

Quality #3: Completing Tasks

Procrastination

- Download PDF of Unedited Transcription of Audio
- Listen to the audio – Procrastination (11) minutes
- Download PDF of Practicum
- Listen to or read Scroll V (morning), IX (noon), VII (night)

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OG MANDINO FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Procrastination

Do you ever procrastinate?

Visualize:

Some distance in front of us is a task we do not want to do. The deadline is looming ever closer. We are experiencing all kinds of noise in our head about the task – obsessive, sabotaging thoughts about our worthiness, ability, capacity, energy, the need to do it perfectly, the time it will take and more. The noise is screaming so loudly we cannot clearly hear the urgency of task, which is also screaming to get our attention.

As the deadline approaches it becomes increasingly loud. Eventually it is screaming so loudly that the full magnitude of the importance and urgency finally gets our attention. We cannot hide from it or avoid it any longer. With no other choice we finally jump into action.

It is not long and we are experiencing a sense of surprise. A mysterious capacity has manifested. We understand what needs to be done and have the ability to do it. We find ourselves saying, “Wow! That wasn’t so hard!” or “Wow! Why did I wait so long?” Task completed and off our plate, we experience a sense of peace, relief and accomplishment. A sweet moment especially when compared with the battle that occurred prior to taking action.

What is happening in these moments of surprise, these “Wow. That wasn’t so hard!” moments?

Consider:

The external deadline finally screamed louder than the noise in our head, loud enough to overpower these sabotaging thoughts freeing our natural genius. Yes, we just met our natural genius. It has always been there. It has just been buried in noise of fear.

When our full capacity surfaces, unfettered by sabotaging noise, most unpleasant tasks

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are quickly transformed from a seven-headed Medusa to a warm and cuddly puppy dog.

What happens when you finally face an immovable deadline and jump in?

What do you discover?

Have you ever jumped in and within a short period of time looked up and gleefully exclaimed, "Wow! That wasn't so hard!?"

Are you ever surprised?

When faced with the next unpleasant task or looming deadline, what usually happens?

Do you follow the same pattern?

If so, how long have you been doing this?

When you were in school, did you ever wait until the last minute to complete an important assignment such as prepare for a test or write a paper?

With an external deadline looming ever closer, at what point did you finally jump in with both feet?

Were you ever surprised how quickly it all came together?

Were you ever pleasantly surprised by the grade you received?

Did you ever wonder what grade your instructor or professor might have assigned if they knew how little time you spent?

Smile for this last question - Did you ever view yourself as a very good B.S. artist?

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Now you know the truth. You were not getting away with anything. You were finally tapping your ability, your natural genius.

In 1968, Og wrote in Scroll IX, “My procrastination which has held me back was born of fear and now I recognize this secret mined from the depths of all courageous hearts. Now I know that to conquer fear I must always act without hesitation and the flutters in my heart will vanish. Now I know that action reduces the lion of terror to an ant of equanimity (peace of mind).”

What do we fear? Here is a partial list: Lack of worthiness, confidence, knowledge, ability, capacity, energy, money and time (to do it perfectly) or the loss of freedom, lack of compensation or appropriate recognition or additional complications, being discovered, amount of work. Now that is a lot of noise!

The most common cause of fear is unmet expectations. We fantasize by escaping to a time in the future when we are above all of this – the pain, stress, frustration, debt, work. While in this state we experience large and chronic doses of norepinephrine that leave us feeling euphoric. When reality shows up, and there is nothing quite like an unpleasant task to bring us back to reality, the body goes into an autonomic defense mode.

Cortisol replaces norepinephrine leaving us feeling anxious, confused and fearful. The amygdala, the fight and flight center of the brain releases fear dendrites that go up and shut off energy to our prefrontal cortex where our higher levels of consciousness reside. Our intuition reads all of this as something substantive and causes the release of even more cortisol. Our memory center is nearly shut down. The amygdala releases even more fear dendrites and we are in a deadly spiral of fear.

As stated by an unknown author, fear is an acronym (F.E.A.R) that stands for, “False evidence appearing real.” Fear is crippling and paralyzing. Fear squashes passion, destroys vision, and leaves us exhausted, confused, frustrated and even angry.

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Ultimately it robs us of our hopes and dreams. It also robs us of partnership with the power that governs abundance.

When Og wrote these words in Scroll IX, axiological mathematics, on which the Intentional Creation Assessment is based, was in its infancy and neuroscience was embryonic, yet in his poetic and poignant verse Og reveals the bare truth about procrastination. Procrastination is born of fear. Now you know the root cause of fear - fantasy. Fantasy fosters fear.

If your why is about engaging and creating versus escaping and avoiding it will ignite your passion and drive your action.

When passion is fully ignited, we avoid fantasy like the plague it is. As a result, we never have to again say in the confusion of procrastination, "I don't know what to do." We already know or we have a desire to acquire the ability and figure it out.

Og also tells us that action turns the lion of terror into an ant of equanimity. This may be the most powerful of all the gifts we receive when we take action. Action quiets our mind and we experience equanimity - peace of mind. Peace of mind allows us to reveal and access our natural genius. Good-bye fear. Seems like a pretty clear-cut choice.

Now you know what awaits you when you take action. In Scroll IX, Og encourages us with this admonition, *"I will act now. I will act now. I will act now! Henceforth, I will repeat these words again and again and again, each hour, each day, every day, until the words became as much a habit as my breathing and the actions which follow become as instinctive as the blinking of my eyelids. With these words I can condition my mind to perform every act necessary for my success. With these words I can condition my mind to meet every challenge which the failure avoids."*

We can add to this admonition Og's affirmation from later in Scroll IX, *"I will command and I will obey my own command."* When we consciously discipline ourselves to do so, we release our natural genius. It emerges from the dust and ashes of self-doubt and

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self-criticism and often to such an extent that we are surprised. When our natural genius is released we get to have a glimpse into our real worth. We get to know our real self – who we really are. A sense of accomplishment, meaning and purpose replaces fear.

As we consciously and repeatedly make the decision to take action surprise graciously becomes ownership and our self-esteem begins to heal. We rejoice. No more need for over compensating arrogance or timidity, just joy and wholeness.

Consider some tasks that you have been putting off. Identify the fear that has been keeping you from taking action.