

# HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF STRESS & PROCRASTINATION

STRESS & PROCRASTINATION CAN FEED EACH OTHER TO CREATE A CYCLE.

## 1 WE FACE OUTSIDE STRESS

We have **ongoing stress** at work or home that doesn't allow us to rest or recover.

Or we experience **extreme stress**, like an emergency or a crisis.

## 4 WE CREATE INTERNAL STRESS

But procrastination is only a short-term fix.

Long-term costs include feelings of guilt, irritability, panic, and more anxiety.

In other words: more **STRESS**.

## 2 WE LOSE COPING RESOURCES AND FEEL STRESSED & ANXIOUS

Over time, the "wear and tear" of stress depletes our health.

We feel overwhelmed, discouraged & anxious. We also feel **exhausted** & **unable to cope**.

## 3 WE COPE BY PROCRASTINATING

The ongoing demands of a stressful situation can consume our energy & focus.

We may also feel too exhausted and discouraged to work on other tasks. So, we **procrastinate**.

So, **STRESS** can lead to **PROCRASTINATION**,  
and **PROCRASTINATION** can lead to **STRESS**.

## SOLUTIONS SHOULD FOCUS ON:

- Managing stress;
- Boosting emotional regulation & coping; and
- Reducing procrastination.

### SOME EXAMPLES:

#### PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION.

Treating personal flaws and setbacks with patience and kindness can reduce feelings of anxiety and is linked to lower levels of procrastination.

#### NOTICE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS WITHOUT JUDGMENT.

It's not helpful to get anxious over your anxiety. Noticing emotional responses without judgment, understanding that they don't have to drive the narrative and will often pass when circumstances improve, can remove their power in the stress-procrastination cycle.

#### GET TO THE ROOT OF YOUR STRESS.

Stress will continue to feed the cycle until you understand and address the root causes.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

- What stressors are you facing right now? On a scale from 1 to 10, how intense is the stress?
- How do you support your physical and emotional health during times of stress?
- It's tempting to procrastinate on unpleasant tasks, especially when we're stressed out. What are some healthier alternatives? How can you make these alternatives a habit?

