

Session description



- Do you find yourself sometimes wishing you were more focused and less easily distracted by other things?
- From the basics of being able to get started in the first place to maintaining concentration on study, we can all hone our procrastination 'skills', sometimes to our detriment. In response to many requests, this new workshop takes a look at some of the reasons for procrastination. In it you will help develop a toolkit to streamline efficiency, making you as effective as possible.

Whether you're preparing for a forthcoming EMA or exam, or are relatively new to study, there will be strategies to help everyone to just get on with it!

What are SHL workshops?



- Studenthublive is non modular and focuses on study skills relevant to higher education
- This means all sessions are skills based and are not subject based. We cannot provide subject/ faculty related sessions
- SHL workshops do not take the place of tutorials provided by your modules
- All events are always advertised on our website along with studenthome news, social media channels and careers sources
- All events are bookable; workshops do fill up as they are popular

Online workshop basics



- Polls are anonymous to other participants but the chat box will have your logged in name associated with your comments during the live session.
- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website.
- Slides are available to download during the session and from <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/tackling-procrastination-successfully-23-apr-2025> .

Today's workshop



- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you think about issues of motivation, distraction and procrastination
- We use illustrations and examples to get you thinking, as well as providing specific suggestions and ideas to consider the topic further
- There is a lot of interaction so please be ready to answer polls (questions) or add to chat pod during the session, as you find comfortable
- You'll get the chance to share ideas with others and learn from each other

Please be aware



- These sessions are large scale
- They are very busy
- There is lots of interaction
- They are not the same as other tutorials
- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon
- You can also feel free to ignore the chat if it is too distracting for you personally



- We welcome all students at our workshops.
- Please do be aware that they can be very busy and some students may struggle with the non-scripted nature.
- Slides are available to download within the live session and from the event page on the studenthublive website at <https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/content/tackling-procrastination-successfully-23-apr-2025> to follow along or prepare for what will come up.

Please



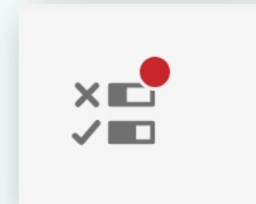
- Do NOT share any personal information in the chat pod during the session.
- On the recording names will be anonymised to user number.
- However, if you type anyone's full name or any other personal information in the chat pod it can be seen by everybody and it would also show up on the recording so we would not be able to make the recording available after the session.

What do you want to learn?



Using the short answer poll provided please say what you are hoping to learn from today's session

(If you are on a mobile device remember you need to tap into the polling option)



To come back to these slides after completing a poll click on the share pod slides icon



Tackling procrastination successfully

What is procrastination?



- Procrastination is the art of putting things off intentionally or habitually
- Usually this means putting all tasks together at the end of time available

Considering motivations



- Personal preferences and motivations can come out when considering what you would do if you have the choice
 - Relaxation
 - Health
 - Likes / Interests
 - Successes

We'll come back to motivation later ...

Making use of help

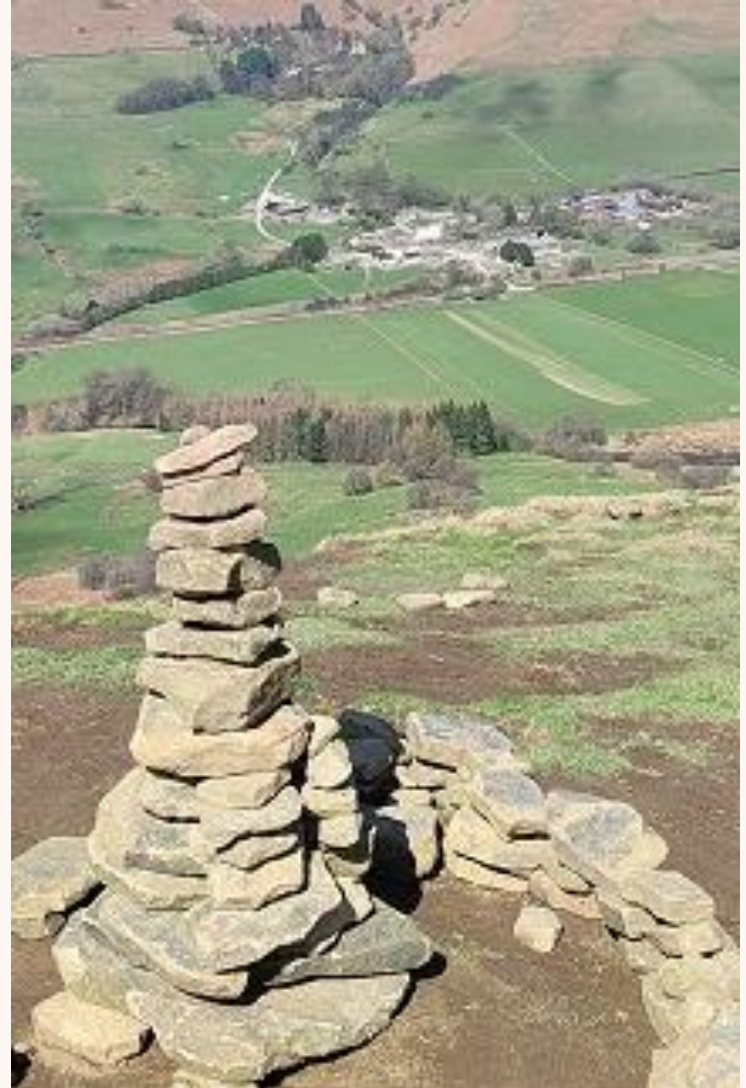


- Carer network
- Disability support team
- Student support team
- Open University students association
- Module forums
- Family/friends

We can't unfortunately find more time or solve all problems for you but can give some ideas for you to work with

What do you see here?

- Look at this picture and use the short answer poll to say what you see



Perception



- Seeing and perceiving
- Difference between describing and explaining
- Perception is based on experience
- We believe the information that our senses pass to us is an accurate representation of our world but we also integrate that with our past experiences of the world

Why is this relevant?



- Past experiences influence current actions
- Many of us do things because we always have, have been taught / modelled a specific way or think we should
- Procrastination may be based on past experiences
- We don't all procrastinate alike
- Be kind to yourself when considering these issues and how experience and emotion fit in with procrastination

- I am aware that some in the neurodiverse community have particular struggles with motivations, distractions, managing time and activities and may resent any suggestions.
- There have been some useful discussions about managing time and similar considerations within neurodiverse community sessions.

Executive function



- For some ND individuals the struggle with executive function may be behind some of the procrastination issues.
- Time management, planning and overall behaviours can impact the ability to get started and can lead to procrastination
- It doesn't always happen but recognising in yourself can be useful
- The best remedy seems to be breaking things into chunks

Imposter syndrome



- For some the underlying feeling they 'should not be there' studying and are 'going to be found out' causes issues with getting study done.
- There are no easy answers unfortunately.
- **Please believe you can and should study.**

Pathological demand avoidance



- Some people may feel they are procrastinating for more serious reasons including pathological demand avoidance.
- There are a couple of downloads available with some additional information provided by past student guest Leighah.

Procrastination word cloud



- Using the option to type in where it says enter word here say **What causes you to procrastinate when you are trying to study?**
- Note that suggestions need to be single words rather than phrases, if you press the space button your first word will go through.
- A word cloud is built up with common answers being larger so we can see if there are patterns

Enter word here

Reasons

- Many reasons to procrastinate can be quite personal although there are common ones
- It is a balancing act to be able to study alongside other life issues but recognising issues and doing something about them can help



Procrastination and emotions



- Sometimes procrastination relates to emotions and particularly avoiding negative emotions
- It may be a coping mechanism – do something else rather than tackle the challenge of the emotions
- Postponing the task temporarily avoids having to experience the emotions

Procrastination as coping



- Being honest do you think you procrastinate as an emotional coping mechanism? Please select from the poll answers. It isn't a failing, just something to recognise and we will see what people think
 - Yes
 - No
 - Really don't know

Managing the emotions



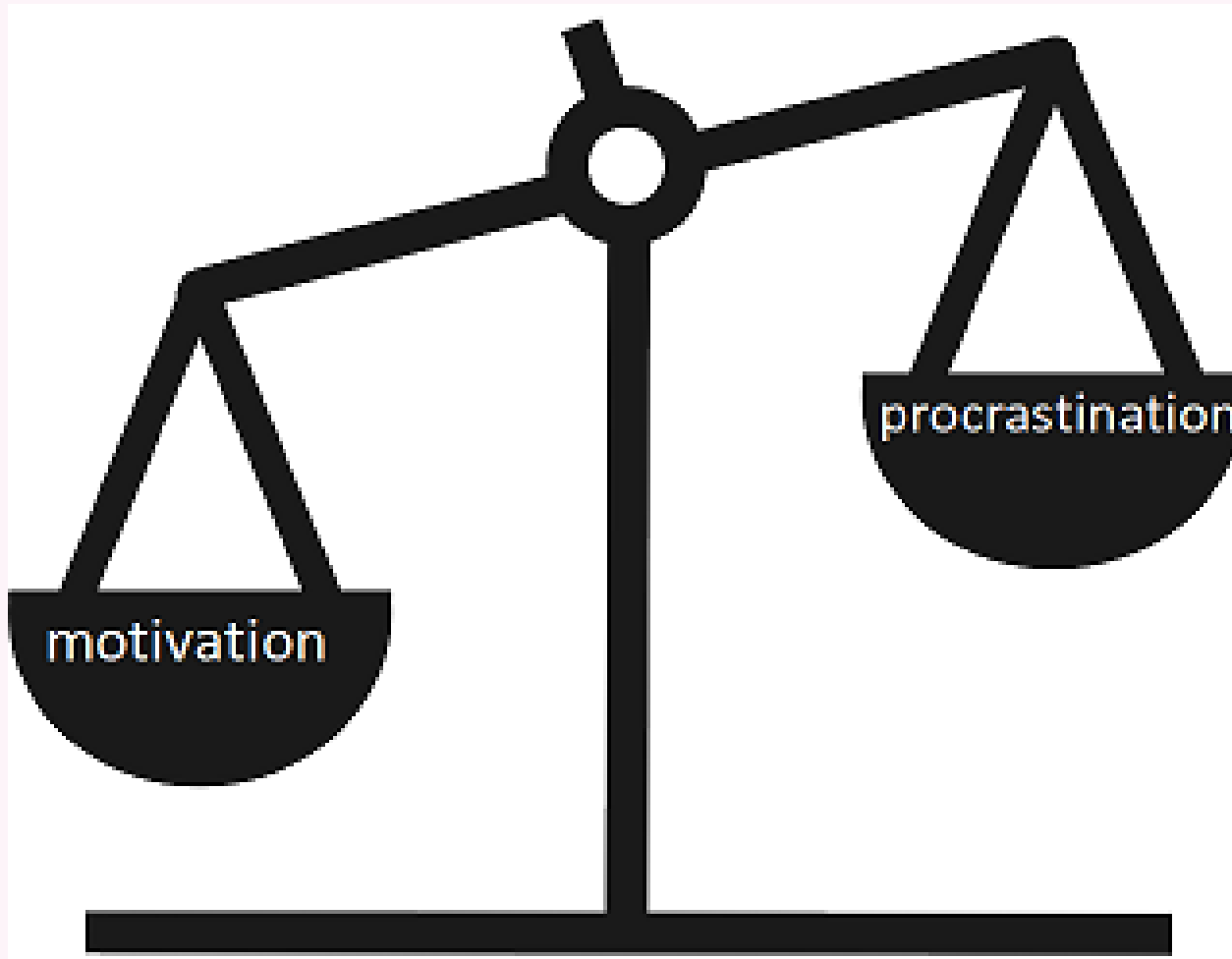
- Recognise them, acknowledge they exist
- Be kind to current and future you and help future you to manage
- Consider whether the negative thoughts can be reframed to be less negative
- Develop an emotional toolbox to help

Good practice

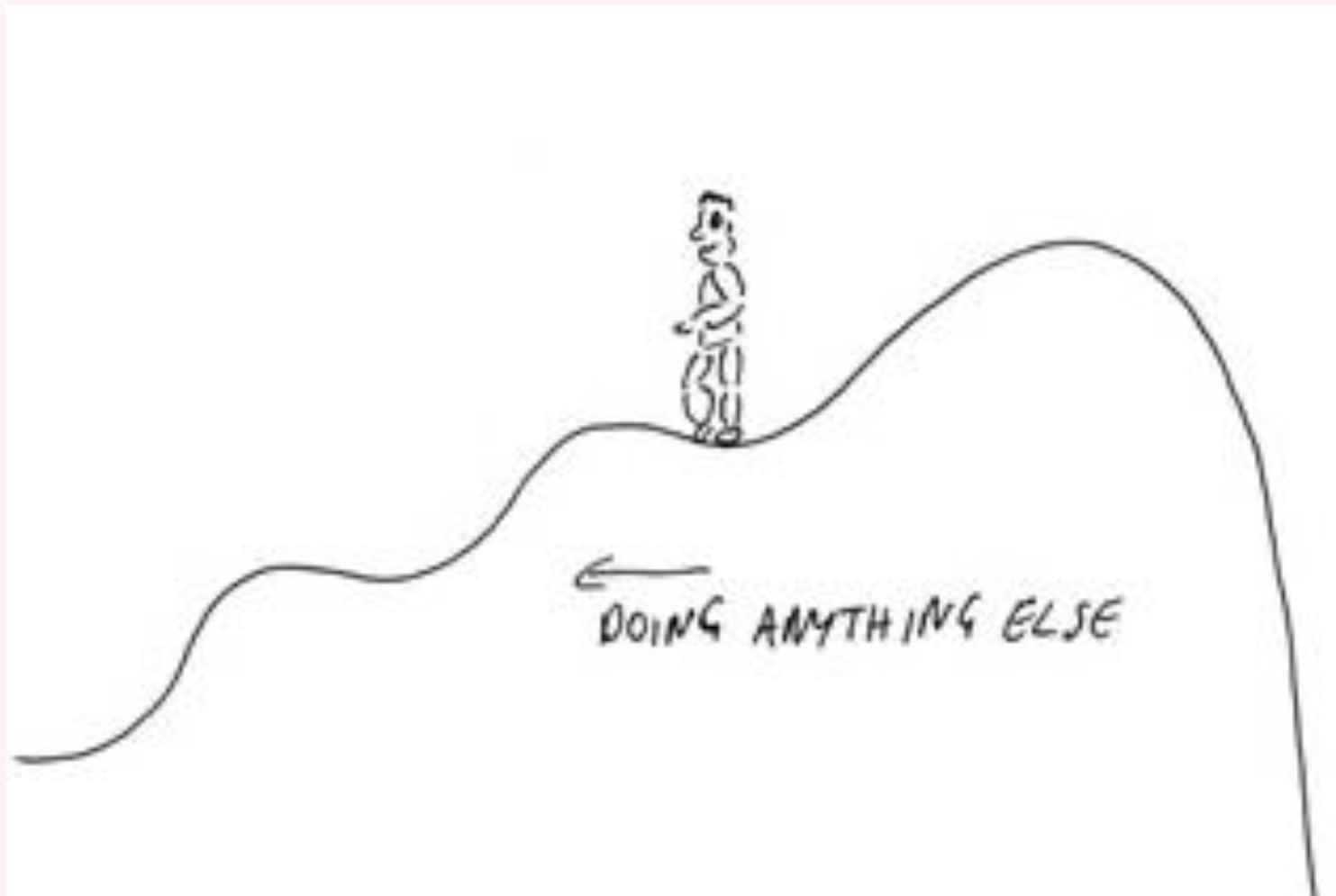


- Be realistic
- Chunk work to become more manageable
- Be specific to tackle obstacles
- Use the support networks

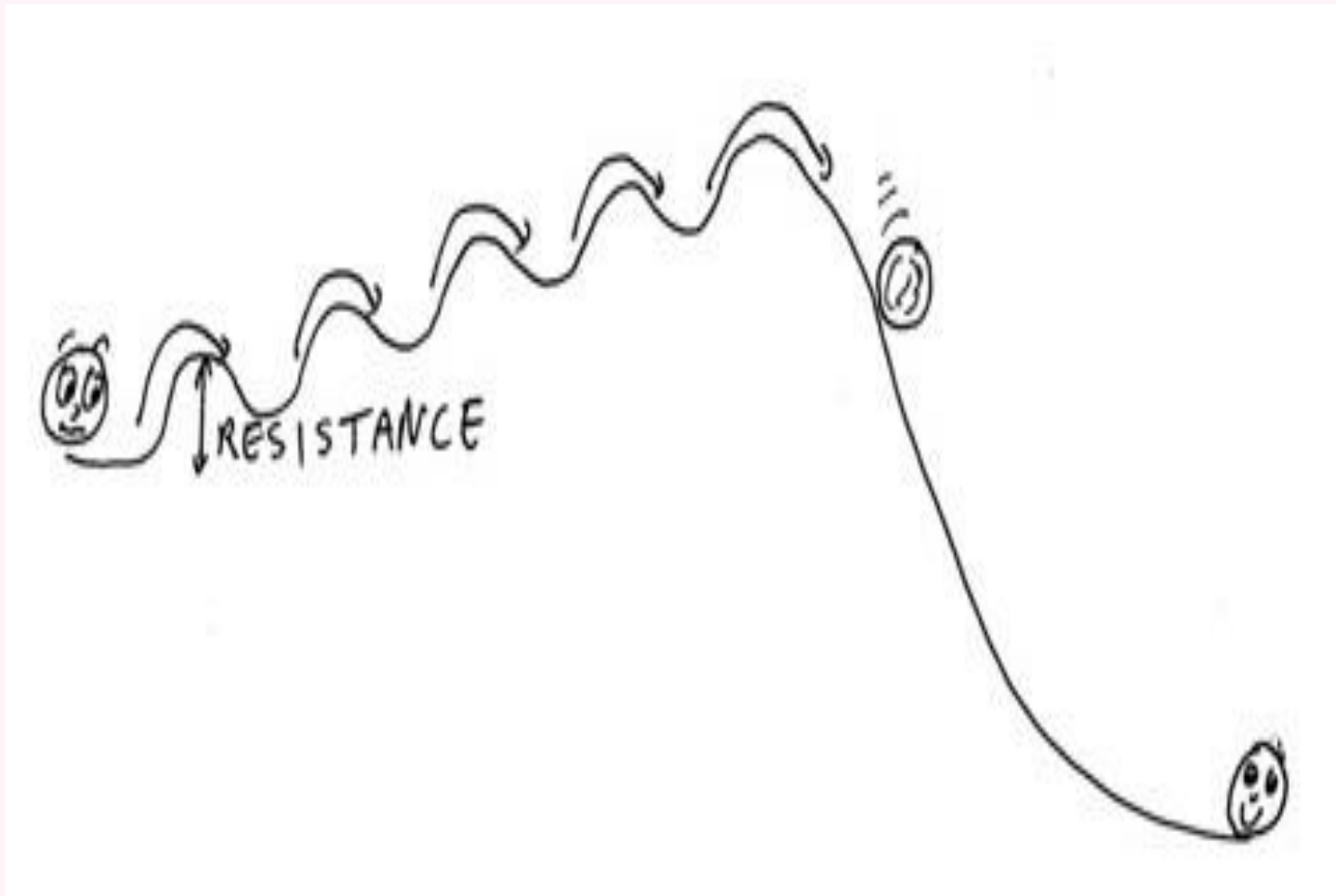
Procrastination V motivation



Avoidance



Tackling the resistance 1



Tackling the resistance 2



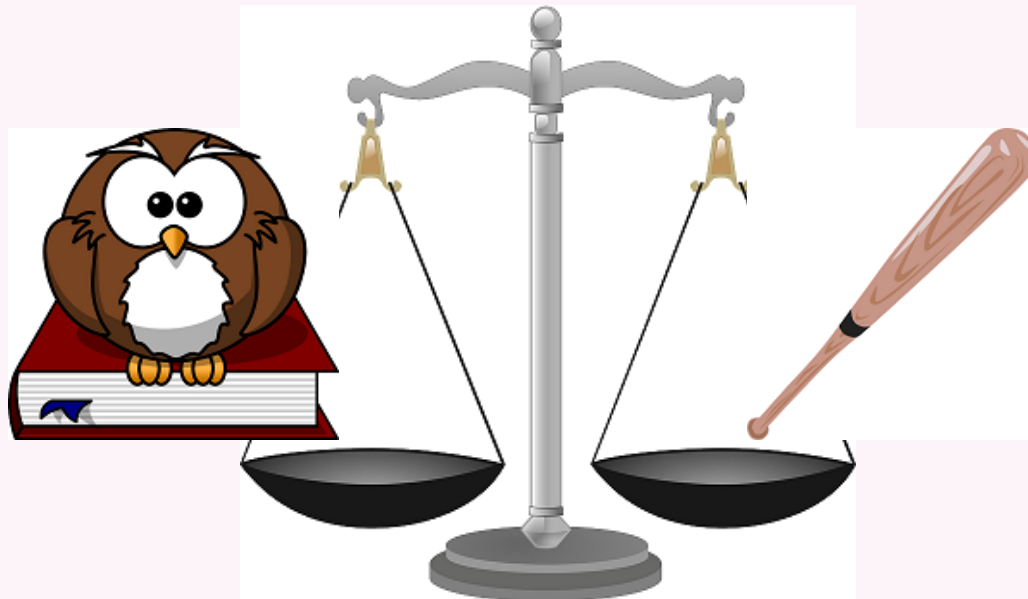
Motivation



- Extrinsic motivation
- Goal based motivation
- Intrinsic motivation

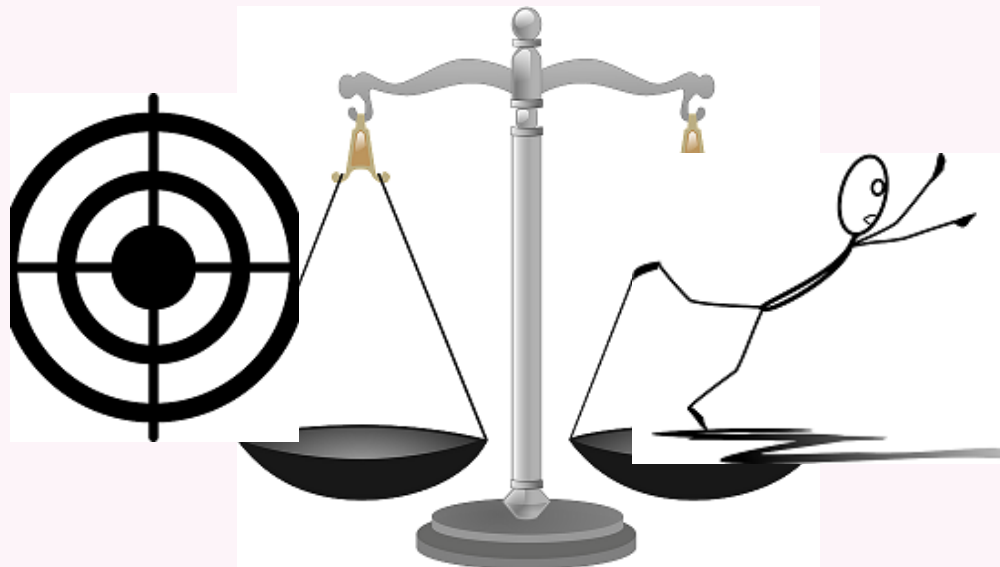
Extrinsic motivation

- This is motivation that comes from outside of the individual
- Benefit- guidance from outside ourselves
- Downside - could also be thought of as the stick method



Goal based motivation

- This is motivation that comes from aiming to achieve specific goals
- Benefit – a specific purpose and target which can be achieved
- Downside – obstacles or failure to meet the goal removes motivation



Intrinsic motivation

- This is motivation that comes from within the individual
- Benefit – it means something to the individual
- Downside – there needs to be a clear target [for the motivation] for it to be generated in the first place



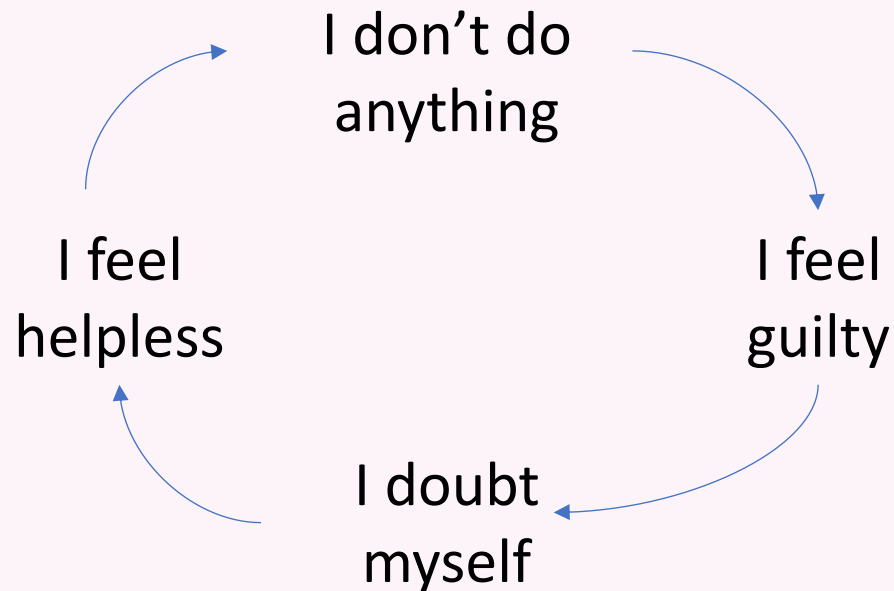
Overall...

- Intrinsic motivation is ideally best as it is about what you as a student want to achieve, not what someone tells you that you have to do



What procrastination isn't?

- Laziness or Relaxation!



Styles of procrastination

- Perfectionist
- Worrier
- Pleaser
- Dreamer
- Crisis maker
- Defier

The first three are motivated by avoiding negative feelings

The second three are motivated by boredom and frustration

Perfectionist

- Wants everything to be perfect
 - All or nothing thinking
 - Fear of failure
 - ...If I don't do this task perfectly I am a failure...
- Doesn't complete a task just in case it isn't perfect



Worrier

- Perceive all the potential problems and sees the failure
- ...I won't be able to do this because... (from the outset)
- Don't even start a task, to avoid experiencing the negative emotions of not succeeding



Pleaser

- Can't say no
- Just too busy
- Hates to ask for help (doesn't want to bother anyone)
- Strong need for approval from others



- Creative
- Lots of ideas
- Doesn't follow through
- Waiting for an opportunity to drop into the lap as shouldn't have to work for dreams



Crisis maker

- It's boring / I don't feel like it or fundamentally unmotivated intrinsically
- Only starts when something makes them (which could be the deadline in a few hours)
- Needs a crisis to actually get going e.g. the stress or pressure because 'it makes them better'



- Becomes annoyed if someone tells them what to do



Identifying in yourself



- Which of the six types of procrastinator have you observed in yourself? (You can choose more than one)
- Perfectionist
- Worrier
- Pleaser
- Dreamer
- Crisis maker
- Defier
- None / don't really know

What can you do?



- Remove the blockage of what makes the task hard to do
- Visualise what might happen if you do it compared to what might happen if you don't do it
- Reframe your thinking from the anxiety to a benefit

Perfectionist – solution



- Everyone makes mistakes and it isn't a failure
- Learn from mistakes and accept they can be useful

Worrier – solution



- Don't catastrophise, everything is not overwhelming
- Break large tasks down into smaller ones which seem more manageable

Pleaser – solution



- Learn to prioritise
- Accept sometimes you have to say no and you can ask for help

Dreamer - solution



- Learn to create concrete goals that are achievable
- Learn to harness your energy

Crisis maker – solution



- Recognise tasks are opportunities
- See benefits to completing a task rather than seeing it as a threat to be done under duress [of a deadline]
- Reward yourself for starting earlier

Defier – solution



- Take responsibility for choices and their consequences
- Learn to channel the rebellious anger into something constructive and effective

Locus of control



- Internal locus of control – **you** make things happen, you can affect outcomes through effort and ability
- External locus of control – things happen **to you** and outside forces like fate make things happen
 - **I control my destiny**
 - OR**
 - **Others control my destiny**

Isabella's avoidance of procrastination



- Focus on responsibility (not in a negative way)
- Tick lists being motivational
- Have set times to do 'fun tasks'
- Simply switch off – phone is on silent and face down

Is it that easy?



- Get ideas about what works for other people to consider whether it might work for you
- These workshops are community events so you can learn from each other
- We ask lots of questions so you can ask and answer questions and consider different approaches
- Everyone is an individual so there is no one method that will always work.

Final questions



- Are there any further questions or suggestions you have about procrastination? Please use either the chat or short answer poll pod and we will do our best to address as we can although we can't solve everything.

Take home message



- Everyone procrastinates but identifying triggers / reasons can help to avoid them
- Make use of the support that exists
- Focus on the end goal

Feedback



Please complete the feedback form that is available at

<https://forms.office.com/e/HHvq5Hjjw4>

This is immensely valuable to provide information on how studenthublive is beneficial to students as well as to help us plan our future programme

Selected Upcoming events



- 1 May 11am studying when English is an additional language
- 6 May 11am Learning from feedback
- **8 May 11am EMAs and remote exams**
- 13 May 11am Preparing for and producing the best EMA
- 14 May 11am Get well prepared for your final exam
- 20 May 7pm Improve your academic writing
- 22 May 11am Power reading
- 29 May 7pm Creative note taking
- **5 Jun 11am Moving on levels: building on your experience**

For more information on all past and upcoming events, go to <http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/>