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Five Ways to Put Off Procrastinating

By Michelle Cederberg, CSP

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Thanks for subscribing to our weekly 'GET TO IT Guideline'. Every week you'll receive a message from me that includes a quote that made me think, along with my thoughts on it. I call it guilt-free accountability and I hope you'll use it as a means of checking in with yourself at the start of your week regarding some of the things you've been meaning to get to.

When life gets hectic it's easy (and common) to put off certain tasks, either because we don't feel we have the time, or because the tasks seem too daunting to tackle. The challenge with excessive procrastination is that – depending on what you're putting off – you won't be very productive, and life will become difficult to manage. I'm going to talk about two types of tasks that we typically procrastinate. The first are the external '**to do**' tasks associated with work or home, that we know we need to get done but don't, either because we don't enjoy it, or because other things take precedence. House keeping, getting finances in order, organizing the office, writing that proposal, paying the bills, getting the car serviced are all the typical 'to do' tasks that people often delay. It's not the end of the world if these tasks don't get done *right away* but if you're always putting them off, eventually there will be repercussions. The house will become unlivable, the tax man will be at you, you'll get behind at work, or your car will break down. You get the idea.

The second type of task we put off is what I'll call the '**to you**' task which is associated with things in your day that you give up or put off as a result of a busy schedule or its resulting fatigue. Exercise, healthy eating, and adequate rest are three examples of 'to you' tasks we delay when we get busy and overwhelmed. Sadly, it's these resilience building habits that we need to hold on to through stress so that we have the energy to make it through the craziness. 'To you' habits keep you healthy, energized, and alert through your day which will also help you tackle your other 'to do' tasks. Below are 5 ways to put off procrastinating and get back 'to you'.

1) **Break it down:** Recognize that every job can be broken down into smaller, more manageable tasks. Whether it's the sky high pile on your desk to the exercise session you're

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dreading after work, look at your daunting task in bits. Commit to sorting a portion of the pile. Get to your workout and commit to at least 10 minutes of movement. My mantra in this regard is, was, and always will be that *10 minutes of doing is better than an hour of thinking about it*. Which bring me to number 2.

2) **Just get started:** If you've down-sized a task (or even if you haven't) skip the part where you feel overwhelmed, and just get started. More often than not, once we kick into gear on a long delayed task we realize that it isn't nearly as daunting as we'd made it out to be in our heads. You'll gain momentum on the task and either achieve your bite sized goal or keep on going because it's not that bad after all. In my efforts to overcome procrastination I constantly remind myself that *it's not the doing that tough, it's getting to it*. Once you begin, you'll likely continue.

3) **Let go perfection:** How many tasks have you put off while waiting for ideal circumstances to do it just right? Life is busy and conditions will always lead you away from perfection, so heed steps 1 and 2 above and step three will take care of itself. *Done is better than perfect*.

4) **Make a list.** If you're a list maker you know the joy of checking off a completed task. Well, it feels so darn good because research has shown that accomplishment of this sort causes a release of positive endorphins in the body. Wahoo! At the start of your day, create a do-able list of small tasks that you know can be completed by days end. Include your obvious 'to do' tasks but also remember to add 'to you' items as well. Take a look at my **GOT TO IT journal** sample pages on the www.gottoit.ca home page. On my daily journal page I list 7 key areas to tackle in small steps every day. I say, if you can take small consistent steps in key areas of your life *every day* imagine how much you'll accomplish in 365 days. *What are you waiting for?*

5) **Get a BUDDY.** If you have tasks on your to do list that are extremely important; if their completion would mean a good step in the right direction for work, fitness, or some other aspect of your life, doesn't it make sense that you get to them? Increase the likelihood by finding yourself an accountability partner, someone who will call you or email you on a predetermined schedule to check in, chat, and cheer you on. It can be a friend, a professional coach, a personal trainer – anyone you trust to guide you through getting it done minus the guilt and nagging. I'll admit my accountability partners are my best friend and my worst enemy. I don't always like doing the tasks on my weekly lists but I dislike, even more, letting down them by

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having to 'make excuses' for why I wasn't successful with my promises... so I get to it – however reluctantly.

I'll be the first to tell you I've put off, procrastinated, ignored, stepped over, and stomped on endless tasks over many years telling myself "I'll get to it when I'm not so busy, tired, stressed, unmotivated ..." and I wonder at all I left undone. Today I tackle 'to do' in small daily steps and I get more done in a week than I could have ever imagined. I encourage you to purchase my **GOT TO IT** journal to help guide you through the process of daily accountability; I invite you to read my October 2009 blog to learn more about *my* personal journey through the accountability practice, and at the very least I ask you to consider the 5 steps I've shared above and begin your own process of guilt-free accountability.

Sometimes success needs a little help! If you want guidance with your goals email Michelle at info@michellecederberg.com to find out about one-on-one life coaching and to order a copy of her Accountability Journal: **GOT TO IT!** 365 day journal for *getting to* the good things

Every day accountability to help you switch "I'll get to it" to GOT TO IT! Have better work-life balance, finally fit in fitness, increase your energy, and love your life – one day at a time.

By mentioning this article, Michelle will extend a \$4.00 discount on every journal you purchase *and* provide a free sample session of coaching.

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Michelle Cederberg leads the industry for life balance, health, and stress management programs, resources, and tools that *actually* conquer procrastination, fatigue, and loss of motivation. Her expansive education and experience combined with her unique products, platform skills and messaging help you find the energy to succeed in business and in life, and you'll have fun learning how. She has built her career since 1990, as a college educator, personal trainer, author, life coach and entrepreneur. As a professional speaker, she shares her experiences in a humorous and realistic way with delighted audiences across North America. This past July she was awarded her Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation – the highest earned designation in the speaking business, held by less than 10% of the global speaker's federation. If you hire a CSP you can be guaranteed a professional, high quality presentation that will make an impact on your organization.

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Michelle knows her energy has fueled her business success! Today, through her products and presentations she helps you increase energy and productivity through a small steps philosophy that just makes sense.

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