your procrastination.

1. It’s so boring. Tasks perceived as boring are difficult. Your interest increases as you get involved in the task.

2. I’m afraid I can’t. You may procrastinate as a way to avoid failure. Excuses are made to give the impression that if you had been able to complete the task, you would have been successful.

3. Excuses. Procrastination gives you an excuse for work that is not your best. You may be confused about how to do a task and afraid to ask for help.

4. It’s just the way I do things. Procrastination may have become a way of “doing life.” You wait until threat of a crisis to act. Your focus is on completing the task, not on the quality of the final product.

“The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot.” —Michael Altshuler

Strategies to help you change and stop procrastinating.

1. Create a plan. Break the project down into a written list of mini-tasks.

2. Work one hour. Work one hour without distractions on the task and see how much you accomplish to gauge how much time the project will require.

3. Make a calendar. Chart deadlines for each mini-task. Include rewards for having finished each portion of the project.

4. Ask for help. Make good use of other people as resources. Form a study group, find a tutor or PAL, or ask your instructor for help.

5. List your priorities. Focus your time on the most important tasks and let the others go.

6. Set boundaries. Say “NO” to the distractions that demand your time when they are not your priorities.

7. Face your fear of failure. Focus on your positive traits. Use positive self-talk to change your perceptions of your abilities.

8. Relax your personal standards. Most people are incapable of perfection. Strive for excellence instead. Make it your goal to improve with each attempt. This goal rewards effort and allows for failure.

9. Turn off the electronics. Cell phones, Facebook, Twitter, and other things can pull your focus away from the task at hand.

10. Find your location to study. Find a quiet corner that only you know of, and use it regularly. The more you go there, the more it will become a habit, and the more productive you will be when you are there.